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Update on the delivery of the two-year Adult Social Care Improvement Programme and preparation for Care Quality Commission Assurance

Alan Sinclair, Director of Adults and Health

Julie Phillips, Assistant Director – Improvement and Assurance |

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Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee |

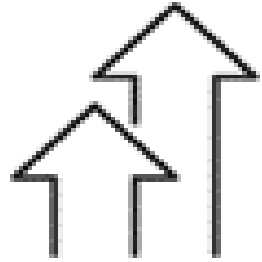


Summary

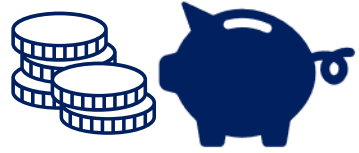


- On 18 September 2024, the Committee considered an update report on the detail and delivery of the two-year improvement programme in Adult Social Care, and preparation for Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance.
- As described in previous reports, the programme continues to be delivered during a period of significant challenge, including the need to support our NHS partners, increased demand and rising complexity of need and considerable financial challenges across the whole social care sector.
- The Committee is asked to consider the latest update on the delivery of the improvement programme and note the progress of the CQC assurance process.

Strategic Context



Government plans for [social care reform and an independent commission](#) from April 2025 – recommends foundations for a national care service. Doesn't report until 2028. The package of reforms will help to deliver the government's Plan for Change by helping to keep older people out of hospital and living independently for longer. As part of the reforms the government also announced additional funding for home adaptations, along with improvements to technology and data sharing between NHS and social care. [The Better Care Fund Policy Framework](#) has also been published with objectives reformed to support the shift from sickness to prevention through enhanced health and social care integration and to support people living independently at home.



Fragile provider and care market and serious financial challenges across the sector – compounded by rising national living wage costs and National Insurance Employer contributions.

The life you want to lead

Ongoing delivery of our Adult Social Care Strategy, The life you want to lead – due for refresh later this year.



Lobbying and influence:

We took part in the [ADASS Autumn survey](#), the results of which highlight the growing challenges facing all councils across the Country.



Response to Government [Health and Social Care Select Committee Inquiry on adult social care reform](#) and an [open letter](#) to the Minister of State for Care.

Care Quality Commission Assurance - update



- On 9 September 2024 we received notification that our assurance process would commence
- On 27 September we submitted 271 documents/evidence as part of a specified Information Return (38 categories)
- On 2 December 2024, we had notification of our onsite visit – w/c 17 February 2025 and request to submit 50 case files
- Following feedback of which cases CQC wish to review, we uploaded the requested 10 detailed case files on 2 January 2025
- Interviews with partners began in January 2025
- Leadership Presentation to CQC lead assessors – 21 January 2025
- Onsite assurance visit – 18/19/20 February 2025
- w/c 3 March 2025, DASS to receive high level feedback
- Draft report expected April onwards.



Improvement Programme at a glance



Portfolio Board: Governance and review

Systems and IT	Practice and Operations	Workforce and OD	Performance and Insight	Strategic Commissioning	Communication and Change
Artificial Intelligence	Transitions	Leadership and management	ASC Reporting	Individual Service Funds	Communications, engagement and change plan
Bed booking system	Strength based working	Development	Data Quality	Directly Provided Services	Roles and responsibilities
Provider Portal	Practice guidance			Market position statements	
Shared care records				Reablement	
Online Assessment Tools					
Direct Payments (Phase 1)					
Integrated front door					

Co-produced Design Principles

- Simple
- People centred
- Supporting choice and control
- Inclusion and tackling inequalities
- Connected
- Empowered with technology
- With data in mind
- Early support

Customer Journey Design Principles underpin all workstreams

x17 Projects & products delivered since commencement of the programme

Strategic Commissioning Workstream (1)



Outcomes Delivered	Outcomes Planned
<p>Market Position Statements - Extra Care House and Older People Bed Based Accommodation developed and signed off. Market Position Statement for Care at Home developed.</p>	<p>Market Position Statement for Care at Home, Mental Health and Lifelong Services to be finalised and published.</p>
<p>Early Support - Increased awareness and access to early support services now available using Council & Local information Online (CLiO). Extensive engagement across service and organisations including WSCC, the voluntary sector, NHS and Districts and Boroughs culminating in co-produced prevention principles creating a platform for future joined up approaches and initiatives to reduce demand. During 2023/24 3952 contacts progressed to a full Care Act assessment (19% of new contacts), with remaining 81% managed by Contact Centre & Carepoint 2, reducing demand on formal services. We also consistently exceed our corporate KPI – percentage of contacts that progress to a social care assessment - with performance in Quarter 3 at 12.9% against an aim low target of 25%.</p>	<p>Libraries will continue to maintain CLiO and update prevention services moving forward with Adults monitoring performance/user reports. Prevention will form part of the Council’s cross cutting programme to provide residents with easy access to the relevant information to help support their needs at first contact, reducing the use of unnecessary resources leading to a reduction in demand and potential future use of services.</p>
<p>Individual Service Funds - Delivery team, commissioning and Combined Placement and Sourcing Team (CPST) established to steer the development and implementation of pilots.</p>	<p>A reset was agreed following a review of activity to date. A revised approach is planned for early 2025.</p>

Strategic Commissioning Workstream (2)



Outcomes Delivered	Outcomes Planned
<p>Reablement - Workforce business case approved in Dec 24, Communication workstream established. Contract awarded to the external partner in December 2024. There has been a 31% capacity increase in the reablement service over the last 2 years, with over 70% of individuals regaining independence, with many others seeing a reduction in their care needs. 2024/25 Performance shows an average of 34 new starts per week, with a future goal to increase to 55 starts per week.</p>	<p>A streamlined referral process/system allowing Care Point 2 (adults contact centre) and other operational teams to make referrals easy and efficient. Identify system changes which will be implemented in March 2025 to streamline business processes. There is an aspiration to improve growth of reablement by 45% by March 2026. Analyse and map future demand.</p>
<p>S75 – Scope of work agreed to wind down agreements. Governance established through a joint executive steering group and working group. Deed of variation signed by both parties in December 2024 which is the dissolution of the Children’s s75 legal agreement between WSCC and the NHS.</p>	<p>Care package reviews scheduled to start in April 2025. The wind-down for the adults’ element of the agreement is likely to take place later in 2025. Work is currently underway to ensure the legal framework is understood by all parties.</p>
<p>Directly Provided Services - summary and options report for the long-term delivery of Day Opportunities and Residential services for adults considered by the Leadership team. Programme established with governance structure.</p>	<p>Steering group meeting regularly to discuss next steps.</p>

Practice and Operations Workstream



Outcomes Delivered	Outcomes Planned
<p>Transitions- Stage 3.1 of the Transition Programme will further improve how the two cross-directorate (Children’s and adults’) WSCC transition-to-adult-social-care pathways meet the conditions for a ‘good transition’. The extension to this programme will focus on the agreed priorities to hand over to BAU. A List of known children’s financial costs by young person aged 14 - 17 has been created and added to the Children Social Care (CSC) transitions dashboard.</p> <p>Engagement with young people, parents, carers and the Parent Carer Forum took place in September to ascertain what improvements we could make to information available to the young people transitioning from Children’s Services to Adults Services ages 16 – 25.</p> <p>A survey in March 2024 of Children’s workers and their managers who made referrals and attended the Transitions Panel in the last 12 months evidenced an improvement of their understanding of the Panel and their overall support of this approach, as well as an improved awareness of how to prepare young people who are likely to transition to adults’ services.</p>	<p>Following the engagement sessions, feedback was collated and analysed. It was found the Transitions Programme needed to change its focus and work on improving information available. Quick wins were identified in the line of roll up banner for transition evenings, a road map visually depicting the anticipated journey for a young person known to Children’s Services who may be eligible for Adults support. The working group has now submitted the request to graphic design for the banner and has a road map drafted with the intention to publish in March 2025.</p> <p>Creation of a multi-disciplinary transition panel for children with disabilities. The protocol for the panel was finalised and approved in December 2024 and is now available. The first panel meeting will take place in February 2025.</p> <p>Included in the CSC transitions dashboard is management information and key performance indicators for transitions. This helps monitor the numbers of young people transitioning from children’s services to adult services. As an example, the average age of referral by Children’s services to adults’ services is 16.96 with the previous month being 17.58; the average time in days between the referral to Transition Panel and heard at Panel started at 103.2 and is now on 62.</p> <p>A recent thematic audit conducted by Children’s Services evidenced that considerations for transition panel referrals for young people aged 17+ has improved and children’s workers and managers are more aware of the process.</p>

Systems and IT Workstream (1)

Outcomes Delivered	Outcomes Planned
<p>Staff AI Assistant (operational/text bot) – has gone live to enable the provision of information and advice through an AI Assistant (text bot) with access to all Adults’ Services policy and practice documents in order to answer staff queries.</p>	<p>Customer AI – FAQs from 32,500 customer transcripts were identified to ensure consistent information is available. Customer information points will be analysed with AI to ensure consistent messaging and any information gaps are filled. Go live of the Customer Text Bot is planned for February 2025. The Customer Voice Bot is also due to go live in February 2025.</p>
<p>Bed Booking – Shaw our main block contract provider is now using Bed Booking from February 24.</p> <p>Provider Portal - The Provider Portal has been built and tested. Domiciliary Care and Extra Care providers have moved across to portal in a phased approach. This enabled the alignment to the Care and Support at Home contract 2024 to enable providers to start to upload to the portal.</p>	<p>Bed Booking system in place to improve the management of block contracts with our residential and nursing homes. Reporting continues to be worked on before other block contracts considered.</p> <p>We are now looking at a business case for other non-residential services to consider what else should move across to the Portal and the Residential Payment Portal is still in development with the software supplier.</p>
<p>Shared care records</p> <p>Plexus Viewer – The Safeguarding Hub and CarePoint 2 were granted access to integrated health and care system. The benefit of having access to important health information saved time for staff and efficiencies for customers.</p> <p>NHS Numbers-- Project delivered the batch-upload of over 100,000 NHS number and the Personal Demographic Service (PDS) look up of the NHS Spine information from within Mosaic are now live as of July 2024. Feedback already received is positive and users are fully utilising the new features.</p>	<p>Plexus Viewer – work being progressed to grant access to Plexus for community teams in Mental Health, Lifelong Services and Adult Operations and also the Combined Placement and Sourcing Team.</p> <p>NHS Numbers - Quote received and project being initiated to share data from the Adults Service electronic record (Mosaic) with Plexus the shared care record.</p>

Systems and IT Workstream (2)



Outcomes Delivered	Outcomes Planned
<p>Information and Advice - Feasibility study on suitable technology and securing software to deliver the on-line assessment tool. The technology available can collect information from the internet and feed into our care record system Mosaic. Information can be added and sent back and forth as required and links into our Mosaic workflows.</p> <p>Care Need Checklist – The online checklist went live in January 2025.</p>	<p>Information & Advice Strategy has been developed which is a public facing document covering key areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the care and support system locally - how the system works and how to access the care and support available locally - the choice of types of care and support and choice of care providers available locally - including prevention and reablement services and wider services that support wellbeing - how to access independent financial advice on matters relating to care and support - how to raise concerns about the safety or wellbeing of an adult with care and support needs and for a family and friend carer. <p>This has been passed for approval and sign-off.</p> <p>The Request for Support and Financial Assessment on-line forms which feed into Mosaic will be available before the end of the Financial year.</p>
<p>Direct Payments – A new Policy has been launched. Direct payments are monetary payments that enable people of all ages to exercise choice and control over the services and solutions that will meet their assessed needs and support them to independently achieve their outcomes through their personal budget.</p>	<p>Development of recommended rates for Personal Assistants is underway for implementation in April 25.</p> <p>A reset and revised approach to improving the direct payments option will be developed later this year, including improved Direct Payment forms, letters and agreements for customers which are more compliant with the Care Act.</p>
<p>Integrated Front Door - Safeguarding referral form and the contract quality assurance form live in July 24a</p>	<p>Project Closure phase, work is now BAU.</p>

Workforce and Organisational Development Workstream



Outcomes Delivered	Outcomes Planned
<p>Leadership and management development programme – content has been agreed to create a working environment based on our Council values and behaviours, to be culturally competent and embody anti-discriminatory practice, promote a diverse and inclusive workforce, be safeguarding aware, ensuring that safeguarding underpins everything that we do. To focus on learning and development and the delivery of high quality and innovative social care practice.</p>	<p>Promote a whole system approach to improvement, learning and reflection and ensuring high standards in people management practices.</p> <p>Training Sessions commenced with Assistant Directors and Heads of Service are ongoing.</p> <p>Service/Team manager training is due to commence in April 2025.</p>

Performance and Insight Workstream



Outcomes Delivered	Outcomes Planned
<p>Performance Reporting Framework - Performance Framework agreed which focuses on Care Pathway, Care Act Compliance and the delivery of operational and strategic performance measures. Move to Power BI delivery schedule and reporting format agreed.</p> <p>Successful release of Safeguarding tab on Power BI dashboard.</p> <p>Power BI dashboard has been implemented across the service.</p> <p>Continue development of ASC data pack for use at internal meetings and for CQC assurance preparations.</p> <p>The Adults' data pack provides one set of coherent data in a user-friendly format and is available to staff across the service. It provides one version of the business and our performance against both corporate and internal indicators, as well as local, regional and national data sets.</p>	<p>Caseloads (Phase 3B) is in progress with approximately 60% complete. Initial testing underway and changes to specification and data model in progress, to be delivered in March 2025</p> <p>Continue to implement Power BI dashboard across the service. This is now a standing item at all monthly performance discussions.</p>

Communications and Change Workstream



Overarching activity

Communications improvements have been an overarching element of the improvement programme

- Weekly DLT messaging to all managers with ASC
- 3 yearly all managers forums in person
- Monthly video messages from the Director of Adults and Health
- Regular staff Q&A sessions
- Revamped newsletter format and Adult Services Zone on the Point
- Improvement programme staff information sessions
- SharePoint site
- Slide decks for managers to use in relation to CQC assurance and the improvement programme
- A new communications area linked to our Adult's Service Zone.

Completed Workstreams

Workstream	Workstream focus	Projects delivered
System Partnership Working	Ensure Adult Social Care is in line with the West Sussex Health and Care Partnership shared delivery plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Intermediate Care (transferred to new programme led by the ICB) • Hospital discharge improvement plan (delivery now in BAU)
Financial Processes	Coordination of work to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the provision of financial reporting information • Standardise practice that impacts budgets and the quality of data input onto Mosaic • Improves the application/use of technology and the Mosaic system • Increases the efficiency of processes related to support planning, purchases, variations and payments to enable better financial management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Run Out project • Payments to Providers • Short-term Services • All other activity has transferred to a new Financial Management Improvement Project (with separate governance to the improvement programme)

Financial Management Improvement Project



- The Financial Management Improvement Project has been jointly established, with the Finance Directorate, to deliver the future 'way we work' for financial management arrangements:
- This project subsumes and replaces the Financial Processes Workstream and has three main objectives:
 - **Empower managers to actively manage their budgets**
 - **Create a shared 'single version of the financial truth'**
 - **Improve the reliability of outturn forecasting**
- The vision (below) has been co-designed with Finance and is underpinned with detail describing the future 'way we work' including:
 - **People:** A collaborative 'one council' approach with clear financial accountability and continuous improvement.
 - **Processes:** Efficient, automated, timely processes and clearly defined roles and responsibilities for budget managers.
 - **Technology:** Reliable and easily accessible management information. Optimised use of existing systems and Oracle Fusion.
 - **Information & Data:** Definitive, single shared version of data / management information to support decision making.
- Joint working between Adults' Services and Finance has mobilised three workstreams to deliver this:
 - Financial Management Workstream
 - Systems and Reporting Workstream
 - Process Improvement Workstream
- Initial work is underway. As work progresses and initial discovery/design is completed, next steps will be planned in detail.



Summary Vision Statement

Managers in Adults' Services are empowered, with support from Strategic Finance, to manage their service and budget to deliver resident outcomes within available funding.

This is enabled with definitive financial and activity management information that is automated, timely, robust and supports reliable outturn forecasting.

Risk implications and mitigations

- Significant risks remain in the demand for adult social care and the significant waiting times for assessment and service provision that are ongoing. The management of these are crucial to ensure that we are fulfilling our statutory duties under the Care Act 2014. Significant efforts have been made to manage and address waiting lists safely and waiting times have been reduced by 28% since May 2024, 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. West Sussex has developed safe systems to monitor and manage risks while people wait for assessments or services including consistent risk assessment, triage, and prioritisation to identify those with the greatest need.
- Data quality and reliability in Mosaic continues to present a risk to the Adults budget and ability to forecast accurately. This risk relates to approximately 10% of the adult social care budget. Although progress continues to be made in addressing processing backlogs, Mosaic does not yet show an accurate record of customer numbers or care costs. As set out in the previous slide, a Financial Management Improvement Project has been set up to mitigate this risk.
- The level of demand and increasing levels of need for Adult Social Care, workforce challenges, the ongoing requirement for the delivery of savings, market sustainability, safeguarding and the ongoing support from the County Council to the NHS remain. These are all part of the rationale for investment into the programme to ensure that required improvements can be delivered in the necessary timescales.
- While strong progress has been made over the past few years, the work involved to deliver savings, prepare for inspection and subsequent action plans, 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.

Improvement Programme and Budget Pressures



- Although there is no specific project aimed to tackle the ongoing budget pressures, work within the improvement programme is supporting us to manage the growing financial challenges the service faces.
- Early Support is showing clear results with fewer people entering the front door who go on to receive a package of care or long-term support, which in turn reduces pressure on the budget, as set out on slide 6.
- Greater availability and take-up of reablement will similarly see fewer people entering the social care system, retaining their independence and quality of life in their own homes for longer, as set out on slide 7.
- The Financial Management Improvement Project and greater availability and clarity of data will help us to understand our biggest pressure points and provide opportunities for learning and improvement. The systems and IT workstream will support these endeavours with advancements in our technology which again will hopefully reduce costs down the line.
- The new Direct Payment policy supports the council's aims to prioritise its key services, ensure it effectively manages the demand on its services, make sure its resources go to where they are needed most and ensure it always gets the best value for money from its resources, in the short and the long term.

Next steps



- Work is underway to review the current workstreams included in the Improvement Programme and various projects that will need to continue past the life of the current programme, which is due to finish in June 2025.
- The Roretti contract – the delivery partner supporting the programme – is due to end on 30 June 2025.
- Discussions are underway about the future of the contract and any possible extension to have continued support for some of the projects within the current improvement programme, which will need to continue beyond 30 June 2025.
- We will ensure that ongoing improvement programme activity aligns to the 3 cross-council programmes in adult social care; Prevention, Managing Demand and Voluntary Sector, Accommodation with care and support, Transitions and Digital.
- The outcome of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance process may also have an impact on the prioritisation of projects.
- The Committee will be provided with an update in relation to the outcome of CQC assurance process and next steps in relation to work which will continue from July 2025.