

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee
Date:	26 November 2024
Title:	Adults' Health and Care, Care Quality Commission (CQC) preparations including publication of the Local Account
Report From:	Director of Adults' Health and Care

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Health and Adult Social Care Committee with an overview of the national arrangements whereby the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will assess and rate the quality and performance of Local Authority Adult Social Care. It will set out the background to the arrangements and provide an update on what Adults' Health and Care are doing to prepare for this assurance assessment for the first time.

Recommendation(s)

2. The Health and Adult Social Care Committee are asked to note the report and to acknowledge the work undertaken by the Adults Health and Care Directorate to prepare for the CQC assurance process.
3. To promote awareness of the guidance from CQC on the role of local democratic leadership in respect to the assessment framework across Adult Social Care bringing insights into local people's experiences and outcomes of adult social care in Hampshire alongside the Director of Adults, Health and Care.
4. To note the positive strengths identified within the recently published Local Account whilst also bringing scrutiny to the areas which have been identified as needing improvement.

Executive Summary

5. This report seeks to:
 - Set out the background to the new process of Local Authority Assessment, by CQC.

- Summarise the essential preparation activities being undertaken by the Directorate to support readiness since participating in the ['Test and Learn'](#) exercise with the CQC in 2022.
- Highlight the areas that the Directorate has identified for improvement and the activity under way in these areas.
- Share what elected members can do to support the CQC process.

Contextual information

6. The introduction of CQC assessment of local authorities, was placed on a statutory footing by the **Health and Care Act 2022**. This high level enabling legislation was introduced through amendments to the Health and Social Care Act 2008. This created a new duty for the CQC to review local authorities' performance in discharging their adult social care functions under the **Care Act 2014**. In discharging this duty, the CQC will consider strategic priorities and objectives set by the Secretary of State for the Directorate of Health and Social Care.
7. The CQC local authority assessment, use a subset of the quality statements from their new single assessment framework. They are structured specifically around the context, aims and roles of a local authority and focus on 4 themes:
 - How local authorities work with people.
 - How local authorities provide support.
 - How local authorities ensure safety within the system.
 - Leadership.
8. The CQC began their assessment process with Adult Social Care Directorates in December 2023, following five pilots, to test and refine their process of assessment. Hampshire was one of the pilot sites and took part in a 'Test and Learn' pilot in 2022. When CQC launched local authority assessments in December 2023, they set out their ambition, to assess each local authority within twenty-four months from this date.
9. Ratings will be awarded following a local authority assessment of: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement, or Inadequate. Currently, the CQC have published eleven [Local Authority Assessment reports](#). Of those assessments published, seven local authorities have been rated **Good**, with four local authorities rated as **Requires Improvement**.
10. Any Inadequate ratings will be reported to the Secretary of State. The Department of Health and Social Care are working on guidance regarding the consequences of an Inadequate rating.

Preparation by Hampshire Adults Health and Care

11. The establishment of the **Practice Improvement Network (PIN)** has assisted to bring together a Directorate wide approach to regulate effective care governance and assurance underpinned by CQC compliance framework. PIN

has strengthened closer working and cohesion across the senior management leadership team and has provided a central point for the Directorate to develop oversight of areas of improvement and strength.

12. The Directorate has stood up a **CQC oversight group**, chaired by the Assistant Director for Younger Adults & Principal Social Worker. This group focuses on key areas of preparation for CQC assessment, including documents and data that will be requested by CQC, in the Local Authority [self-assessment and information return](#).
13. The Directorate has articulated our areas of **strengths** through publishing a [Local Account](#). The Directorate has not undertaken a Local Account for some years. The Directorate considered that it was important to be able to articulate publicly the wide range of work undertaken by Adults Health and Care. The Local Account is an accessible mechanism to engage with stakeholders and residents of Hampshire which outlines both the breadth of work that is delivered by Adults Health and Care and **positive examples** of innovation and practice:
 1. [Connect to Support Hampshire](#)
 2. Safeguarding adult practices.
 3. Embedding learning in practice
 4. Use of technology to support independence.
 5. Short term services and reablement
 6. Direct payments, including Hampshire PA Finder and the Virtual Wallet.
 7. Supporting residents with the right support at the right time.

Current Improvement Areas:

14. Four **priority areas of improvement** for the Directorate have been identified:
 - Waiting lists and pressures at the front door.
 - Working with unpaid carers.
 - Developing our practice in relation to Equalities and Inclusion and working with seldom heard groups.
 - Embedding Co-Production further.
15. **Waiting lists** - The Directorate has been focused on driving up performance and data quality of our waiting lists. Work has been completed to ensure data regarding waiting lists is reliable and consistent across all areas of the directorate, evaluate progress, take further action where necessary and articulate our position to CQC across all services. The Directorate has further strengthened processes to risk assess and safely manage waiting lists. This is to ensure those in the greatest need are prioritised whilst keeping in touch with those who continue to wait. A dashboard has been developed to support this work to drive improved performance.

16. **Working with unpaid carers**- during the Test and Learn, CQC reported that: *“Support for carers, including unpaid carers, and carers assessments could be strengthened to improve carer satisfaction overall. CQC recommended a Refresh of the carers’ strategy and the development of a supporting action plan”*
- a. A refreshed [Hampshire’ Carers Joint strategy 2024 -2029](#) was published in February 2024 and a supporting **action plan** has been developed to implement the strategy. This strategy was **co-produced** with carers and the voluntary sector and implementation is being overseen by HCC officers and people with lived experience.
17. The Directorate have recently re- procured a County wide service for unpaid carers provided by the voluntary sector. The Carers Support Service, delivered by Princess Royal Trust for Carers, is Countywide and offers information and advice, direct 1:1 support, to tailor specific and more in depth help for carers experiencing more complex circumstances and contingency and emergency planning. The service will offer support for the person in their caring role, and assistance in accessing support and services where appropriate, including to Adults’ Health and Care. The directorate are also planning to further support carers through Central Government funding (the Accelerated Reform Fund).
18. **Developing our practice in relation to equalities, inclusion and working with seldom heard groups.** Building on the breadth of good work already underway, the Directorate has undertaken recent work to develop a draft strategic plan and is in the process of engaging on the content and establishing an underpinning action plan. As part of this work, the Directorate has undertaken a systematic review of seldom heard groups in Hampshire, drawing on evidence including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This has enabled identification of particular communities, including those who identify as LGBT+, Veterans, people from an Asian background – including Nepalese, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. Progress is being made to evaluate and identify best practice already occurring, ensuring culturally appropriate social care services for those in these communities with social care needs and working effectively with partner agencies and residents.
19. **Embedding Co-Production further Improving our service user voice and outcomes.** The Directorate has long established and strong links with our current [co – production forums](#).
- a. During the ‘Test and Learn’ 2022 exercise in Hampshire, CQC reported that they did not have enough direct evidence on the category of peoples experience of assessment, care and support. For the purposes of this pilot CQC were able to gain enough evidence indirectly to complete their assessment. To ensure appropriate levels of feedback are received, a short survey has since been developed and deployed to offer service users an opportunity to tell us about their experiences following every intervention with Adults Health and Care services. This will enable the Directorate to hear from a wide range of people

telling us about their experiences to better understand what works well and where improvements are required. Feedback received is reviewed monthly and feeds into further improvement.

How members can support

20. Both CQC and the Local Government Association (LGA) have produced guidance for members on their role within the CQC assessment of adult social care.

CQC have advised members to:

- **Review the themes of the Care Act** our assessment process is designed to test out, including the specific statutory requirements
- **Review our assessment process** - how performance will be measured and rated
- **Be aware of the preparation** being done by the Director of Adult Services (DAS)
- **Contribute to the self-assessment:** this describes current performance, risks and challenges and the plans to address them
- **Share your insights into local people's experiences** and outcomes of adult social care in your area with the Director of Adult Services (DAS)
- **Highlight any local activities, organisations or projects** that are improving people's well-being.
 - a. [The LGA](#) guide, brings together in one place the essential information around the background, legislation and the assessment process. It highlights the areas where members can support preparation and provide oversight.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

21. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

22. This report does not detail specific projects or initiatives that can be assessed using the County Council's climate impact assessment tools but rather provides an overview of the national arrangements whereby the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will assess and rate the quality and performance of Local Authority Adult Social Care.

Conclusions

23. Adults' Health and Care are undertaking a robust approach to prepare for a CQC assurance assessment.
24. The Directorate has identified four initial improvement areas, plans and governance arrangements are in place to drive up performance within these areas building on the learning derived from the 'Test and Learn' 2022 exercise.
25. The Directorate will continue to seek increasing external sources of scrutiny, validation and feedback from both people with lived experience from our local communities and key partner agencies.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
CQC Local Authority Assurance – Hampshire ‘Test and Learn’ exercise and ongoing preparations	24 January 2023
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
Care Act 2014 Part 1 Health and Care Act 2022	2014 2022

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Equality Duty

1.1 The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

1.2 Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

This report does not detail specific projects or initiatives but rather provides an overview of the national arrangements whereby the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will assess and rate the quality and performance of Local Authority Adult Social Care. Therefore, an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.