



## **THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

**(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)**

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel
<b>Subject:</b>	Adult Social Care – Self-assessment preparing for inspection
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
<b>Report by:</b>	Andy Biddle, Director of Adult Social Services

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### **1. Requested by**

Cabinet

### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of the report is for information, with the aim of being open and transparent in the approach taken by adult social care in developing its self-assessment<sup>1</sup>, and transparent and accountable for the areas of development and subsequently the delivery of improvements.

This report also provides an opportunity to outline the new regulatory process for Adult Social Care, (ASC) share the self-assessment as part of this process, set out what has informed the assessment and highlight key elements.

The self-assessment has been prepared to support a single understanding of how well the Council is meeting its statutory duties and responsibilities under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014<sup>2</sup>, aligned to the regulatory assessment framework for local authority assurance.

### **3. Information Requested**

#### **Background**

The Health and Care Act 2022<sup>3</sup> gave the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the independent regulator of health and social care in England, a new responsibility to

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/part/1>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/31/contents/enacted>

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independently assess care in a local area; this responsibility applies to assessments of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) and Local Authorities, (LA).

On 8 December 2023, government approval was given to publish the Local Authority assessment guidance, this included the framework CQC will use to assess how well Local Authorities are performing against their duties under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014 and signalled the start of formal assessment. Local Authorities' adult social care responsibilities have not been subject to formal assessment for over 14 years.

All 153 Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities (CASSRs) will be inspected over the 24 months starting December 2023, to date 10 councils have been contacted by CQC signalling the start of their assessment. Following contact, councils will have a week to provide details of key local contacts, then a further three weeks to provide information under 40 headings set out in the Information Return (IR) and will also have the opportunity to submit their self-assessment. There is no prescribed format for the self-assessment, and it is not a mandated requirement, however if one is not submitted CQC may need to request more information and spend more time undertaking the assessment to understand the council's performance in adult social care.

The structure of the Portsmouth ASC self-assessment is set out to respond to the nine quality statements detailed under the four themes of the regulatory framework:

- Working with People
- Providing Support
- How the local authority ensures safety in the system.
- Leadership

Each of these will be assessed against four categories of evidence:

- People's Experience
- Feedback from staff and leaders
- Processes; and
- Feedback from Partners

Ahead of formal assessment CQC will write to the Council and request the Information Return and self-assessment, which will signal the commencement of assessment. The assessment will take place within a nine week to six months window of the request for information, with CQC contacting the council to confirm the dates for site visit allowing 6 to 8 weeks' notice. CQC will review the information, six customer journeys and spend two days meeting with key council roles (including the DASS and Chief Executive), frontline workers, partners, carers and customers. CQC will review the evidence against the evidence categories for each quality statement, score each of these evidence categories and combine the evidence category scores to give a score to the



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related quality statement. The resulting nine quality statements scores will then be combined to arrive at an overall score and a rating.

Overall ratings will be Inadequate, Requires Improvement, Good or Outstanding. Following a factual accuracy check by the council, CQC will publish a report and rating on their public facing website (similar to the familiar Ofsted process that regulates Children's Services).

The purpose of the self-assessment is to demonstrate that Portsmouth ASC knows the areas of practice where the service is strong and understands the areas of practice where the service needs to develop.

### **Approach to the self-assessment**

The drafting of the self-assessment during 2023, has involved different groups of people and different elements.

#### Staff

Over the last year we have engaged with staff across the Directorate by keeping all informed of the evolving CQC framework through monthly ASC newsletters and ASC All Staff Live Webinars. In addition, a monthly (workshop style) All Managers Meeting has taken place to co-produce our approach to self-assessment and collectively take responsibility for gathering evidence and developing case studies in recognition that this will be an inspection of what 'we' do.

The information, case studies, observations, processes, and evidence provided by staff have been collated and used to support a review of our performance against the framework.

#### Formal Stakeholders

How we work with care providers, the voluntary sector and statutory partners is important, as is their view of ASC in Portsmouth. In October 2023 ASC hosted an event<sup>4</sup> with formal stakeholders and partners to hear how well they understood the service, our strategies, and priorities; and how well aligned the respective organisations are to one another. The learning from this has been included in the self-assessment, for example considering how we can support partners 'having a place at the strategic table' and celebrating that we are 'talking the same language'.

#### People with lived experience

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<sup>4</sup> Appendix 2 for copy of ASC Assurance Stakeholder Feedback Report 2023



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Feedback from people with lived experience was a critical part of knowing ourselves and is a core category of evidence for CQC. With support from the Community Engagement Team feedback was gathered from over 200 people living in Portsmouth

in November 2023<sup>5</sup> and through a postal survey led by ASC. We have included that people know where to go for information advice and who they need to contact about their care, and as an area for improvement we are developing our approach to strength-based practice which includes a review of how we record and present detail relating to an individual's support and their personal budget.

The feedback summary includes a response from one person who shared their experience of finding it hard to know who to talk to when accessing social care, with commissioned care providers having little accountability for problems, and they felt that communications between care providers, customers and social services could be improved. Although this is feedback from one individual, with ASC supporting over 2000 people, this feedback is important. We plan to undertake a 'mystery shopper' exercise to better understand the experience of people contacting ASC and share the feedback on communication with staff and care providers. Care providers are held to account through contract management and safeguarding and supported to improve quality when this is needed; where issues, or complaints are raised these are investigated under the appropriate framework.

### Peer review

In addition to work with stakeholders, the Local Government Association (Partners in Care and Health) facilitated a review of the leadership of ASC in October 2023. This exercise reviewed senior management capacity in key areas aligned to our Care Act duties including commissioning and hospital discharge. Consequently, the Directorate has formed an action plan and secured temporary resource to lead areas reflected in the self-assessment.

### Performance

The number of people waiting for assessments, services or reviews has been an area of focus for the Directorate, and is relevant to the assessment framework, reviewed monthly as part of our governance arrangements. Over the last year due to dedicated efforts of teams these have been reduced and are managed taking account of risk and priority.

### Successes

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<sup>5</sup> Appendix 3 for Adult Social Care Self-Assessment Feedback Report



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There is much to be celebrated in ASC including the positive quality of life indicator reported through the Adults Social Care Survey, the work being taken forward by the transition lead to support a seamless move from Children's Services to Adults, Carers Service and Room One.

We have developed trusted relationships with care providers, which recently included working together to support to inform the Department of Health and Social Care on the shape of future data collections from providers.

Challenges

Known challenges that are highlighted in the self-assessment and are being further highlighted in pulling together the Information Return are gaps in written policy and process. Over a number of years, as the council and the Directorate has focussed available funds to protect front line services and meet growing demand, resource crucial to business infrastructure such as policy and practice development posts have not been funded. Consequently, there are gaps in written policy and process, some of which are detailed under the information return.

During 2023 funding was agreed by the Council to secure analyst resource, this has given ASC capacity and the capability to extract and analyse data to support the Directorate to understand its business, manage and drive performance and see the impact of change. We are also leading a project to create a 'data warehouse', supported by corporate IT, with the aim of simplifying data reporting, however we are not as advanced as we would want to be at a time of new regulation.

Preparing for inspection

The LGA's Partners in Care and Health have an offer to support staff to prepare for assurance. Portsmouth have requested this support and have been invited to scope the work in late March 2024 with 2 days on site work in April 2024.

**Next steps**

Subject to approval from 5 March Cabinet meeting and feedback from Health Oversight and Scrutiny Panel the Directorate will develop its improvement plan and deliver based on priority and available resource.

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Signed by (Director)



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**Appendices:**

1. ASC Self-Assessment 2024
2. ASC Assurance Stakeholder Feedback Report 2023
3. Adult Social Care Self-Assessment Feedback Report

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location