

Somerset County Council  
Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee  
– 3 November 2021

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## Adult Social Care: Reform and Assurance Proposals

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Cabinet Member: Cllr David Huxtable, Cabinet Member for Adults

Division and Local Member: All

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. This covering paper and supporting presentation outlines recent developments in relation to national plans relating to Adult Social Care reform and assurance. At present, these are directions of travel and the full detail is not yet available.

### 2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. For Scrutiny members to note and discuss the latest developments and proposals relating to adult social care from 2023, and how this will impact activity and resources both within the service and wider health and care system, and for those reliant on care and support.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. **Social Care Transformation:** On 7 September 2021, the Government set out its new plan for health and social care. It provided an overview of how the plan would tackle the elective backlog in the NHS and put the NHS on a sustainable footing. It also set out details of the plan for adult social care in England, including a cap on social care costs and how financial assistance will work for those without substantial assets.

The plan covers wider support that the government will provide for the social care system and explains how the government will improve the integration of health and social care. It also outlines the government's plan to introduce a new Health and Social Care Levy.

This paper was laid in Parliament on 7 September 2021 and is available via: [Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/build-back-better-our-plan-for-health-and-social-care)

- 3.2. **ASC Assurance:** In February 2021, the Government set out legislative proposals for a Health and Care Bill, due to receive Royal Assent in Quarter 1, 2022: [Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all \(HTML version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/integration-and-innovation-working-together-to-improve-health-and-social-care-for-all)

This included proposals for a new assurance framework for adult social care, and the introduction of a new duty for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to assess Local Authorities delivery of their statutory adult social care duties under The Care Act 2014:

*'As social care affects a greater number of people at some point during their lives, accountability for services becomes increasingly important for both national*

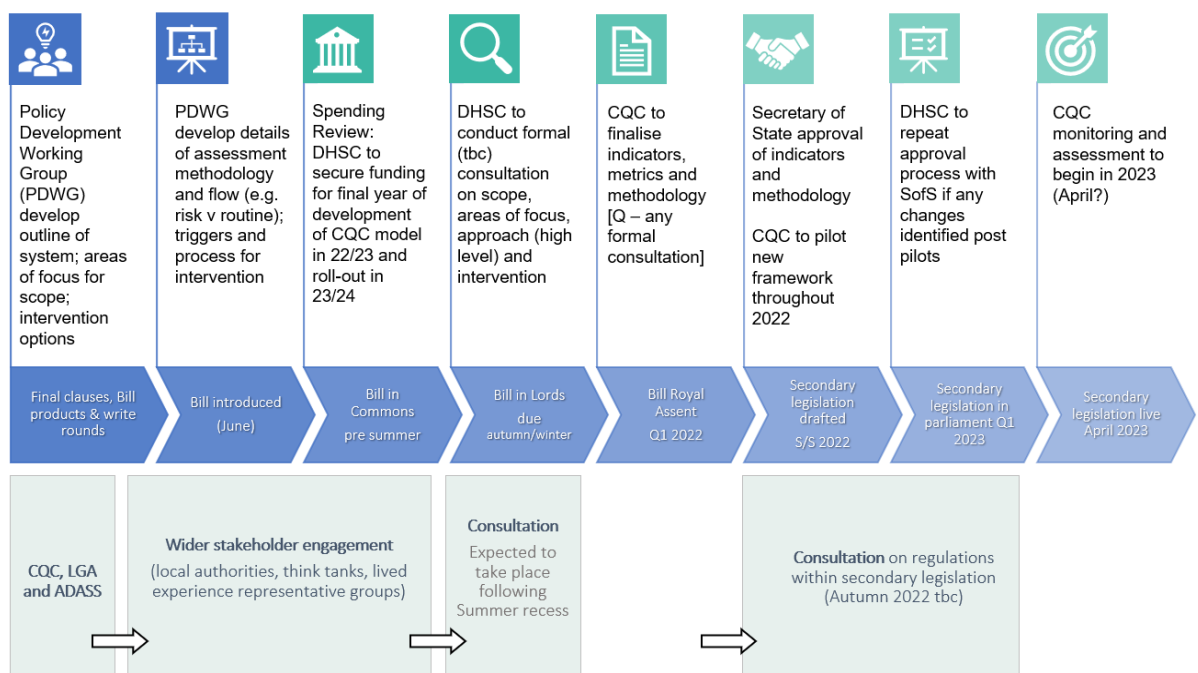
and local government.

*It is therefore only reasonable for government to want to ensure the ASC system is delivering the right kind of care, and the best outcomes, with the resources available. We also want to be able to readily identify best practice across the system, building on existing sector-led support and improvement programmes. To achieve this, we want to work with local authorities and the sector to enhance existing assurance frameworks that will support our drive to improve the outcomes and experience of people and their families in accessing high quality care and support, regardless of where they live.*

*To support these goals, we propose to introduce through the Health and Care Bill, a new duty for the Care Quality Commission to assess local authorities' delivery of their adult social care duties'.*

- 3.1** It is likely that the new CQC monitoring and assessment framework will commence from April 2023. Work is underway nationally to clarify the indicators, metrics and methodology for any assurance activity.

Overview of Assurance Development April 2021 – April 2023



As a Local Authority, Somerset has recently started work to self-evaluate our activity and performance, in anticipation of this new requirement and to support regional and national peer sector led improvement and piloting activity.

## 4. Consultations undertaken

- 4.1.** Consultation is currently underway across the CQC, Department of Health and Social Care, Local Government Association and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services regarding datasets, peer review, regulations and assessment methodology.

## **5. Implications**

- 5.1.** Both Government announcements will impact the Local Authority in terms of demands, expectations, and human / financial resources required to support the impacts of the activity. This level of detail has not yet been explored and it is therefore not possible to fully understand this impact or indeed any accompanying support that reflects it.
- 5.2.** We anticipate a higher level of care act assessments and brokerage/care sourcing functions on the back of proposed reforms. There are tight implementation timescales for all systems and processes to be in place for new reform and assurance activity.

**Note** For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author