

## **Adult Social Care: Performance and assurance**

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Cabinet Member: Cllr Heather Shearer, Cabinet Member for Adults

Division and Local Member: All

### **1. Summary**

**1.1** This report provides an update to Scrutiny Committee members on key developments in relation to demand and performance activity across adult social care both nationally and locally. It is supported by an accompanying presentation, prepared by the Adult Social Care Performance Lead, detailing key performance indicators for the service to help inform the Committee's understanding of current activity and performance locally.

### **2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations**

**2.1** For Scrutiny Committee to note the key updates provided in relation to Adult Social Care demand and performance, and to consider whether it wishes to make any recommendations arising from the report and wider discussion.

### **3. Background**

**3.1** The service last provided an update on Adult Social Care performance to Scrutiny Committee on 26 January 2022<sup>1</sup> prior to the local elections in Somerset of May 2022. The report had highlighted the growing supply and demand pressures being faced by the sector right across the country.

**3.2** On 13 May 2022, ADASS (the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) published findings from its latest survey<sup>2</sup> that indicated that more than half a million people were waiting for an adult social care assessment, for care or a direct payment to begin, or for a review of their care nationally. It highlighted new evidence that showed that - despite staff working relentlessly over the last two years of the pandemic - 'levels of unmet, under met or wrongly met needs' are increasing and the situation is getting worse, concluding that '*the growing numbers of people needing care and the increasing complexity of their needs are far outstripping the capacity to meet them*'.

**3.3** Somerset's Adult Social Care strategic approach remains focused on promoting independence and supporting person-centred practice and approaches, but the rising cost of social care driven by increasing demand for services, and the recognised workforce challenges (both within social care services delivered by local authorities *and* across the wider independent care provider market and health sector) has impacted on our ability to consistently deliver within our desired targets and timeframes in some areas of our activity.

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<sup>1</sup> [Somerset County Council](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Adass](#)

**3.4** In February 2021 the Government announced the intention to develop a new assurance framework for adult social care; proposals included a new duty for the Care Quality Commission to assess local authorities' delivery of their statutory adult social care duties from April 2023 onwards. The proposal was formalised in the [Health and Care Bill](#), receiving Royal Assent in April 2022. Whilst the inspection framework and methodology has not yet been published and is still subject to co-production and engagement activity, the emerging scope is expected to cover the following key themes:

1. **Working with people:** *assessing needs, supporting people to live healthier lives, prevention, wellbeing, information and advice*
2. **Providing support:** *markets (including commissioning), workforce equality, integration and partnership working*
3. **Ensuring safety:** *safeguarding, safe systems and continuity of care*
4. **Leadership and workforce:** *capable and compassionate leaders, learning, improvement, innovation*

**3.5** Evidence for CQC assessments will emerge from the experience of individuals being supported by our care and support services, as well as feedback from key partners, staff and leaders. Any assurance activity will also include observation of practice, review of processes and documentation, and local performance data, outcomes and impact.

**3.6** Somerset continues to contribute to consultation activity with the Care Quality Commission and via South West ADASS in relation to the developing inspection plans and sector-led improvement activity. Piloting work is underway nationally in relation to self-assessment formats and approaches and supporting datasets. The framework is expected to be published later in the autumn. Assurance features as a key strand of Somerset's adult social care Transformation activity. As a service, our ambition is to ensure that inspection readiness is not simply something we do as an 'event' – rather that it's a state of operation linked to optimal practice, a strong service culture and effective governance. The service has invested additional resource into supporting our policy, performance and assurance requirements, and is learning from others subject to inspection (including our colleagues in children's services) to ensure robust logistical arrangements are in place to support assurance activity from next April.

**3.7** We anticipate future performance and assurance reporting to the Scrutiny Committee to mirror the published assurance framework focus and structure.

#### **4. Supporting Appendices**

4.1 ASC Scrutiny Performance Slides (July 2022)