

## **Adult Social Care: Performance Report**

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Cabinet Member: Cllr Sarah Wakefield, Cabinet Member for Adults

Division and Local Member: All

### **1. Summary**

**1.1** This report provides an update to Scrutiny Committee members on key performance across adult social care in Somerset. It is supported by an accompanying presentation (Appendix A) which includes some visuals and narrative to support Committee members to assess and scrutinise local performance in the context of the ongoing pressures facing the national health and care system, and the upcoming new Care Quality Commission assessment regime.

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

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

### **3. Background**

**3.1** The service most recently provided a detailed update on Adult Social Care performance to Scrutiny Committee in October 2023.

**3.2** This report's supporting performance presentation (Appendix A) includes the following performance highlights:

- **Calls resolved at first point of contact:** Through our ongoing commitment to early help and prevention, and the development of a robust community offer for Somerset residents, we would expect to see demand for statutory care reduce, and see more contacts resolved at the front door through signposting to community solutions. Our award-winning Customer Contact Centre continues to help people find solutions to their problems and is demonstrating its impact in terms of diversions from formal care and statutory services. The proportion of calls resolved by Somerset Council's Customer Contact Centre (the Council's front door) at 'first point of contact' has remained in line with our target. The cumulative resolution rate for 2023/24 (to end of February 2024) is 61%.
- **Continued high levels of overdue assessments and reviews:** In common with many Local Authorities across the country, the number of overdue assessments and reviews continue to remain high and above our desired

target. Performance has been impacted by rising demand, complexity of need, and ongoing internal workforce capacity pressures.

A weekly Operational Assurance Group is providing strategic oversight of the completion of assessments and reviews in our operational adult social care teams and is supporting the reduction of backlogs through close monitoring of trajectories and regular reporting to governance and assurance boards, including the multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Board which receives quarterly updates. Our approach to assessing needs and reducing risk will be a key focus of any future Care Quality Commission assessment and also informed the Local Government Association Assurance Peer Challenge in early March 2024.

- **Care market capacity, stability and quality:** Somerset has continued to see the impact of additional investment and focused commissioning activity, as well as some pick up in care provider recruitment, with levels of 'unmet' homecare need falling to their lowest ever levels since March 2021. We are in a position where provision of domiciliary care outstrips demand, meaning we are not currently accepting any new home care providers onto our procurement framework. This is a significantly improved position to where we were a year ago. Since April 2023 the highest month end position in terms of the number of unsourced packages of homecare has been 4. In contrast between April and September 2022 'Unmet Needs' ranged from 85 to 111 care packages waiting to be sourced.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has the overarching role to monitor, inspect and regulate health and social care services to make sure those who use these services receive high-quality, safe, effective, and compassionate care. We work closely with the CQC as part of our routine system surveillance activity. Through our monitoring and assurance function, we support and work alongside our local care providers in obtaining the best possible standards of care, as well as holding them accountable for doing so, working closely with any provider that falls below a 'Good' overall rating as part of a quality improvement process. 82.7% of Somerset's active social care settings (*residential and community provision combined*) inspected by the CQC were rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' as of February 2024, down from 84.7% in March 2023 but making a steady improvement in recent months and remaining above national and regional averages. Our multi-agency Commissioning and Quality Board met most recently in February 2024 and continues to support close monitoring of Somerset's care market.

Homecare package contract 'handbacks' have steadily reduced since hitting a peak (38) in May 2022. Although occasional care package handbacks are not uncommon and can occur for a variety of reasons, most commonly staffing capacity issues within the provider, these rose sharply during the pandemic. The average number of handbacks per month during 2023 was 13. This compares to 19.8 in 2022, and 19.4 in 2021.

- **ASC Hospital Discharge Pathways:** In February 2024 94.6% of people aged 65 and over that were discharged from a Somerset Hospital were able to return home. This compares positively with February 2023 when the figure was 91.7%.
- **Learning from ASC Stakeholder Feedback:** Since launch in January 2022, our ASC Feedback form responses have offered valuable insights on the experience of service users and carers, partner colleagues and other key stakeholders, and opportunities for learning and improvement.

The single biggest element and influencer of both positive and negative feedback is communication – how clear, responsive, professional and compassionate we are in our respective job roles makes a fundamental difference to the experience of those we engage with and support.

Over the last 12 months, 78.5% of the 288 responses received via the ASC Stakeholder Feedback route rate the overall service received from our adult social care teams as either good or excellent.

- **Practice Quality:** September 2023 saw the formal launch of the refreshed Somerset Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework (PQF) and the aligned monthly auditing schedule. The PQF sets out clear practice standards and expectations for our workforce and forms an important part of our governance and assurance approach. It clarifies what good looks like and has been informed by people who draw on services. Between September 2023 and February 2024, a total of 786 Practice Quality audits have been undertaken by staff at various levels across our service (including self audits and peer audits). Themes and feedback emerging from the audits are shared and explored at the subsequent monthly Practice Quality Board meetings and have also been promoted in our monthly Staff Highlight Reports. Identified actions are logged and monitored for progress by the Practice Quality Board. Our Practice Development Advanced Practitioners are also taking a key role in monitoring and disseminating information including via team meetings and CPD sessions, and progressing any recommendations, actions or learning arising from the audits.

#### **4. Client Level Data insights**

- 4.1** The Department of Health and Social Care set out its approach to using client level data in '[Care data matters: a roadmap for better adult social care data](#)' as part of its commitment to transparently sharing new information with the public and with national and local government. Somerset Council is now providing quarterly data returns to support this activity; we will be building insights from published information in our future reports to Scrutiny Committee.

#### **5. Supporting Appendices**

- 5.1** Appendix A - ASC Scrutiny Performance Slides (Apr 2024)