

Report of the Strategic Director, Adult Social Care & Health to the meeting of Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee to be held on Thursday 28 September 2023

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Subject: Annual Report of the Principal Social Worker and Adult Social Care's Preparation for the new CQC Assurance Process

Summary statement:

Rob Mitchell is the Principal Social Worker (PSW) in Adult Social Care for Bradford District. The PSW ensures that there is professional practice oversight in place to lead, oversee, support and develop excellent social work practice and in turn lead the development of excellent social workers and social care practitioners. The PSW leads on quality assuring social work practice. For 2022/23, Rob has produced his first Annual PSW Report in Bradford and this is attached.

The Care Quality Commission have been given new powers to carry out an assurance process on local authorities with adult social services responsibilities on how they carry out their duties and responsibilities under the Care Act 2014. This report also gives an update on how Bradford Council is preparing for this process and what is known about this new methodology.

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:
Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Care Act 2014 guidance states that it is the responsibility of the local authority to support a Principal Social Worker role to give the credibility, authority and capacity to provide effective leadership and challenge, both at managerial and practitioner level. In Bradford Adult Social Care our Principal Social Worker is a senior manager with oversight responsibility of adult safeguarding, practice learning and development and the resource to advise on complex cases including on mental capacity decision-making.
- 1.2 The Care Act guidance, section 1.28 Local authorities should therefore ensure that the role is located where it can have the most impact and profile. The PSW sits on the Departmental Management Team of the Adult Social Care department for Bradford Council.
- 1.3 Amongst other tasks the PSW role should also:
 - Support effective social work supervision and decision making.
 - Oversee quality assurance and improvement of social work practice.
 - Advise the DASS and/or wider council in complex or controversial cases and on developing case or other law relating to social work practice.
 - Develop practice across adult social care to include support staff who complete assessments and support social work.
 - Function at the strategic level of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF).
- 1.4 This inaugural Annual PSW Report has sections on adult safeguarding practice, the Mental Capacity Act Service, our practice quality assurance process named 'Raising Expectations', professional workforce development and a number of schemes intended to promote people's human rights and strengths. The report is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.5 The Health and Care Act 2022 gives the Care Quality Commission a new duty to assess how local authorities are meeting their duties under part 1 of the Care Act 2014. It also gives CQC a role in reviewing Integrated Care Systems, which is not covered by this report. Both regimes will allow CQC to look more effectively at how care provided in a local system is improving outcomes and reducing inequalities for local people.
- 1.6 From April, CQC have started to review published evidence and data, across all local authorities, focusing on two quality statements: 'Care provision, integration and continuity' and 'Assessing Needs', looking mainly at data already being published such as Market Position Statements and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for example. CQC will publish those findings in their annual State of Care report.
- 1.7 CQC are recruiting inspection teams now to begin this work in early 2024. Five pilot sites have volunteered to pilot the assurance methodology in August 2023:
 - Birmingham City Council,
 - Nottingham City Council

- Lincolnshire County Council
- Suffolk County Council
- North Lincolnshire Council

1.8 The reports and five one-word ratings of these volunteer local authorities will be published at the same time as 'indicative' (likely end of September 2023). Formal assessments of the remaining 148 local authorities, following the pilots and a review of the assurance methodology, will begin in early 2024 and take two years to complete. It is not known where Bradford will be on this timeline.

A single assessment framework

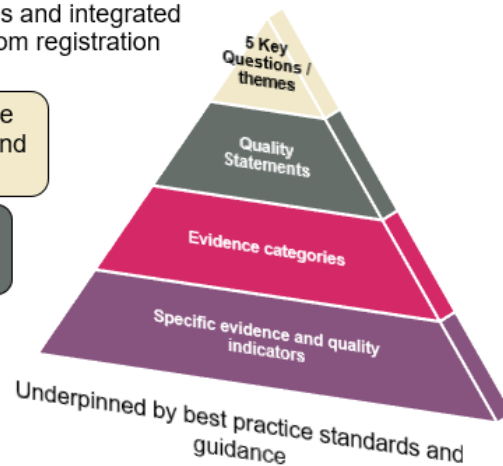
Our framework will assess providers, local authorities and integrated care systems with a consistent set of key themes, from registration through to ongoing assessment

Aligned with "I" statements, based on what people expect and need, to bring these questions to life and as a basis for gathering structured feedback

Expressed as "We" statements; the standards against which we hold providers, Local Authorities and Integrated Care Systems to account

People's experience, feedback from staff and leaders, feedback from partners, observation, processes, outcomes

Data and information specific to the scope of assessment, delivery model or population group



1.9 The CQC assurance methodology will include several elements:

- Data and insight held by the CQC on a number of metrics;
- Documentation provided by the Authority or in the public domain;
- End to end Case Tracking of a small number of individuals;
- Fieldwork on site with the local authority where a number of interviews and group discussions will take place;
- Insight from carer groups and advocacy organisations;

1.10 A draft assurance framework was soft-launched by the CQC in September 2022 and a number of accompanying documents, including a self-assessment document by the LGA, have been released since then.

1.11 The draft assurance framework describes four key themes that will be inspected. All of these are based on the Care Act statutory guidance 2015 which is a detailed document describing local authority powers and duties under that legislation.

The four themes are:

1. **How local authorities work with people** – assessing needs, care planning and review, direct payments, charging, supporting people to live healthier lives, prevention, wellbeing, information and advice.
2. **How local authorities provide support** – market shaping, commissioning, workforce capacity and capability, integration and partnership working.
3. **How local authorities ensure safety** – safeguarding enquiries, reviews, Safeguarding Adults Board, safe systems, pathways and continuity of care.
4. **Leadership** – culture, strategic planning, learning, improvement, innovation, governance, management and sustainability.

Work to date in Bradford Council

- 2.1 Adult Social Care undertook an initial self-assessment against the CQC quality themes in December 2022, using the Local Government Association's self-assessment tool, to spot any early gaps or areas for improvement. This informed an action plan to prepare for assurance. The self-assessment is at Appendix B.
- 2.2 Senior managers in adult social care are leading the themes of the framework:
 - Working with People – Rob Mitchell / Dean Roberts
 - Providing Support – Jane Wood
 - Safety and Safeguarding – Fazeela Hafejee
 - Leadership – Iain MacBeath
- 2.3 A number of initial meetings have been held with senior managers from adult social care in Bradford to test the self-assessment. A draft self-assessment narrative has been created for Bradford which will be iterated regularly until inspectors arrived.
- 2.4 Every council in Yorkshire and Humber undertook a regional sector-led improvement exercise in May 2022 involving a former Director of Adult Care Services (Andrew Cozens, former DASS from Leicester) interviewing key individuals and examining their self-assessment narrative. Feedback to councils was provided at a regional meeting on 16 June.
- 2.5 A meeting of West Yorkshire councils took place on 22 June where colleagues examined each-other's self-assessment narratives and offered comments and ideas for improvement in the spirit of collaboration. This will be repeated in September with the next iteration of self-assessments.
- 2.6 Regionally, a number of 'peer reviews' have been undertaken looking at a council's performance against the assurance methodology. For each council, a team of six colleagues from other local authorities in the region are invited in to undertake a full peer review. Iain MacBeath led the peer review in Doncaster in July. A peer review team will land in Bradford from 19-22 September.

- 2.7 In preparation for this peer review, an external consultant was employed to interview all relevant senior managers and a number of focus groups in week beginning 24 July and a report on themes identified is due in mid-August.
- 2.8 A document library has been collated as evidence for CQC containing the key plans and strategies that give the strategic direction of travel for adult social care in Bradford District.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 In parallel to the new assurance process for adult social care, the CQC are developing an inspection regime for Integrated Care Systems (West Yorkshire level) that Bradford Council would participate in as system partners.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 No additional resources have been provided by the Government to prepare for this assurance process. Existing staff within support teams and managers seeking development opportunities are being employed to prepare the council.

5. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 5.1 The review will fully comply with the Council's obligations under the Health and Social Care Act 2022, the Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None.

7. OPTIONS

- 7.1 This report is for note and comments.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Committee comments on the PSW report and CQC assurance preparations.

9. APPENDICES

Appendix A Annual Principal Social Worker's Report for Adult Social Care 2022/23

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.