

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR INTEGRATED ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH

1. Decisions

1.1 No recent Cabinet decisions to report back on.

2. Meetings

Date	Meeting with	Outcomes
08-10-24	Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board – Partnership Development Day	Review of strategic priorities 2021-2024 including progress made, ongoing risks and the role of partners. Also a look forward to strategic priorities 2025-2027 to be agreed at December Borad Meeting. The Annual Report will also be on the agenda for sign off in December.
30-10-24	IASC Assurance Board	Update on CQC preparations and associated activity, and progress of the Directorates priorities. Ensuring maintained sight and awareness of progress, successes and challenges.
28-11-24	Carers Partnership Steering Group	Verbal update to be provided

3. Service Issues and Forthcoming Activities

3.1 Our improvement journey

3.1.1 The three Directorate priorities are set out below. The directorate has made progress across all three:

- **Improvement:** Improve practice quality and productivity
- **Coproduction:** Improve services in response to feedback from their users
- **Sustainability:** Maintain financial and market sustainability

3.1.2 The waiting list for those waiting to receive assessment under the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards is currently averaging around 3400 and this is increasing year on year.

- 3.1.3 Previous and ongoing investment is ensuring the Service has capacity to focus on individuals at most risk, and start to address the increase in referrals and backlog. The productivity of the DoLS Service has been independently assessed as very good, it is the sheer volume of DoLS applications being received currently at 160 per week that means waiting lists remain high.
- 3.1.4 Devon now has the highest number in absolute terms of acute hospital applications of any local authority in the country and the 4th highest by proportion. DoLS waiting lists are a national concern.
- 3.1.5 Locally, work is taking place to bring together the co-ordination and assurance / oversight functions of the Council's statutory duties in relation to individuals experiencing a deprivation of liberty. This will include those deprived of their liberty in a community setting (e.g. in people's homes, supported living) and in twenty-four-hour care and health settings. Providing a central DoLS co-ordination service will ensure clear oversight and improve people's experience and outcomes, and further improve productivity.
- 3.1.6 We have centralised Safeguarding arrangements into a single hub to ensure more consistent triage and practice. Although increasing over 5 years, the concern rate is below, and enquiry rate significantly below benchmark indicating potential under reporting of concerns in health and care settings.
- 3.1.7 Safeguarding outcomes are positive with more people than is typical elsewhere saying their desired outcomes have been achieved, however, currently, there are 1093 open safeguarding concerns. Of the open concerns 49.3% (539) of them are open from 0-30 days, new referrals, 23% (247) are open 31 to 60 days and 27% (307) open over 60 days.
- 3.1.8 Waiting lists for Care Act needs assessments and financial assessments are too long, and reviews are not happening frequently enough. At the end of September 2024 there were 2500 people waiting for a Care Act Assessment and 4200 people overdue a Care Act review.
- 3.1.9 A Learning and Managing Effective Workflow programme has been established to improve care management productivity and reduce waiting times. Progress is being made with early signs of improvement.
- 3.1.10 Financial assessments are undertaken by the Client Financial Services team in the Finance and Public Value Directorate. As at the 21 October 2024, a total of 2,730 financial assessments were outstanding, consisting of 1,101 for residential clients and 1,629 for non-residential clients.

- 3.1.11 It is reasonable to expect that approximately 1,000 financial assessments will be outstanding at any given time, due to the regular inflow of cases and processing times. Taking this into consideration brings the number of financial assessments that could be considered as overdue to 1,730.
- 3.1.12 The current average time from the date of referral to the completion of a financial assessment is 123 days. The median is currently 84 days. Completion times and outstanding workload volumes have improved significantly following a restructure of Client Financial Services, upskilling of the workforce and the introduction of performance management targets.
- 3.1.13 We have maintained the progress made since January 2023 with approximately 90% reduction in the number of care hours that are waiting to be arranged. This means more people are receiving their preferred care, and less people receiving less optimal care such as a short-term care home placement, or additional and unnecessary time in hospital.
- 3.1.14 We have significantly improved capacity in the personal care market, including through international recruitment, but the change in legislation challenge is a cause for concern and risks undoing the progress made.
- 3.1.15 We are focussed on developing specialist solutions such as for the increasing number of people we support with dementia. We are working with the local care providers to ensure more people with more complex needs can remain in Devon.
- 3.1.16 Practice Quality Reviews (PQR) are a process in which staff take an objective and reflective look at each other's practice to support learning and improvement. PQRs are now re-established and embedded, but numbers are still below target.
- 3.1.17 Survey satisfaction ratings with adult social care in Devon remain in the top quartile of local authorities in England, and the CQC continues to rate the quality of the independent provider care market in Devon better than regional and national comparators.

3.2 CQC Inspection update

- 3.2.1 The CQC continues its inspection of local authority delivery of Care Act duties. At the time of writing 71/153 local authorities have either gone through the inspection process or at a point within the process.
- 3.2.2 If the current timelines are maintained, DCC can expect to be notified in the next 7 months and visited at the latest by Autumn 2025 as the CQC aims to complete the baselining period by Dec 2025.

3.2.3 'Leadership' is one of four themes of the CQC inspection framework, and that extends to leadership beyond Adult Social Care and into the broader Council and Council Membership. During inspections CQC inspectors have been interviewing Members beyond the sitting administration. Through the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee Members have had the opportunity engage and be prepared. This continues and I have arranged the first in a series of officer led preparedness session for nominated Members from each political group.

4. Performance and Partnerships

4.1 To support this report Members are directed to the In-year Directorate Briefing provided to the [Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee on the 21 November 2024](#) that provides a more detailed assessment of performance and finance.

4.2 Section 75 agreement between DCC and DPT for the provision mental health services

4.2.1 The Section 75 agreement underpins the partnership arrangement the Council has with Devon Partnership Trust. It helps create smoother, more coordinated care for people by working together with shared staffing arrangements to make services more efficient and effective. The Council's arrangements with DPT have been extended for another year with improvements made to be more effective and to improve access and outcomes for people receiving services governed by the agreement.

4.3 Better Care Fund (BCF)

4.3.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a nationally mandated programme that supports local systems to deliver the integration of health and social care in a way that promotes person-centred care, sustainability and better outcomes for people and carers. It is a pooled budget between Devon County Council and Devon Integrated Care Board.

4.3.2 There is currently a forecast overspend of just under £4.3 million associated with the BCF. This is mainly the result of pressures within the Community Equipment Service. Work is underway to mitigate and reduce this risk, but the pooled budget arrangements mean that the Authority would be responsible for funding 50% of any end of year deficit. This £2.1 million forecast pressure, an improvement of £191,000 from month 4, is reflected within non-service items detailed within section 3.30 of the [Month 6 Budget Monitoring Cabinet Report](#).

4.4 Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership

- 4.4.1 The Partnership is a group of local organisations including local councils, health services, and police, that work together to protect vulnerable adults from harm. They focus on keeping people safe from abuse or neglect, especially those who might struggle to protect themselves, like older adults or people with disabilities.
- 4.4.2 Over the last 12 months 6 Safeguarding Adults Reviews have been published, each containing a number of key recommendations and learning to improve practice across multi-agency partners operations. The themes from these referrals include mental health, self-neglect, substance misuse, and neglect/acts of omission. Regular assurance is received from partners in relation to practice improvements.
- 4.4.3 There has also been a focus on '[Hidden Harm](#)', such as domestic abuse and control, with resources produced for front line staff, the delivery of effective multi-agency safeguarding training, improved multi-agency practice guidance for use by partners, development of a Multi-Agency Risk Management Meeting forum and a number of practitioner learning briefs developed and shared for operational use.

5. **Any Other Matters**

5.1 **The Autumn Budget Statement**

5.1.1 In the [Autumn Budget](#), the Chancellor made a number of adult social care specific announcements, and also a number of broader announcements that will impact adult social care. At this point the full implications are unclear, and we are waiting for further details to better understand the impact and subsequent actions locally:

- Increase in grant funding includes £600M for social care (adults and childrens) nationally.
- Increased [Disabled Facilities Grant](#) of £86M nationally.
- 60,000 more unpaid carers nationally will qualify for [Carers Allowance](#) after a rise in the earnings threshold from £151 to £183. The equivalent of working 16 hours at the National Living Wage.
- An additional £233M to District Authorities for homelessness, up to £1B in 2025-26 nationally.
- National Insurance increase from 13.8% to 15%, decreased threshold from £9,100 to £5,000. The government is expected to compensate public sector organisation for direct impacts.
- The government is investing £115 million in 2025/26 in the [Connect to Work employment support scheme](#), to help match people with disabilities or health conditions into vacancies. A 'Get Britain Working' White Paper will shortly be published with £240 million of investment to trial new ways of getting people back to work.

Councillor Bullivant
Cabinet Member for Integrated Adult Social Care and Health