

Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission Report

Preparation for CQC Assurance:
Our Self-assessment

Lead Member: Cllr Sarah Russell
Lead Strategic Director: Martin Samuels
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Wards Affected: All
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission with preparation for Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance
- 1.2 To share the self-assessment completed in preparation of external assurance and seek any comments

2. Summary

- 2.1 Adult Social Care (ASC) was subject to a substantial programme of reforms, as previously described (see background papers). Some of this has been paused, following central government decisions regarding funding reforms and reforms of the framework for Deprivations of Liberty Safeguards / Liberty Protection Safeguards. Other elements have continued to move towards implementation.
- 2.2 Within this programme, the white paper, "People at the Heart of Care" created a new duty for CQC, to become responsible for assessing local authorities' delivery of their adult social care duties, under part 1 of the Care Act. The assurance approach by CQC commenced on 1st April 2023.
- 2.3 The anticipated approach to assurance was shared with the ASC Scrutiny Commission on 8th December 2022 and has moved forward largely as expected. 5 councils, including 2 in the East midlands, have volunteered for 'pilot' assurance visits by CQC between June and September. Between September and December, 20 further councils will be visited for an assurance process / inspection, with 20 further council's being subject to assurance processes between January and March 2024.
- 2.4 It is unknown when Leicester City Council might be visited by CQC for an assurance process. We have been preparing for this (as set out in the ASC Scrutiny paper dated 8th December 2022) working with regional colleagues.
- 2.5 A core element of this preparation was the completion of a self-assessment. This is similar to the document prepared by Children's services for Ofsted, known as the Self-Evaluation Framework.

2.6 Our self-assessment is attached at Appendix 1. This document set out the key areas of strength and areas for improvement.

2.7 The approach to completing this document and the quality assurance work that has followed is covered in the main report (below at section 4), together the governance, quality assurance and communication arrangements that support us to address areas for improvement.

2.8 The self-assessment is not a 'fixed' document and will be refreshed periodically to ensure it remains an up to date narrative of the delivery of ASC and the impact that this has for people who draw on our support.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission is recommended to:

- a) Note the report and self-assessment and provide any comments or feedback.

4. Report

Approach

4.1 In preparation for future CQC assurance processes, the East Midlands councils worked together with the Local Government Association to produce a template and guidance for a self-assessment. The self-assessment is a key element of the assurance process, being a document that will be requested by CQC when an assurance visit is scheduled to take place.

4.2 Leicester ASC started the production of our self-assessment via a staff workshop in January 2023 – 80 staff, representative of the many roles across ASC, came together to identify our position against the CQC quality statements in their draft assurance framework.

4.3 This information was used to produce a narrative document (the self-assessment) that describes where we believe our strengths and areas for improvement are, and describes the plans we have to build on, sustain or address these. The self-assessment is supported by an evidence bank, so that our understanding of our position can be triangulated or tested against data, feedback from people who draw on support and carers, from staff and stakeholders. Our aim was to be self-aware; both positive about strengths and honest about areas for improvement.

Quality Assurance

- 4.4 All East Midlands councils shared their self-assessments with the regional ADASS branch for independent review, followed by a joint workshop to look at approaches, content and to reflect on their styles and accessibility. Feedback regarding Leicester's self-assessment has been positive, in that it is seen to be genuine, self-aware and well evidenced.
- 4.5 Work has since taken place to produce a summary version and an easy read version, to support wider engagement with people who draw on support and with stakeholders. This is core to quality assurance, so that the narrative is one that others would reflect if asked about their experiences of ASC in Leicester.
- 4.6 To support our capacity for leadership in the context of external scrutiny / judgement, a 2-day Leading for Assurance course has been developed by the ADASS branch regionally and delivered to middle managers (Heads or Service / Service Managers and equivalent). This has been well received by the 2 cohorts who have completed it to date; 8 of the 13 managers in Leicester for whom this training is targeted have attended, with the remaining 5 to participate in September.
- 4.7 Readiness for CQC assurance is one workstream reporting to the ASC Reforms Programme Board. It is led by the Director, Social Care and Safeguarding. The focus has now shifted away from the preparation of the self-assessment to 2 areas of focus:
- a) Quality assurance as our everyday business
 - b) Being prepared for a CQC visit

Governance and quality assurance

- 4.8 Our primary aim is to deliver an ASC offer that supports people to live the lives that are important to them. Therefore, whilst we wish to be prepared for external assurance / inspection, we want to understand for ourselves how well we are achieving that aim and quality assurance is the core mechanism by which we can explore this. Prior to the reforms, we had developed a range of approaches to understanding our impact and effectiveness and these have been further developed in the context of external scrutiny.
- 4.9 An ASC Assurance Framework is in place, with an Annual Assurance Statement produced in 2022/3. The delivery of ASC is monitored and supported by a Practice Oversight Board.
- 4.10 The Social Care and Education (SCE) Performance and Quality Board receives regular reports from ASC, covering a range of metrics, indicators

and sources of information including from people who use services and staff.

4.11 Information gathered in the Annual Assurance Statement and the self-assessment, as well as Healthy Workplace Survey and from peer reviews, has been drawn together to inform priority planning for 2023/4. A business plan has been developed with 6 core priorities, reflecting the areas for development and improvement identified including those from the self-assessment.

4.12 The 6 core priorities for 2023/24 are:

- **Carers** – We want informal carers to feel well supported, able to continue their caring roles and live a good life
- **Wellbeing** – We want to maximise the wellbeing of people who draw on support, in order that they can achieve their potential and reduce their reliance on adult social care
- **Staff** – We want our staff to work in an environment that is positive and inclusive, where change is managed well
- **Care market** – We want to secure a market that delivers good quality of care to the right people who draw on support, providing the right care at the right time to the people who need it.
- **Capacity and outcomes** – We want to maximise our capacity, responding to need and achieving outcomes efficiently and effectively
- **Use of resources** – We want to be sure that we are making best use of our resources, so that all that we do provides value for money.

4.13 We are using this summer's sector led improvement approach to test ourselves against our self-assessment; an experienced ex-Director will review our documentation and published performance / quality data and will also meet with staff and stakeholders in August. She will reflect back to us what she has found, as a critical friend.

4.14 In this respect, being able to demonstrate to an external inspector that we understand ourselves and have appropriate plans in place to make improvements, is built into our everyday business processes, rather than being seen as a 'one off' activity.

Communication

4.13 In readiness for a CQC visit, we are communicating key messages to staff. 15-minute briefings took place for all staff on the week commencing 3rd July. Regular updates will be provided in team and service meetings and 'storyboards' are being developed that provide staff with the accessible information about topics related to the CQC quality statements.

4.14 Communication with wider stakeholders will take place in forums such as our partnership boards, Making it Real Group and place-based meetings with our system partners.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Martin Judson, Head of Finance Ext 35 4101

5.2 Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from the contents this report

Pretty Patel, Head of Law Ext 35 1457

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

There are no significant climate emergency implications directly associated with this report.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

5.4 Equalities Implications

The council need to ensure that that we are meeting our statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Whereby public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

There are no direct equality implications arising from this report as it provides an update for the Commission on the preparation for Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance processes.

Inspection is invaluable, particularly for public sector services in identifying strengths, reinforcing good behaviour, reassuring staff and to give examples of good practice that could be replicated, whilst also addressing identified weaknesses. It is important for an ASC service to understand the diverse health and care needs of people and our local communities, so care is joined-up, flexible and supports choice and continuity. Genuine choice and control about personalised care and support can enhance quality of life and promote independence to individuals from across all protected characteristics.

Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

6. Background information and other papers:

ASC Scrutiny Paper: Health and Care Reforms, 18th August 2022

[Executive decisions \(leicester.gov.uk\)](#)

ASC Scrutiny Paper: Adult Social Care Assurance, 8th December 2022

[ASC assurance_for Scrutiny Nov 22 v2.pdf \(leicester.gov.uk\)](#)

7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Leicester City Council Self-Assessment March 2023 v7