



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Health Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 06 March 2025

Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment of Telford and Wrekin Council's ability to meet its Adult Social Care duties under Part 1 of the Care Act (2014)

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Paul Watling - Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care & Health Systems	
Lead Director:	Simon Froud - Director: Adult Social Care	
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Wards Affected:	All Wards	
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision	
Forward Plan:	Not applicable	
Report considered by	SMT – 14 January 2025 Cabinet - 13 February 2025	

1. Recommendations for decision/noting

It is recommended that Health Scrutiny Committee:

- 1.1. Notes that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has assessed Telford & Wrekin Council's Adult Social Care Services as 'Good', recognising that the services are performing well and meeting their expectations. Their assessment highlighted that:

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- “Assessments were conducted professionally, using strength-based approaches and focused on whole-family support to ensure people could live at home for longer.”
- “Innovative approaches to coproduction, engagement, and inclusion, were embedded in local authority processes. These were supported by the strategic board structures and staff culture.”
- “Strong partnership working.”
- “Improved outcomes in supported accommodation, and enabled bespoke solutions for people maintaining independent living, delaying entry to statutory services through the use of assistive technologies.”
- “Strong leadership and a culture of transparency and learning.”
- “The realignment of locality team functions and responsibilities, as well as innovative use of frontline teams were improving waiting lists, and strong partnership working with health partners was improving discharge and readmission outcomes for people.”

1.2. Supports the implementation of the Adult Social Care (ASC) Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment Summary Continuous Improvement Plan as presented in Appendix B.

1.3. Monitors the ASC CQC Assessment Summary Continuous Improvement Plan.

2. Purpose of Report

2.1. To present the findings from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment of Telford & Wrekin Council’s ability to meet its Adult Social Care duties under Part 1 of the Care Act, for people accessing care and support. The report was published on 15 November 2024 and a copy can be found in Appendix A.

2.2. To present the ASC CQC Assessment Summary Continuous Improvement Action Plan as detailed in Appendix B.

3. CQC Assessment Background

3.1. From April 2023, CQC took on new responsibilities under the Health and Care Act 2022 for assessing how local authorities meet their [Part 1 Care Act](#) duties for people accessing care and support.

3.2. The assessment uses a subset of 9 quality statements from the new [single assessment framework](#). They are structured specifically around the context, aims and roles of a local authority and focus on 4 themes:

1. How local authorities work with people
2. How local authorities provide support
3. How local authorities ensure safety within the system
4. Leadership

3.3. By December 2025, CQC aim to complete initial formal assessments on all 153 local authorities. This includes reviewing published data (e.g. Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and national data collections) to help identify themes and insight on access, commissioning, market shaping, workforce and personalisation.

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Telford and Wrekin were one of the earliest councils to be assessed and receive a published report. To date 22 reports have been published.

- 3.4. The CQC assessment is an in-depth and rigorous approach, which analyses evidence from multiple sources including:
 - **people's experiences** – feedback directly from people using services (e.g. through case tracking and speaking with carers) and feedback from community organisations, groups and local user groups.
 - **feedback from staff and leaders** – interview staff and leaders to gather views and hold drop-in sessions for staff to share their experiences.
 - **feedback from partners** – speak to relevant partners to gather their views and gather views from care providers.
 - **processes** – review effectiveness of the processes, including policies and strategies, audits, performance data and waiting times
 - **outcomes** – focus on the impact of processes on individuals and communities
- 3.5. CQC's Assessment Teams for Local Authorities include an Assessment Manager, CQC Directors, Inspectors, Local Authority Specialist Advisors and Executive Reviewers. The team comprise people directly employed by CQC as well as appropriate people from other Local Authorities undertaking specific roles. Telford & Wrekin Council currently contribute to CQC Assessment Teams of other Local Authorities via officer secondment as a Specialist Advisor.
- 3.6. The outcome of each assessment is in the form of a published report that includes an overall rating for the Local Authority (Inadequate, Requires Improvement, Good or Outstanding).
- 3.7. During this initial baselining phase CQC continues to learn, develop and refine their approach.
- 3.8. For detailed information on the assessment process please view CQC's website: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/local-systems/local-authorities>

4. Summary of main proposals

- 4.1. The overall findings of the assessment judged the Council's ability to meet its Part 1 Care Act duties for people accessing care and support as '**GOOD**'.
- 4.2. The final report, attached in Appendix A, highlights many positive areas together with some areas for the Council to focus on. The summary action plan, attached at Appendix B, provides further detail of the actions to be taken to address areas of focus highlighted by CQC. The plan will be monitored by the Telford & Wrekin Council Health and Care Scrutiny Committee. The plan will form part of the wider Adult Social Care Continuous Improvement Plan.
- 4.3. The CQC assessment confirms that the Council is well placed to move forwards. The Council is committed to building on the many positives highlighted in the report and to responding proactively to the areas of focus in order to further improve services for local residents and deliver outstanding future outcomes.

5. Telford & Wrekin Council's CQC Assessment

- 5.1. On 19 February 2024, we received notification from CQC of our Local Authority Assessment. At the same time, they requested our full Information Return by 8 March 2024. The information return is the first part of CQC's assessment and includes a series of documents to help CQC start their assessment and plan for their onsite visit. For details of the specific information requested please [click here](#).
- 5.2. The Council were notified on 24 May 2024 that the onsite element of the CQC assessment would take place the week of 22 July 2024. At the same time, the Council was required to provide further documentation, including an anonymised and coded list of 50 people who received care and support. CQC subsequently chose 10 of these people to talk directly to about their experiences.
- 5.3. Prior to their onsite visit CQC requested a meeting with the Adult Social Care Leadership Team. The purpose of this meeting was to enable CQC to understand how the local authority is organised, including pathways and other arrangements. A comprehensive presentation was delivered which covered:
 - How the leadership team is organised and lines of accountability (management arrangements)
 - How front-line teams are set up, including how frontline teams support people with specific needs (for example, autistic people, people with a learning disability, mental health need, or sensory need).
 - A person's journey from initial contact with the local authority through to allocation to a team for assessment.
 - The pathway for young people transitioning from children to adult's services.
 - Any Section 75 partnership agreements in place, allowing budgets to be pooled between health and social care.
 - Any commissioned partnership arrangements for the provision of Care Act duties.
 - Arrangements for working with housing.
- 5.4. The presentation, given by the Adult Social Care Leadership Team, was completed on 26 June 2024. Senior representation from the Council's Housing and Public Health Services were also involved. It showcased how the Council delivers its statutory duties, how it works with partners to improve people's outcomes, how it enables people to live well and independently in Telford and Wrekin and included examples of the positive difference the services are making to resident's lives.

Healthy Lifestyles at the Independent Living Centre: Abi's story

Abi self-referred to the Healthy Lifestyle Service after visiting the Independent Living Centre. She had gained weight since lockdown due to unhealthy food choices and was finding food preparation more difficult due to her arthritis, cooking from scratch was difficult. She felt isolated and found walking difficult due to the pain from her arthritis.

After just 6 sessions, Abi managed to make significant changes to her diet and was managing to cook healthy meals with the use of an air fryer. She was managing daily exercise which included walking and seated exercise at the Fit4All sessions. She achieved 16.5 pounds weight loss.



"Thank you. Having somebody supporting me made all the difference and now I have completely changed my eating habits and am losing weight on a regular basis. My thanks go to Rachael as I know I wouldn't have done it without her help"

Technology Enabled Care supporting night time care calls

Adult Social Care uses Oysta technology device to contact carers as and when they need to during the night. A team then responds directly to the callouts, meaning people can receive personalised care without the need for a night sit in service.

This approach has enabled carers to see up to 20-30 people in the night, compared with 2 before this approach. People using the technology has said that "it's a lifeline and don't know what they would do without it".



Information adapted from ITV's report on this approach – see full report and video [here](#)

- 5.5. The onsite assessment in July included 3 days of interviews, speaking with people who used Adult Social Care services, as well as with staff, leaders and partner organisations. This included our Making it Real Board and other experts by their experience, our frontline teams, partners and executive leaders across the Council.
- 5.6. Whilst the on-site experience was intense, people who were spoken to by CQC felt listened to, comfortable and found it an enjoyable experience sharing their views of how the Council is delivering its statutory duties and promoting good practice across Adult Social Care at Telford and Wrekin.
- 5.7. Following a period of factual accuracy negotiations in October, the final report of CQC's assessment of the Council was published on 15 November 2024. A copy of the assessment report can be found on [CQC's website](#) but is also available in Appendix A.

Adult Social Care's Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment Outcome

- 5.8. This CQC assessment concluded that the Council's ability to meet its Part 1 Care Act duties for people accessing care and support was 'GOOD'. 'GOOD' means that CQC recognise that Adult Social Care is performing well and meeting their expectations.
- 5.9. This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of Council staff and our strong partnerships with families, experts by experience, community stakeholders and partner organisations.

Areas of strength

- 5.10. The report reads positively, with CQC highlighting in particular the following strengths:
- 5.10.1. "Assessments were conducted professionally, using strength-based approaches and focused on whole-family support to ensure people could live at home for longer."
- 5.10.2. "Innovative approaches to coproduction, engagement, and inclusion, were embedded in local authority processes. These were supported by the strategic board structures and staff culture."
- 5.10.3. "Improved outcomes in supported accommodation and enabled bespoke solutions for people maintaining independent living, delaying entry to statutory services through the use of assistive technologies."
- 5.10.4. "The realignment of locality team functions and responsibilities, as well as innovative use of frontline teams were improving waiting lists, and strong partnership working with health partners was improving discharge and readmission outcomes for people." Innovations included:
- "The Family Carer Occupational Therapist Role who undertook assessments and provided support on moving and handling"
 - "The new Hybrid team, made up of unqualified social workers and occupational therapists, was to assess less-complex cases and provide equipment in a timely manner, which had allowed other frontline teams to focus on complex cases, reducing waiting times for both."
 - "Calm Cafés were delivered in partnership between Telford Mind and Telford & Wrekin's mental health social work team. A specific Calm Café had also been set up for Armed Forces Personnel and veterans. People told us the cafés had become very well regarded in the local area and recognised as being a notable example of place-based preventative support, with up to 300 people attending each month."
- 5.10.5. "People could easily access the local authority's care and support services through multiple channels, including online and self-assessment options."
- 5.10.6. "The local authority ensured people were given help, advice, and information about how to access services, facilities, and other agencies for help with non-eligible care and support needs through clear strategic approaches to partnership working."

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5.10.7. “The local authority’s framework for eligibility for care and support was transparent, clear, and consistently applied. Decisions and outcomes were timely and transparent.”

5.10.8. “People could easily access information and advice on their rights under the Care Act 2014, and ways to meet their care and support needs.”



5.10.9. “The Independent Living Centre was seen as a great resource for all communities... it was a ‘one-stop-shop’ for all support, information and advice around equipment, assessments, adaptations, and assistive technologies, with a ‘Virtual House’ programme available to help people see and understand how technology worked.”

5.10.10. “Inclusive local authority practices, supporting people’s needs and wishes as well as their cultural and ethnic needs. For example, access to culturally appropriate food, bathing facilities, prayer rooms, targeted mental health support, inventive use of direct payments, transgender support, and vaccination outreach programmes (Betty the Bus).”

5.10.11. “Telford and Wrekin had strong partnership working links with health partners, neighbouring authorities, the voluntary and community sector, and regional organisations to ensure strategic and operational plans met national and local objectives.”

5.10.12. “Safety was a priority for everyone, supported by a culture of openness and learning. People’s care journeys were coproduced with people using services, partners, staff, and communities to ensure continuity of care, choice and control, and the least restrictive options were used to promote independence.”

5.10.13. “People’s experiences of hospital discharge and the support received was positive.”

5.10.14. “There were effective systems, processes, and practices to make sure people were protected from abuse, neglect, and exploitation through the TWSP (Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership).”

5.10.15. “Safeguarding enquiries were conducted sensitively, keeping the wishes and best interests of the person concerned at the centre.”

5.10.16. “The local authority used information about risk, performance, inequalities, and outcomes, to allocate resources and inform strategic planning. This enabled them to deliver the actions needed to improve care and support outcomes for people and local communities.”

5.10.17. “The work the Making it Real board were doing on improving accessible information standards was having real, positive impacts for people’s lives.”

5.10.18. “Strong, visible leadership from senior managers who had a good understanding of the challenges faced by the local authority due to effective coproduction, engagement and use of data and insight.”

5.10.19. “There was an inclusive and positive culture of continuous learning and improvement.”

5.10.20. “The local authority’s co-productive approach made a genuine difference to Adult Social Care services.”



5.11. These achievements reinforce the Council’s aim to Protect, Care and Invest to create a better borough and the delivery of its priorities, particularly for every child, young person and adult to live well in their community. These achievements also reflect our Adult Social Care Vision to work together with people, key partners and communities to enable people to live well and independently in Telford and Wrekin and our approach to prevent, delay and reduce people’s need for formal social care.

Areas for focus

5.12. In addition to the strengths identified, the report identifies some areas for focus and continued work to:

- reduce waiting lists and waiting times for assessments.
- improve take up of Direct Payments.
- improve accessibility of services.
- improve the diversity and representation within experts by experience groups and Boards.
- focus on Safeguarding, Mental Capacity Act (MCA) and Deprivation of Liberties (DoLS)
- improve communication with people in receipt of care and support services, their family and carers.
- develop the care market further
- focus on employment opportunities available for people with care and support needs including with learning disabilities.

5.13. These areas were priorities for the service prior to the CQC assessment process, and actions to improve them were already underway. Progress was shared with

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CQC as part of the Council's self-assessment, information return and on-site visit. Since July, this work has continued at pace, resulting in further improvements.

- 5.14. Appendix B provides a summary on these areas, the actions identified to address them, and the positive direction of travel over the last 6 months.
- 5.15. Whilst some areas of focus were agreed, CQC found that Adult Social Care in Telford and Wrekin is performing well and meeting their expectations – rated 'Good'. As such, no intervention activity from the Department of Health and Social Care is required (this is triggered when any quality statement receives a score of inadequate). The Council, however, is committed to continued improvement of Adult Social Care and will ensure that the continuous improvement plan is fully implemented.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1. There are no alternative options.

7. Key Risks

- 7.1. The CQC report assesses Telford and Wrekin Council's ability to meet its Part 1 Care Act duties for people accessing care and support as 'GOOD' which provides assurances that the Council's services are performing well and meeting CQC's expectations.
- 7.2. The development and implementation of an action plan will further strengthen the delivery of the Council's duties. Were an action plan not to be developed this would hinder the ability of the council to continue to improve and refine the services it delivers to its residents.

8. Council Priorities

- 8.1. The CQC report and subsequent continuous improvement action plan aligns with the council's priorities. Particularly when considering 'Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community' and 'all neighbourhoods are a great place to live'.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1. There are a number of actions summarised within the continuous improvement action plan in Appendix B. It is expected that delivery of the plan will be achieved from within planned medium-term resources. However, where additional funding is identified as required, this will be sought through the Council's existing Governance processes.

RP 7/01/25

10. Legal and HR Implications

- 10.1. The CQC assessment framework assesses local authorities against their duties under the Care Act 2014, identified within the Care and Support Statutory

Guidance and detailed within The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Care Functions) Regulations 2023. Having completed the assessment period and providing a finalised report s.46a Health and Social Care Act requires publication of the same by the CQC.

ON 07/01/2025

11. Ward Implications

- 11.1. The continuous improvement action plan will have a borough-wide impact for all adults living within Telford and Wrekin with care and support needs.

12. Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 12.1. There are no negative health, social or economic implications arising from the continuous improvement action plan. The CQC report assesses the Council's ability to meet its Part 1 Care Act duties for people accessing care and support as 'GOOD'. The council will continue to, as part of its Care Act duties, promote an individual's wellbeing, provide information and advice and promote the integration of care and support. The continuous improvement action plan provides an opportunity to further improve people's wellbeing and independence and to reduce health and care inequalities.

13. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 13.1. The Council, in particular Adult Social Care, will continue to work in partnership with people with care and support needs, carers and wider family in a respectful, sensitive and transparent way. Recognising that individuals each have their own needs and by working with people in a collaborative way is more likely to lead to improved outcomes for them.
- 13.2. CQC heard from people using services and partners "how innovative approaches to co-production, engagement and inclusion were embedded in local authority processes. These were supported by the strategic board structures and staff cultures."
- 13.3. This is a positive opportunity to build on the excellent feedback about the current approach to equality and diversity.

14. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 14.1. There are no climate change or environmental implications because of the action plan.

15. Background Papers

None

16. Appendices

- A CQC Assessment Report of Telford & Wrekin Council

Adult Social Care's Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment Outcome

B Adult Social Care's Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment
Summary Continuous Improvement Action Plan

17. Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	19/02/2025	24/02/2025	ON
Finance	02/01/2025	08/01/2025	RP
Director	19/02/2025	24/02/2025	SF