



## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Health Scrutiny Committee

11 December 2025

#### Adult Social Care CQC Continuous Improvement Plan Update

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Kelly Middleton - Cabinet Member: Public Health & Healthier Communities, Cllr Paul Watling - Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care & Health
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Felicity Mercer - Executive Director: Adult Social Care, Housing & Customer Services
<b>Service Area:</b>	Adult Social Care
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<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT 25/11/2025 Health Scrutiny Committee – 11 December 2025

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting

It is recommended that Health Scrutiny Committee:

- 1.1 Notes the positive outcome of the Care Quality Committee (“CQC”) inspection that was carried out in 2024;
- 1.2 Notes the progress made by Adult Social Care in delivering the improvement actions within the CQC Improvement Action Plan as outlined below and in **Appendix A**.

- 1.3 Considers undertaking a review into supported employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities in the Borough.

## 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to remind Health Scrutiny Committee members of the good CQC inspection result, the actions arising from that inspection and highlights the areas of progress against those actions reporting on the impact this is making on people with care and support needs and their carers in Telford and Wrekin. The report also gives an update on the National CQC Inspection programme.
- 2.2 Attached at **Appendix A** is the Action Plan that was created to address recommendations made by CQC updated to reflect progress against those actions.

## 3.0 Background

- 3.1 In 2024, the Care Quality Commission ("CQC") undertook their 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.
- 3.2 The overall findings of the assessment judged the Council's ability to meet these duties as '**GOOD**'. The report was published on 15 November 2024 and a copy can be found [here](#).
- 3.3 The report highlighted a number of areas of good practice, including
- "Assessments were conducted professionally, using strength-based approaches and focused on whole-family support to ensure people could live at home for longer."
  - "Strong partnership working."
  - "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 leadership and a culture of transparency and learning."
- 3.4 The inspection regime includes provision for CQC to make recommendations that would result in even better outcomes. The action plan, setting out the actions to respond to those recommendations was published **in February 2025**. Since that date, work has been ongoing to implement the identified actions and this report provides an opportunity for Health Scrutiny members to receive an update on the progress made to date in this regard.

## 4.0 Update

The majority of the focussed actions for improvement have been completed, with the remainder in progress. **Appendix A** includes feedback from people with care and support needs, carers, staff, and partners, highlighting improvements in service delivery, communication, and outcomes. Key areas include:

- 4.1.1 **Carers' Strategy** – the actions contained in the All-Age Carers' Strategy 2024-2029 continue to be implemented and overseen by the Carers' Partnership Board. Of particular note is the refreshed Carers' Offer with an enhanced wellbeing offer for carers including a renewed focus on referring carers into the Healthy Lifestyles Service, a free and confidential service which supports residents to make changes to their mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. In addition the All Age Carers' Centre now has an active weekly hospital presence and a referral pathway for carers has also been developed. The Council is currently in the process of commissioning Carers' Card UK (a comprehensive benefits offer for unpaid carers in Telford) and the Bi-Annual National NHS Digital Carers' Survey is currently underway (results due April 2026). Carers locally report feeling supported and informed, with positive feedback about services.
- 4.1.2 **Care Provider Market** – the Joint Market Position Statement 2025–2029, co-produced with stakeholders, was launched in Summer 2025 and is now being implemented.
- 4.1.3 **Co-production with Experts by Experience**– the structure of the Making It Real Board has been reviewed and new experts by experience recruited. A new group for people with physical and sensory disabilities has been launched; the Safeguarding Lived Experience Group is in place and is shaping the work of the Safeguarding Adult Board; and there is continued engagement with seldom heard groups to shape services. Positive feedback from experts by experience about their involvement in the groups and their impact continues to be received.
- 4.1.4 **Translation Services** – Adult Social Care continues to see increased use of translation services. In addition, there is ongoing development of digital tools, regular communications to staff and positive feedback from individuals about improved access and support.
- 4.1.5 **Staff Training** – training for Safeguarding, Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards have been reviewed and refreshed for all Adult Social Care staff.
- 4.1.6 **Care Act Assessment and Review Waiting Times** - waiting times for assessments and reviews continue to improve despite the increased demand for long-term care this year compared to 2024/25. This remains a continued focus for the service in order to improve people's experiences and outcomes. People who make contact with Adult Social Care continue to be triaged and prioritised by risk, with additional hub locations now live to meet demand.
- 4.1.7 **Occupational Therapy (OT) Service** – a service review has been completed, with assessment waiting times reducing and improved Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) processes in place resulting in positive feedback from people regarding prompt support and helpful advice.
- 4.1.8 **Equipment Service** – the jointly commissioned service with Shropshire Council and the Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care Board continues with 99% of urgent equipment requests delivered within 24 hours.

4.1.9 **Direct Payments (DP)** - uptake continues to increase for both people who use services and carers. In addition there has been increased positive feedback from users and staff about the Direct Payments process and support.

4.1.10 **Supported Paid Employment Opportunities for people with learning disabilities** – the aim to expand the number of opportunities continues to be challenging. Although the Government's Connect to Work Programme has commenced in Telford and Wrekin it will take time for it to impact locally and enable more people with learning disabilities to access employment. It is proposed that as an outcome of the progress update presented to the Telford and Wrekin Health Scrutiny Committee that the Committee considers a review into supported employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities in Telford & Wrekin to identify how organisations across Telford & Wrekin could support this work.

## 5.0 Feedback about the difference the improvements have made

"I recently completed a visit to a gentleman who does not speak English. I was supported in the visit by an interpreter who really helped throughout the discussion and it gave the gentleman the opportunity to give his views, wishes and feelings. The gentleman has a diagnosis of dementia and experienced difficulties with regards to capacity, understanding some questions and giving appropriate responses; the interpreter was really patient with him and had a lovely approach and manner. It was a really positive experience for all involved."

"I just wanted to write to thank you and the team involved for everything that has been done to help me, and so promptly since our appointment with you to discuss my mobility and general aging problems. To be able to look at and try out bathroom aids was so interesting and helpful, and I did not want to lose the access to a bath. The aids decided on were delivered without delay by Medequip after being sanctioned, ie the bath cushion, bath step, perching stool, and toilet rail. The instructions for use were delivered to us at the door a few days afterwards by a Medequip driver. One hour after the arrival of above equipment, M from OTRehab/Community Enablement arrived to assess the type of walker required. She very kindly adjusted the height of perching stool, and toilet rail, and put the latter in situ. She returned one week later to deliver and demonstrate the walker to me, as she wanted me to have it as soon as possible. She thinks it will be helpful to use, when I am going out into town, and it certainly is.

R from Telford & Wrekin Council came out early this week to fix me some grab rails. He was very kind and patient, and anxious that I should take my time and have them positioned in exactly the most helpful spot and height for me. He also proposed a rail instead of a grab thing to get outside from the conservatory to the patio. This is wonderful and is going to be a great asset.

I am feeling very pleased and grateful with what has been done to assist in my everyday living and make life easier for us both. X has taken your kind advice and registered himself as a carer. Your detailed questions helped us to become more aware of how much he actually does to help me! So thank you very much.

“My experience with Adult Social Care has been excellent. The response and care has been 1st class and I feel very fortunate to have so much support. I work in Health & Social Care and this experience has prompted me to encourage others to access their local carers support.

We would like to say thank you to everyone who has helped us over the last 3-4 months.”

“We would like to say thank you for all your help and suggestions the other day and how useful the Telford and Wrekin Virtual House was. The House enabled us to have some ideas on what might be helpful to both of us, so that when we met you, we understood the items you suggested and were able to show us. The House clearly explained how the items shown might make life easier as we grow older!! Moving around the Virtual House was extremely easy, even for someone not at home with computer technology. Since our meeting we have purchased a number of these items which are either in use or ready for when we need them.”

## **6.0 Next Step Key Actions**

- 6.1 Focus on further improving the local Direct Payment offer working in partnership with experts by their experience and appropriate organisations.
- 6.2 Subject to consideration by the Committee to work with them, alongside internal and external partners to review and improve the local Supported Employment Offer for people with disabilities and supporting them into paid employment.
- 6.3 Implementation of the Making Prevention Real programme which focuses on preventing, reducing and delaying people's needs for formal care and support and enabling people to maximise their independence. The programme's priorities include: proactive prevention, enablement, targeted reviews and strategic commissioning.

## **7.0 CQC National Picture update**

- 7.1 CQC is currently assessing 153 local authorities to baseline how well they are meeting their adult social care duties under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. This is due to conclude in 2026, with all on-site assessment activity due to be completed by end of December 2025.
- 7.2 Of the 88 reports published to date:
  - 3 - outstanding

- 58 - good
- 25 - requires improvement
- 2 - inadequate

7.3 CQC have been seeking feedback from all local authorities who have had an assessment to inform the future assessment process. The local authority feedback has highlighted a need for additional guidance/clarity/improvements on the information returns, processes for evidence gathering, use of data, consistency in reports, calculations of scores, factual accuracy and length of time of the assessment process.

7.4 The emerging improvement themes CQC are reporting nationally include:

•More support for unpaid carers is needed	Equity of experiences scoring consistently low in assessments	•Challenge of reducing waiting lists while maintaining quality and risk oversight	•Increased emphasis needed in supporting prevention and working with providers to shift to outcome-based commissioning
•Data is used inconsistently making it harder to plan and monitor services and measure outcomes.	•Transitions for young people becoming adults is an area of challenge	•Inconsistent practice in safeguarding	•Increasing reliance on voluntary sector around prevention and better outcomes where there is strong partnership working

7.5 CQC is currently developing its future approach to local authority re-assessments which is expected to start after April 2026. They have already shared their emerging thinking which includes:

- The next phase of the assessment approach to be more flexible.
- To not be repeating the current approach of baseline assessments for all Local Authorities.
- Awareness that process takes too long from the first notification to the site visits to the publication of the reports.
- Strengthening the voice of carers and people's experience and outcomes in the next phase.
- The approach will be informed by learning from baselining, feedback from people and stakeholders, the Secretary of State's emerging priorities for the sector and CQC's understanding of best practice

7.6 The new approach will be signed off by the Secretary of State, and following approval, CQC will share more details on what their ongoing programme of local authority assessments will be.

7.7 To support future assessments of local authorities, CQC are looking to introduce and use rating characteristics. These will suggest what care and support, and governance and leadership might look like for each quality statement across each rating in the assessment framework. The ratings characteristics are an opportunity to set clear expectations about the importance of people's experience and outcomes, building on learning from CQC's baseline assessments. CQC are

currently consulting on this, with a closing date of 9 December 2025 and more information on the consultation can be found on their [online consultation platform](#). Telford & Wrekin Council are working with ADASS West Midlands to respond to the consultation.

### **8.0 Alternative Options**

- 8.1 There are no alternative options.

### **9.0 Key Risks**

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 The development and implementation of the action plan further strengthens the delivery of the Council's duties. Were the action plan not to be implemented this would hinder the ability of the council to continue to improve and refine the services it delivers to its residents.

### **10.0 Council Priorities**

- 10.1 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'.

### **11.0 Financial Implications**

- 11.1 There are a number of actions summarised within the continuous improvement action plan in Appendix A. These will either be delivered within existing resources or where additional funding is required this will be subject to consideration through the Council's existing governance processes.

### **12.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 12.1 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.

### **13.0 Ward Implications**

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

### **14.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**



- 14.1 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'.
- 14.2 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.

## **15.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 15.1 The Council, in particular Adult Social Care, continues 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.

## **16.0 Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications**

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

## **17.0 Background Papers**

- 1 Health Scrutiny Committee – 06.03.2025

## **18.0 Appendices**

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

## **19.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Legal	27/11/2025	01/12/2025	ON
Finance	27/11/2025	01/12/2025	RP / TD
Director	27/11/2025	01/12/2025	FM