

Health Select Commission

Adult Social Care Peer Review

Councillor Baker-Rogers, Lead Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
and Health

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ACHPH

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Legal Context

From April 2023, The Health and Care Act 2022 gave the Care Quality Commission (CQC) new regulatory powers to undertake independent assessment of local authorities' delivery of regulated care functions as set out in Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. Local authorities will be assessed against four domains:

- i.) Working with people
- ii.) Proving support
- iii.) How the local authority ensures safety
- iv.) Leadership

It is critical that the Council are adequately prepared for CQC assurance. Adult Social Care commissioned the Local Government Association (LGA) to carry out a Peer Review to gain insights into its areas of strengths and identify areas for improvement with a focus on preparing for assurance.



Overview

- Peer Review led by Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS)
- Took place between 22 and 24 January 2025
- Completed twelve case file audits
- Held interviews and discussions with around 150 people across adult social care, partners and people with lived experience
- Spent around 200 hours with the council and as part of reviewing the submitted evidence file

Key Lines Of Enquiry

- **Theme 1: How Rotherham Council Works with People.** *This theme covers Assessing needs, Supporting People to Live Healthier Lives, Equity in Experience and Outcomes.*
- **Theme 2: How Rotherham Council Provides Support.** *This theme covers Care Provision, Integration and Continuity, and Partnerships and Communities.*
- **Theme 4 Leadership.** *This theme covers Governance Management and Sustainability and Learning, Improvement and Innovation.*

Key Messages

- 1) There is strong political and corporate support for adult social care and confidence in the adult social care leadership team to deliver.
- 2) Relationships with partners remain strong and are demonstrated through the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board, the shared commitment to continued investment in prevention, and health partnerships (amongst many examples).
- 3) There is evidence that a person-centred and strengths-based approach is becoming increasingly embedded.
- 4) Colleagues spoke positively about access to learning and development opportunities and the investment in the learning and development team.
- 5) There is a robust approach to quality and risk management, with providers appreciating the benefit of high challenge, high support.



Key Messages

- 6) You recently achieved zero delays for home care. There is good capacity for supported living for some people.
- 7) You should be celebrating more, the good work that is happening.
- 8) There is a robust assurance and performance system in place. More focus needs to be given to articulating the outcomes and experience of people.
- 9) There is further work to do to ensure the voice of people with lived experience is embedded in the day-to-day work of the department as well as change initiatives.
- 10) Recruitment and retention continues to be a challenge with high agency use in some teams and across provider services. There are however efforts to reduce the use of agency staff and the people who work here are committed and proud to work in Rotherham.



Areas of Strengths

- A strengths-based approach was evident across most of the cases reviewed.
- There was evidence of outcomes and risk being considered at the beginning of the safeguarding process
- A whole market approach is promoted through the market position statement, which is regularly updated and market shaping activity, including the annual cost of care exercise, was reported to be stabilising gaps in the market.
- There is robust quality and risk monitoring and market management, and a strong relationship between commissioning and quality team.
- The peer team met with several people with lived experience who provided positive feedback about the impact of support and services on their lives.
- The Safeguarding Adults Board is working effectively in partnership to safeguard people.
- There is a very robust system of assurance with oversight at a very senior level and shared accountability and responsibility.



Areas of Strengths

- Practitioners feel well supported with risk management processes by senior managers; and each other.
- There is a timely and coordinated response to organisational safeguarding.
- Adult social care continues to be well led with a strong and committed leader, chief executive officer and lead cabinet member. The adult social care senior leadership team continue to be valued for their visibility and stability of leadership
- There is a good line of sight from the principal social worker to the director of adult social services and the principal social worker feels heard and able to influence change.
- There is good access to learning and development opportunities across all services along with a range of career development opportunities such as advanced practitioner, apprenticeships, and support for newly qualified social workers.
- A willingness to try new things and continuously develop and learn provides confidence in the direction of travel.



Areas of Improvement

Working with People: This theme includes six recommendations covering areas such as improvements to pathways, more timely decision making, clarity on our duty function and ensuring face-to-face support is the default approach to delivering services.

Providing Support: This theme includes four recommendations covering areas such as tactical commissioning, ensuring a true focus on co-production and exploring further opportunities to address gaps within the care sector.

Ensuring Safety: This theme includes three recommendations relating to consistent application of the 3-stage test in safeguarding, earlier referral for transition assessments and strengthening the voice of the person within the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board.

Leadership: This theme includes four recommendations relating to strengthening the engagement of the workforce, managing the level and frequency of change, understanding the barriers and challenges to recruitment and developing a greater focus on celebrating the great work that is happening.



Next Steps

1. Review and assure progress of the improvement plan via the Adult Social Care Regulatory Assurance Board
2. Deliver the improvement plan by April 2026
3. Await the outcome of the onsite CQC inspection
4. Report back to Health Select Commission on the outcome of the CQC inspection



Any Questions?

