

Appendix 2

ADASS Peer Review Improvement Plan

Area of Focus	Area for Consideration	Action	Lead	Deadline
Working With People: assessing needs, care planning and review, direct payments, charging, supporting people to live healthier lives, prevention, wellbeing, information and advice				
Person-Centred Practices	There was minimal evidence in some cases of conversations that explored a range of options with the person. Support for carers mainly involved signposting and some assessments were more focussed on the cared for person. The safeguarding triage process was not applied effectively in one case i.e. it was identified late in the process that the person had no care and support needs. In one case there was a question about whether the Mental Capacity Act had been appropriately applied.	Implement a new carers offer Refresh the safeguarding pathway to ensure the 3-stage test happens earlier in the triage process Conduct an MCA deep dive and report findings into the Safeguarding Adults Board for consideration	Head of Professional Practice	August 2025
Waiting for Assessment and Support	The peer team found that some people experienced long waits for assessment, that decisions on proposed care packages could be quicker and the wait times to commission care and support could be improved.	A waiting safely assurance board is established to actively monitor wait times for assessments and ensure steps are taken to mitigate any impact to the person. The decision making pathway will be reviewed. Opportunities to expand the commissioning options for care and support will be explored.	Assistant Director, Adult Care Head of Professional Practice Assistant Director, Commissioning	June 2025 December 2025 December 2025
New Duty System	There is lack of universal clarity about the agreed approach yet, but it is part of a formal consultation process.	A formal duty practice standard will be developed in partnership with the workforce.	Head of Professional Practice	August 2025
Consistency of Decision Making	There appeared to be a lack of consistency in decision making and application of thresholds (possibly erring toward risk averseness), with an indication that some cases were passed through to locality teams which should be dealt with at the Front Door. Some managers are perhaps more risk averse than others, and there is a need for more consistency in applying thresholds to make sure all people are supported in a timely way.	Promote positive decision making and risk-taking practice guidance and training across the workforce. Launch new team criteria to ensure clarity across the workforce on the remit of teams to ensure people are appropriately triaged to the correct team for support.	Head of Professional Practice	August 2025

Direct Payments	<p>Some people with lived experience highlighted difficulties with the process such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -finding information about direct payments that is easy to understand and does not include 'jargon' -the lack of support for managing a direct payment -not choosing to have a direct payment because of being 'told where to use them' -not being involved in decisions about ongoing support. 	<p>Updated communications will be provided to the workforce on refreshed direct payment guidance to resolve any outstanding queries.</p>	Head of Professional Practice	October 2025
	<p>Teams equally reflected the difficulties they experienced with the direct payment process and about the lack of available options for people should they choose to have direct payment.</p> <p>The peer team were told that the direct payment process has been recently relaunched, but the council may want to better understand how the relaunch has landed with teams, whether the new process takes proper account of the lived experience of people, and whether there is opportunity to further engage teams and people with lived experience in future developments.</p>	<p>People with lived experience will be engaged through the RASCAL Board, consortium work and other bespoke mechanisms to ensure satisfaction with services from people with lived experience continues to improve.</p>	Head of Service Improvement & Governance	March 2026
Access to Services	<p>Some individuals described an over-reliance on phone/ internet and lack of face-to-face support, which they would prefer in light of their communication needs. The peer team heard from people with lived experience, and particularly carers that they had experienced a lack of face-to-face support, especially since the covid pandemic. They reflected that in their view, there was too much reliance on the use of the telephone and digital means which is difficult for those not digitally literate.</p>	<p>The service already offers all of its services on a face to face basis. The service will ensure that the workforce are clear on the preference for face to face visits.</p>	Head of Professional Practice	September 2025
<i>Providing Support: shaping, commissioning, workforce capacity and capability, integration and partnership working</i>				
Market Capacity	<p>Availability of support for people with complex needs and carers –you are working on this. The peer team heard about a lack of appropriate services to support people with complex needs – i.e. dual diagnosis, self-neglect and substance misuse. With just three main providers, practitioners talked about how the enhanced brokerage service found it difficult to source placements for people with a mental health assessment that presented as too much risk. Work is in progress however, to increase day opportunities for people with complex needs via Castle View – a new facility which will be completed later this year - as well as developing additional bed-based capacity that will enable people who need support in a crisis to remain closer to home.</p> <p>As previously referenced, carers described a lack of respite provision with cost cited as a barrier for some and while there is an emergency carers scheme allowing for 48 hours intervention in crisis via the Rotherham Foundation Trust, commissioners acknowledged more needs to be done to develop respite provision for older people and carers and they are working on this.</p>	<p>A Complex Needs Paper will be drafted for consideration of the next steps.</p> <p>Opportunities to expand the current respite offer will be explored.</p>	Assistant Director, Commissioning	March 2026

Co-Production	<p>Better understanding of co-production vs consultation and of the impact on people when there are changes to services / support. The ambition around co-production is evident from the self-assessment and the range of co-production activity that is taking place. What some colleagues sometimes described however, sounded more comparable with consultation and engagement than true co-production. The council may therefore want to consider how to further develop a clearer understanding of the ladder of co-production across the workforce. Furthermore, once changes to service have been made the council may want to better understand the impact of those changes on people to assure itself that intended benefit is being delivered.</p>	An Involvement Framework will be developed to ensure a clear approach by the service to co-production.	Head of Service Improvement and Governance	October 2025
Tactical Commissioning	<p>More work needed to develop tactical commissioning approaches to ensure personalised care and support needs can be met. We heard from some individuals about choice being limited in terms of options available. The peer team heard from various sources about issues that potentially limited choice for people. One team indicated that there was no flexibility in commissioning to use 'spot' providers and that a direct payment should be offered instead. Commissioners indicated however, that there is room for negotiation in the framework with health for mental health provision - with consideration being given on a case-by-case basis. This indicates there may be a need for commissioners to communicate a clearer position with teams.</p> <p>The medication policy was described as restrictive and potentially out of kilter with how other areas work. One person with lived experience said that this can prevent access to the correct care provision.</p> <p>The peer team also heard that access to support via direct payments is limiting options for support and more work is needed to commission a more diverse range of options to provide greater choice that extend beyond employing a personal assistant or using a care agency.</p>	<p>Explore opportunities for further Flexible and Dynamic Purchasing Systems which address the gaps identified within the care sector.</p> <p>Review the Medication Policy to ensure it remains fit for purpose.</p> <p>Implement Individual Service Funds (ISFs) to provide greater choice and flexibility</p>	Assistant Director, Commissioning	March 2026
Access to Preventative Support	<p>There is more work to do to map and understand the full range of preventative support available - this is underway. The council recognises that the extent to which people are signposted to preventative support in communities can be dependent on what knowledge individuals and teams have about the local area. Work is therefore being done by public health to map and better understand what is available in communities.</p>	Map what support is available in communities across the Rotherham footprint and share with the workforce	Director of Public Health	March 2026
Ensuring Safety: safeguarding enquiries, reviews, safeguarding adults board, safe system, pathways and continuity of care				
Consistent Application of the Three-stage Test	<p>Operational colleagues questioned themselves whether there is consistent application of three-stage test. They felt in some cases the care management route would be more appropriate. Currently the three-stage test is at the end of the contact form /initial safeguarding enquiry. Teams felt the form is long with too much information and so becomes part of the enquiry rather than a triage. Timescales for decisions about whether there should be an enquiry is two days which was felt does not always support a Making Safeguarding Personal approach. The peer team were told that work is ongoing at the front door to address this.</p>	Refresh the safeguarding pathway to ensure the 3-stage test happens earlier in the triage process	Head of Professional Practice	May 2025

Voice and Impact	<p>The Safeguarding Adults Board acknowledged that there is more work to do to embed the voice of the person in the work of the board and to articulate the connection between the work of the board and impact and outcomes for people. There was recognition by the board that more needs to be done around voice and community engagement. The independent chair has met with the Rotherham Adult Social Care Always Listening Board which is keen to be involved. The challenge for the Safeguarding Adults Board now is how to work to best effect with the various groups that represent the voice of people with lived experience.</p> <p>The independent chair also talked about the need to be able to demonstrate more strongly what has been done strategically in the board and to be able to make the link to impact on quality of practice.</p>	<p>Establish a customer voice sub-group within the Safeguarding Adults Board structure.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to recruit people with lived experience to be part of the Board.</p>	Safeguarding Adults Board Manager	December 2025
Referrals for Transitions Earlier in the Process	The peer team heard that there is close liaison with the leaving care services, through drop-in support sessions to enhance sharing of knowledge and reflective practice. It was highlighted however, that an alert and/or earlier referral from children's services would be advantageous to ensure an even smoother transition planning process. Teams are working to improve this.	Implement a new preparing for adulthood referral process to ensure a smoother transition for young people	Head of Specialist Services	July 2025
Leadership: culture, strategic planning, learning, improvement, innovation, governance, management and sustainability				
Recruitment and Retention	The peer team heard about recruitment issues across several teams including a reliance on agency staff in some key areas. Work to do to understand why some areas are struggling more than others. The council should therefore consider ways to further understand barriers and challenges to recruitment by engaging with the existing and potential workforce.	The Adult Care Workforce Strategy Group will review opportunities to address recruitment challenges within specific areas of the service	Head of Professional Practice	October 2025
Staff Engagement	There was an indication that staff were not always engaging in service development and redesign. The peer team felt therefore that more work was needed to better understand and address reasons where there is a lack of staff engagement.	Understand through the Employee Opinion Survey if this is a widespread issue and take steps as appropriate to address any areas of concern.	Assistant Directors	March 2026
Managing Change	Potentially linked to the ability for staff to engage, the peer team heard from several sources that there is lots of change which has an impact on colleagues and a sense that changes are not always given the chance to fully embed before further changes are introduced. This can leave staff feeling overwhelmed and unclear about what has been achieved. The peer team suggest therefore that council should further consider ways to allow and enable changes to fully embed and be evaluated in terms of impact.	Monthly overview of change projects to be shared with the workforce including an overview of when changes are anticipated to be implemented, enabling future changes to be implemented in a considered way.	Head of Service Improvement and Governance	September 2025
Celebrate Success	Given the progress made and the strength and stability of leadership, the peer team feel that the time is right for adult social care in Rotherham to develop a greater focus on celebrating and articulating the great work that is happening and the positive impact and outcomes for people. This will help focus minds more toward what is strong in Rotherham rather than what is wrong.	Implement celebration events for the directorate including a focus on 'Your Time to Shine' in recognition of the great work happening across the service to support residents.	ASC Regulatory Assurance Lead	August 2025