

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cabinet Report Template

Cabinet

Subject: Improving Outcomes in Adult Social Care

Agenda Item

Date of meeting: Thursday, 17 September 2026

Report of: Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities, Public Health & Adult Social Care

Lead Officer: Name: Corporate Director for Homes & Adult Social Care

Contact Officer: Name: Steve Hook, Edward Yeo

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Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Key Decision: Yes

Reason(s) Key: Is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions (wards).

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 Following the February 2026 Cabinet Paper on the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan, this report will update on progress on agreed actions highlighting improved outcomes for residents requiring care and support under the Care Act 2014. The Improvement Plan is designed to fulfil statutory obligations arising from regulatory judgement by the Care Quality Commission and to set targets for additional areas of improvement.

1.2 This report will also explain the next phase of Care Quality Commission Inspection Framework and the requirements for Brighton & Hove City Council.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet notes the progress of Adult Social Care Improvement Plan as part of bi-annual update

2.2 Cabinet notes the next stage of Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection Framework including anticipated expectations for Brighton & Hove

3. Context and background information

3.1 Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection Framework – as reported in February Cabinet Paper

3.1.1. A new regulatory framework for Local Authorities with responsibilities for Adult Social Care was announced in 2022, first pilot inspections were completed by early 2024. Brighton & Hove was notified of the Inspection Process starting in November 2024, with onsite inspection completed in April 2025. The final inspection outcome was received in December 2025.

3.1.2. The Regulatory Framework measures how well Local Authorities deliver their responsibilities under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014.

3.1.3. A report has been completed by CQC and has given the overall rating for Brighton & Hove City Council as 'Requires Improvement', with a score breakdown below;

Quality Statement	Score
Score Assessing Needs	1
Supporting people to live healthier lives	2
Equity in experience and outcomes	2
Care provision, integration and continuity	2
Partnerships and communities	2
Safe pathways, systems and transitions	2
Safeguarding	2
Governance, management and sustainability	2
Learning, improvement and innovation	2

Score 1 – shows significant shortfalls (inadequate), Score 2 shows some shortfalls (Requires Improvement), Score 3 shows a good standard (good). Score 4 shows an exceptional standard (outstanding).

3.2 Section 50 notice – as reported in February Cabinet Paper

The CQC has issued Brighton & Hove a section 50 notice for score of 1 in Assessing Needs, which means that they will give formal notice of the judgement to the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care. As a result of this The Council will work closely with Local Government Association to complete a response plan, which will then be shared with Department for Health & Social Care.

The Section 50 notice highlighted 2 main areas of concern; Waiting times for assessment including waiting well procedures and completion of annual reviews. The Adult Social Care Improvement Plan will address these areas of concern and include other performance areas as explained in the document.

Since the CQC Inspection on-site visit there has been significant improvement in the key areas, specifically Annual Reviews and wait times in teams explained further below.

3.2.1 Update

Since the Section 50 notice was issued Brighton & Hove has been working closely with a Department of Health & Social Care Advisor, who has been attending regular meetings both as 1-1's with key members of staff and monthly Improvement Board meetings. The Improvement Board is the key operational group delivering on identified workstreams, chaired by Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) and attended by senior managers in Adult Social Care.

DHSC advisor has recognised the progress made against key actions and we are anticipating the Section 50 notice being reviewed in Autumn 2026.

3.3 Brighton & Hove City Council – Learning Organisation Framework

Adult Social Care Improvement Plan will;

- **be connected** – Adult Social Care are working closely with support from external stakeholders (e.g. Department for Health & Social Care, Local Government Association, Benchmark authorities) and Internal Stakeholder with experience of regulation (Children's Social Care and Housing Regulation). This will ensure we identify best practice examples and can build from shared experiences.
- **be confident** – the areas identified by regulation for Adult Social Care and national benchmarking have given a clear indication of improvement areas, and we know that improvement in those areas will lead to improved outcomes for residents and results in future regulation.
- **be innovative and creative** – Adult Social Care have identified opportunities to introduce new ways of working and new technology to support delivery of key actions. E.g. use of digital tools to support case work and speed up processes around reviews and maintain contact whilst individuals wait for a service.
- **be diverse and inclusive** – Adult Social Care are pleased to have a diverse workforce that reflects the diversity of Brighton & Hove. The diversity of our workforce is monitored as part of a national programme and have an established infrastructure to ensure we continue to hear from minority groups in the city.
- **be healthy and psychologically safe** – Adult Social Care have recognised that our staff played an important part in the CQC Inspection and will continue to monitor responses by Adult Social Care staff in Staff Surveys and engagement opportunities.

3.4 Areas of Improvement

As a result of the Requires Improvement judgement, Brighton & Hove have been working closely with Local Government Association (LGA) to support the improved outcomes. The support offered by LGA is offered to all Local Authorities who received Requires Improvement or Inadequate rating. Copied below are the key areas of improvement that were submitted for the

Stage 3 (6 months after release of CQC report) return completed in June 2026

3.4.1 'Early wins'

We have made significant progress in our Residential Admissions reporting. Following clarification from DHSC, we have brought ourselves in line with national benchmarking and separated services users who have been discharged into the community into residential placements as part of aftercare provision of s117 of the Mental Health Act, from our Care Act reporting. This has meant a significant improvement explained below

- Move from 15th in peer group to 3rd in peer group for Residential & Nursing Placement for 18-64 year olds
- Move from 14th in peer group to 7th in peer group for Residential & Nursing Placement for 65+

We are also anticipating further improvement in benchmarking when a new reporting system of client-level data is fully implemented.

3.4.2 Prioritised Actions and Updates

Prioritised actions	Update
Expanded Reablement Offer	Having appointed a Senior Programme Manager for Reablement, we have reviewed case files to help support the case for an expanded Reablement offer. As part of the review we have evidenced the opportunity for an expanded reablement programme and remodelling of existing services. The business case has identified a pilot phase, which we anticipate launching in July 2026.
Reduced number of placements in Residential & Nursing Homes	As described above we have made significant improvement in our benchmarking performance following clarification on data returns by DHSC. Having established a task & finish group we have now returned this to business as usual approach, channelling the work into our existing meetings with other Council departments including Housing colleagues.
Reduced Wait Times for Assessment	As described above we are working closely with our Care & Health Improvement Advisor (CHIA) via the LGA to source external support to review our pathways and embed a culture of proportionality. We have introduced new tools in proportionate reviews, which have now launched and are being

	monitored within teams.
Waiting Safely Framework	Waiting Safely Framework has successfully launched and is well understood by operational teams. As part of the framework we have included approaches to contact, which will be monitored by our performance team. The categorisation of cases will support improvement in data quality identifying anomalies at team level and further improve confidence in our reporting
Increased Annual Reviews	We have achieved the target of 45% of annual reviews completed on time in 2025/26 and have a further target to improve to 55% for 26/27. We have allocated targets to teams, which can now be monitored on a regular basis. This will spread the targets throughout the year and give each team a focus on regular reviews.

3.5 Future CQC Approach

Care Quality Commission has recently briefed Local Authorities on the next phase of Inspection Framework. Regulation was reintroduced for Local Authorities in 2024, with previous Inspections delivered in 2010/11, the first phase was an opportunity for 'baselining' to understand the performance of Local Authorities and how that compared nationally. The next phase of the Inspection Framework is to move to a regular pattern and a 'business-as-usual' approach. This means that;

- Quality Statements will be the same – How Local Authorities work with people, Providing Support, Ensuring Safety within the System and Leadership
- Stronger focus on unpaid carers experience and improved co-production processes
- The end-to-end process will be shortened, lasting 19 weeks from the point of notification to the publication of the report.
- Communication approach will change, with more regular meetings and longer time on site (5 days)
- Rating characteristics have been introduced to provide clarity on how the overall judgement was reached and areas for improvement

3.6 Next Steps

3.6.1 Self-Assessment

To prepare for the new Inspection Framework, explained further below, Adult Social Care teams will start a series of workshops to help develop an updated Self-Assessment. The Self-Assessment will be in keeping with new

guidance published by CQC and will incorporate learning from the previous years experience. When complete the Self-Assessment will be shared with Lead Member for Adult Social Care for oversight.

3.6.2 Proportionality & Pathways Workshops

As previously mentioned we are working closely with Local Government Association, who are supporting all Local Authorities with a Requires Improvement judgement. The LGA will support Brighton & Hove Council in delivering workshops to review all of our assessment pathways and help embed a culture of proportionality. The LGA support will help with our management of waiting lists.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 CQC Inspection has highlighted areas of improvement for Adult Social Care in Brighton & Hove that match our self-assessment completed at the start of the Inspection Framework. In identifying and addressing those areas there has been improvement in key metrics explained in this report. If performance had continued on a similar trend (e.g. low performance on annual reviews, under-utilised re-ablement and high residential admissions) there would have been a deterioration in resident outcomes and compliance with statutory duties. The next phase of Inspection Framework will support our continuous improvement journey, engaging with staff and ensuring better outcomes for residents with adult social care needs.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 Brighton & Hove Council has engaged closely with internal & external stakeholders since the introduction of CQC Inspection Framework. The regular communication will continue and include;
- Email communication for regular updates, before the Inspection timetable has been announced, during the Inspection and post Inspection result
 - Regular updates at Cabinet member briefings and all-party briefings where required
 - Workshops delivered by Brighton & Hove and supported by LGA
 - All staff briefings chaired by Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) explaining our current performance, the Inspection process and how staff will be involved.
 - Other communication – video's, briefing notes and team meetings
 - Regular attendance and participation at regional groups to maximise learning opportunities.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. The Adult Social Care Improvement Plan will inform budget development and the Medium-Term Financial strategy of the Council. Any changes in service

delivery will be subject to recommissioning processes and will need to be delivered within the available budget.

Name of finance officer consulted: Brian Smith Date consulted (03/07/26)

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2022 and associated regulations provide CQC with statutory powers to independently assess how well Local Authorities deliver their responsibilities under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. Where one or more of the quality statements is given a score of 1 by CQC, pursuant to Section 50 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (as amended), CQC must inform the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

Name of lawyer consulted: Sandra O'Brien Date consulted 16/06/26

8. Risk implications

- 8.1 Increasing Complexity of Need – The number of open Adult Social Care clients in Brighton & Hove has increased from 3,652 in June 2025 to 3,771 in April 2026, a net increase of 119 clients, or 3.3%. This sits within a changing pattern of demand, with 571 new clients open in April 2026 who were not open in June 2025, offset by 452 clients who were no longer open by April 2026. Open agreements increased from 5,194 to 5,419, suggesting that growth reflects both additional clients and increased service intensity for some existing clients.
- 8.2 The largest areas of growth are in Community Support Services, Supported Living and Direct Payments/Individual Budgets, with notable increases across working-age adult mental health, physical support and learning disability home and day care services. This indicates continuing pressure from more complex and varied need across the city, including increased reliance on community-based support and higher-intensity packages

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 The implementation of the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan has several key equality implications given the CQC findings and Council's Statutory Duties under Care Act and Public Sector Equality Duty. The Improvement Plan will positively impact groups with protected characteristics, ensuring that they have equity in access, assessment and when in receipt of services. By addressing key improvement areas in wait times, reablement and residential admissions outcomes will improve for those individuals and their families.

10. Sustainability implications

- 10.1 N/A

11. Health and Wellbeing Implications:

11.1 N/A

Other Implications

12. Procurement implications

12.1 N/A

13. Crime & disorder implications:

13.1 N/A

14. Conclusion

14.1 The Adult Social Care Improvement Plan provides a clear framework for responding to the CQC judgement and strengthening outcomes for residents who draw on care and support. Progress has already been made in key areas, including annual reviews, waiting safely arrangements, reablement planning and improved use of performance data. Continued delivery of the plan, alongside refreshed self-assessment and preparation for the next phase of CQC assessment, will support the Council to evidence sustained improvement, meet its statutory duties, and maintain a clear focus on safe, timely and person-centred support for residents and unpaid carers in the city.