

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 FEBRUARY 2011

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Purpose of Report

1. To introduce the Annual Performance Assessment report.

Background

2. Every year the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) advises the County Council of the outcome of the Adult Social Care Services Annual Performance Assessment.
3. It provides important information for the Committee on care provision and performance of services, but on occasions has highlighted areas that might warrant further scrutiny. The Executive considered the attached report for 2011 at its meeting on 1 February. Members will note the Government's intentions to abolish the Annual Performance Assessment and introduce a new performance assessment framework.
4. The Committee might be interested to learn that the Executive had already asked the Corporate and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee to look at the status of all local performance indicators. This was in the light of the Coalition Government's stated intention to reduce the number and range of local performance indicators on which the Council is required to report.
5. At its meeting on Monday, 28 March 2011 that Committee therefore intends to consider suggestions on the performance management information it would be most appropriate for the authority to retain or develop in future financial years.

Recommendation

6. That the Committee consider the attached report and decide whether it has implications for the work programme

BRYON HUNTER

Scrutiny Team leader

County Hall
NORTHALLERTON

26 January 2011

Background documents: None

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

1 FEBRUARY 2011

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE – 2009/10

Report of the Corporate Director – Adult and Community Services

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To report on the 2009/10 Adult Social Services Assessment of Performance carried out by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for which North Yorkshire County Council has received an overall grade of 'Excellent'. It should be noted it is a requirement by CQC that the report is presented to an open meeting of the relevant Executive Committee.
- 1.2 To advise the Executive on key strengths and areas for improvement arising from the CQC Annual Performance Assessment report.
- 1.3 To inform the Executive of the Government's proposals to abolish the Annual Performance Assessment and introduce a new performance assessment framework.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The CQC carries out an annual assessment of performance for local authorities with adult social care services responsibilities. Regular business meetings are held during the year between the CQC's Area Manager and Adult and Community Services to review progress. The Adult Social Care assessment ratings were published nationally on 25 November 2010.
- 2.2 The CQC is the regulator for adult social care services following the merger of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), Health Care Commission and the Mental Health Commission. The CQC took on its new responsibilities from 1 April 2009 and now regulates health and social care services including those provided by the NHS, local authorities, private companies and the voluntary sector. The 2009/10 annual performance assessment set out in this report represents the second and final year of assessment by the CQC.
- 2.3 The CQC assessment of performance report awards an overall grade for delivering outcomes and individual grades for delivery against seven outcomes. The judgements are:
- **Performing Poorly** - not delivering the minimum requirements for people.
 - **Performing Adequately** - only delivering the minimum requirements for people.
 - **Performing Well** - consistently delivering above the minimum requirements for people.
 - **Performing Excellently** - overall delivering well above the minimum requirements for people.

- 2.4 The CQC has judged that overall North Yorkshire County Council is performing excellently based on the following outcomes:

Improved health and emotional well being	Excellent
Improved quality of life	Excellent
Making a positive contribution	Excellent
Increased choice and control	Excellent
Freedom from discrimination and harassment	Well
Economic Well Being	Well
Maintaining personal dignity and respect	Well

- 2.5 On 3 November 2010, the Government announced the abolition of the current CQC Annual Performance Assessment system. The Department of Health is currently consulting on a new sector-led performance assessment framework which it intends to introduce in 2011/12. It is currently consulting on proposals on a new strategic approach to quality outcomes in adult social care. The consultation runs until 9 February 2011 and it is likely that final proposals will be published during spring 2011.

- 2.6 The ending of the annual score for social care services within local authorities follows the abolition of Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) followed by a further announcement in August 2010 that the Audit Commission, which administered the CPA, would also be abolished.

3.0 ISSUES

3.1 The Overall Performance Judgement

- 3.2 In awarding the maximum performance rating for adult social care services for 2009/10, the Commission highlighted excellence in the outcomes that relate to improved health and well being, improved quality of life, making a positive contribution and increased choice and control.
- 3.3 The Commission particularly highlighted the Council's strong leadership and its political commitment to adult social care where elected members are actively championing the adult social care agenda as community leaders. It recognised the continuing improvement in transforming all of its services and highlighted the Council's successful approach in keeping vulnerable people safe in its safeguarding arrangements. The Commission also acknowledged the Council's close partnership working and its strong performance in continuing to achieve efficiency savings and ensure better value for money.
- 3.4 The judgement represents sustained improvement on the previous year's judgement. It continues the trajectory of significant improvement in the Council's adult social care services over the last few years. The Executive will note that this is the third year in which the Council's Adult Social Care Services has been assessed as delivering 'excellent' outcomes for the people of North Yorkshire.
- 3.5 The judgement recognises that adult social care services have continued to make significant improvements in the range and quality of support provided to North Yorkshire's more vulnerable citizens. The grading continues to reflect the highest degree of confidence in the Council's adult social care services and is an endorsement of the Council's determination to modernise services in an increasingly challenging financial climate.

3.6 North Yorkshire County Council was one of only six shire counties nationally which were graded 'excellent' across the delivery of outcomes judgement. Of the 152 councils in England with adult social services responsibility, 37 (24%) were graded 'excellent'.

3.7 Leadership

The judgement recognises that Elected Members are active in driving the social care agenda and the crucial role they play in ensuring that the different views of their communities to inform planning and service delivery. It also recognises that the transformation of key services is the key priority for the Council and that there is evidence of continuing improvement in performance across all areas and service groups during 2009/10.

3.8 Commissioning and Use of Resources

As reported to the Executive last year, the performance judgement continues to recognise that highly effective resource governance arrangements are in place that have assisted the Council in delivering its efficiency savings in 2009/10. The CQC acknowledges that budget monitoring systems have been further developed to better understand locality spending patterns and alignment of care activity with financial data in real time. In addition the CQC also noted: *"the Council is aware of, and planning for, the financial challenge in forthcoming years, and is identifying opportunities to continue to release resources for transfer to community based services which will allow it to progress the transformation agenda."*

3.9 The CQC endorses the approach taken by the Council's adult social care service, which continues to transform traditional services by reinvesting in initiatives such as telecare. It has received national recognition for its work in this area as an example of good practice. The CQC also highlighted the continued development in extra care which offer supported living solutions to maintain people's independence. In addition, the CQC noted the strengthening of the Council's reablement service to provide an intensive home care service which helps service users to manage for themselves their daily living activities notwithstanding illness or disability.

3.10 Key Challenges

3.11 The recent local government settlement presents a significant challenge to the improvements secured across all client groups in recent years as highlighted in paragraph 3.7 above. As reported last year, the difficult economic climate will continue to impact adversely on the overall health and well being of our local communities and it follows that people will continue to turn to the Council for leadership, support and advice in far greater numbers. Increasing numbers of older people are seeking help in North Yorkshire with complex needs such as dementia. Access to services continues to remain a significant challenge in North Yorkshire given its geographical size and rural nature. It is further anticipated that the welfare reforms announced by the Government which will add a "welfare pressure" to the increasing underlying demographic demand.

3.12 The 'excellent' assessment represents a continuing endorsement of the Council's proven strategy to invest in prevention and early intervention. This in turn will help the Council to manage a future rise in demand whilst delivering better

quality outcomes at a lower cost. This judgement amounts to an acknowledgement that the Council is better prepared than many others for the financial challenges ahead.

- 3.13 The Annual Performance Assessment continues to emphasise the priority of improving safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable people within North Yorkshire. Rightly, the CQC maintains focus on this area particularly as it relates to the quality of services that the Council has commissioned from the independent sector and in keeping people safe from abuse and harm. The CQC expects the Council to demonstrate sustainable improvement in this area which is likely to be tested in a formal inspection of North Yorkshire's safeguarding arrangements in the future. There will be an expectation on the part of the CQC that the quality of front line services will be protected notwithstanding the financial challenges highlighted above.
- 3.14 As highlighted above, the Annual Performance Assessment was abolished. The Government want councils to face "real time, ongoing" assessments of their performance, not "artificial snapshots". Further, that the new performance system should be based around "local accountability" and "sector-led, mutual support" rather than top down "central intervention". To this end the Government published "A Vision for Adult Social Care" on 16 November 2010. It sets out a new direction of travel for performance where greater local accountability will drive improvement and innovation to deliver higher productivity and higher quality care services. Councils therefore have the freedom to focus on publishing information locally on agreed outcomes to support transparency and accountability. Alongside the Social Care Vision, the Government also launched "Transparency in Outcomes: A framework for adult social care – a consultation on a new strategic approach to quality and outcomes in adult social care".

4.0 PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Annual Performance Assessment Report is attached at **Appendix 1**, and highlights key areas of strength and key areas for development which are considered to be priorities for improvement in the forthcoming year. With regard to outcomes 1-6, the Council was allowed to confirm through self-declaration that it was continuing to perform at the previous year's levels. It was allowed to passport judgements from 2008/9 in this way because of its 'excellent' status. However, all Councils were assessed on Outcome 7: Dignity and Respect as well as the key areas covering Leadership, Commissioning and Use of Resources. This was part of a move to a more proportionate performance assessment process in 2009/10.
- 4.2 Seven key areas which set out what the Council does well have been identified by CQC within adult social care services and include the following:
- Continued delivery of planned changes in the context of demographic pressures and financial constraints;
 - Continuing success in addressing transformation of services;
 - Telecare services;
 - Strong performance management culture;
 - Use of commissioning approaches to lead transformation of services;
 - Continued positive development of safeguarding arrangements across the county;
 - Improvement in safeguarding referral rates;

- Joint work with health to address poor quality care in nursing homes and improve outcomes for people.
- 4.3 Whilst recognising those areas where the Council does well, the CQC has identified key areas where it needs to improve which include the following:
- Continue to reduce proportion of residential care placements for older people;
 - Further extend safeguarding training opportunities in the independent sector;
 - Exploring ways in which people who have been involved in safeguarding issues can more directly contribute to the safeguarding board's decision making and development.
- 4.4 All areas for improvement identified in the assessment have been addressed.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. As in previous years, sustaining the success achieved in adult social care services is dependent upon policies which ensure:
- Continuation of 'invest to save' and better outcomes strategy in preventative and early intervention services which help people to live in their own homes for as long as possible through practical initiatives
 - A demonstrable value for money approach through sound budgetary management and good commissioning arrangements;
 - Through practical initiatives;
 - The safety of people within the Council's care;
 - Continued implementation of "Putting People First" with a particular focus on self-directed support and personalised budgets;
 - Maintaining and improving productive partnership working with health partners to address the wider health and well being agenda.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The process to agree the Council's budget for 2011/12 is continuing. Members' attention is drawn to the need to consider the implications for performance of the final decisions made by the Council on the adult and community services directorate budget within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no explicit legal implications arising out of the Performance Assessment. The Council is expected to copy the assessment letter and the Annual Performance Assessment report to the Council's appointed auditor and to relevant partners. This will be carried out.

8.0 HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The CQC acknowledges the Council's promotion of high standards for the development of its workforce. In particular, the CQC cites adult and community services achievement of the Training Quality Standard for Employers. North Yorkshire County Council was the first Council nationally to achieve the standard.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Council received a grade of 'performing well' in respect of the 'Freedom from discrimination and harassment' outcome.

10.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

10.1 Consultation regarding performance improvement was undertaken regularly between the CQC and the Adult and Community Services Management Board in 2009/10.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

It is a CQC requirement for me to present the Annual Performance Assessment Report to the Executive. There is also a requirement to publish the report in an easy read format so that it is readily accessible to vulnerable and disabled people. This will be placed on the Council's website.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 The Executive is asked to:

- i. Note CQC's requirement to present a copy of the Annual Performance Assessment Report to an open meeting of this Executive;
- ii. Note the content of the Annual Performance Assessment Report and the positive outcome rating of "excellent" which is an exceptional achievement for the Council;
- iii. Note this positive result for all staff and managers in respect of the service and performance improvements and, in particular, the difficult 'face to face' decisions that front line staff have had to make to ensure that the Council's key objective of affordable quality care is met;
- iv. Note the considerable evolving challenges set by the Government in its proposals for the new sector-led performance assessment framework.

DEREK LAW MBE
Corporate Director – Adult and Community Services

County Hall
Northallerton

5 January 2011

Background Documents:
Appendix 1 – CQC Annual Assessment of Performance Report

Report prepared by:
Sukhdev Dosanjh
Assistant Director – Performance & Change Management

Assessment of Performance Report 2009/10

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE 2009/10: North Yorkshire



Contact Name	Job Title
Dianne Chaplin	Compliance Manager
<p>The report will produce a summary of the performance of how the council promotes adult social care outcomes for people in the council area.</p> <p>The overall grade for performance is combined from the grades given for the individual outcomes. There is a brief description below – see Grading for Adult Social Care Outcomes 2009/10 in the Performance Assessment Guide web address below, for more detail.</p> <p>Performing Poorly - not delivering the minimum requirements for people. Performing Adequately - only delivering the minimum requirements for people. Performing Well - consistently delivering above the minimum requirements for people. Performing Excellently - overall delivering well above the minimum requirements for people.</p> <p>We also make a written assessment about</p> <p>Leadership and Commissioning and use of resources</p> <p>Information on these additional areas can be found in the outcomes framework To see the outcomes framework please go to our web site: Outcomes framework You will also find an explanation of terms used in the report in the glossary on the web site.</p>	

2009/10 Council APA Performance

Delivering outcomes assessment Overall council is:	Excellent
Outcome 1: Improved health and well-being	Excellent
Outcome 2: Improved quality of life	Excellent
Outcome 3: Making a positive contribution	Excellent
Outcome 4: Increased choice and control	Excellent
Outcome 5: Freedom from discrimination and harassment	Well
Outcome 6: Economic well-being	Well
Outcome 7: Maintaining personal dignity and respect	Well

Council overall summary of 2009/10 performance

The council has built on its strengths during 2009/10 to continue to deliver its vision for transformed care services. It has progressed its ambitions to create high quality personalised health and social care services and further develop a community based approach.

There has been continuing success in addressing transformation of services and the council's telecare services remain a national exemplar of good practice. There is a strong performance management culture across the council and a continuing commitment to the training and development of staff to increase awareness of and help to deliver personalisation.

The council's approach to commissioning is leading the transformation of services, and there has been positive engagement with the voluntary and independent sectors to reshape the market to support changing and emerging needs. The council needs to continue to reduce the proportion of residential care placements for older people and deliver planned changes in the context of demographic pressures and financial constraints.

Safeguarding arrangements have been further developed and there has been a significant improvement in referral rates. There is also positive joint work with Health to address poor quality care in nursing homes and improve outcomes for people. The council needs to further extend safeguarding training opportunities in the independent sector and explore ways in which people who have been involved in safeguarding issues can contribute more directly to the safeguarding boards decision making and development.

Leadership

“People from all communities are engaged in planning with councilors and senior managers. Councilors and senior managers have a clear vision for social care. They lead people in transforming services to achieve better outcomes for people. They agree priorities with their partners, secure resources, and develop the capabilities of people in the workforce”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The council has continued to make progress with partners in the delivery of its shared vision to make “Putting People First in North Yorkshire” a reality. The transformation of services is the key priority for the council and there is evidence of continuing improvement in performance across all areas and service groups during 2009/10.

Information and advice to support health and wellbeing and promote independence is increasingly available and the council has continued to use its library services to ensure a county wide dissemination of this information and to target harder to reach groups such as the gypsy and traveller community. An online community information directory, “Engage in North Yorkshire” is available to support access to groups and events across localities.

The council has strengthened its reablement service building on existing good practice and further developing integrated approaches with the PCT. Its approach to telecare has achieved national recognition as an example of good practice and there has been continuing development of extra care housing. Opportunities to exercise choice and control through the use of individual budgets have also been developed further from an already high base level. Close working arrangements with health and other partners has not only supported the delivery of the transformation agenda but has also assisted the council in achieving efficiency savings and ensuring better value for money. The delivery of personalised services is well supported by focussed development of the council’s workforce and positive engagement with partners across the public, voluntary and independent sectors.

Elected members are active in driving the social care agenda and, as community leaders, have played a key role in ensuring that the views of the many different communities which make up the county of North Yorkshire, inform planning and service delivery. The council has well developed processes for systematically capturing the experiences and views of people who use services and their families and carers, and can evidence how this contributes to shaping the commissioning agenda and the personalisation of services.

The council continues to promote high standards for the development of its workforce. The Adult and Community Services Workforce Development Unit has achieved the Training Quality Standard for Employers and has also retained its Investors in People status following review in 2009/10. Training is focussed on customer need and corporate aims and objectives, and courses are evaluated to ensure that they can be linked to improving performance. The council has developed The Care Alliance with partners in the voluntary and independent sectors to support workforce development across the social care market. Both staff turnover and vacancy rates have reduced to below the national average.

The council has continued to build on its existing strong performance management culture. Performance management is led by the Performance Board which sets the strategic direction for service improvement. This is supported by specialist Service Improvement and Outcome Managers who work directly with locality teams to achieve strategic goals. This approach to performance management encourages involvement from staff across all levels and is underpinned by well developed and regularly available management information.

Key strengths

- Continuing success in addressing transformation of services
- Telecare services
- Strong performance management culture

Areas for improvement

Commissioning and use of resources

"People who use services and their carers are able to commission the support they need. Commissioners engage with people who use services, carers, partners and service providers, and shape the market to improve outcomes and good value".

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

A long term commissioning strategy is in place and this is regularly reviewed and refreshed. Joint priorities are agreed with key partners and other stakeholders. During 2009/10 the strategic commissioning group has undertaken a locality exercise linked to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which involved mapping data on budgets and demand, service provision and gaps in services. This will help take forward the place shaping approach for localities and will be rolled out in other areas of the county in 2010/11. A five year Commissioning and Procurement Framework is being developed with partners. The council evidences the involvement of and use of feedback from stakeholders, including people who use services and their carers, in their commissioning strategy.

Commissioners are leading the transformation of services and shaping the local social care market to provide more personalised options to meet individual need. Resources are being redirected to preventative services and there is an increasing focus on reablement to support independence. These prevention schemes were further developed with the engagement of a wide range of providers and organisations from the third sector including some innovative commissioning with Age Concern (now Age UK).

Telecare services and the developing joint telehealth arrangements are particularly strong. The council has also specifically targeted reducing acute admissions to hospital through early intervention and prevention. The continuing development of Extra Care Schemes is supporting the council's challenge to reduce the proportion of residential placements for older people against significant demographic pressures across the county. There has been continued growth in the use of personal budgets to give people more choice and control in the commissioning of services to meet their needs and brokerage support has been further developed.

The council has a range of approaches regarding the development and delivery of integrated commissioning with Health underpinned by a joint vision statement. Adult and Community Care commissioning services have been reconfigured on a locality basis to match the PCT structure and joint working with the PCT Practice Based Commissioning Groups is working more effectively. This approach is facilitating whole system commissioning across the health and social care spectrum and should have

a positive influence on outcomes in 2010/11.

Effective resource governance arrangements are in place and the council has delivered its efficiency savings in 2009/10. Budget monitoring systems have been further developed to better understand locality spending patterns and align activity with financial data in real time. The council is aware of, and planning for, the financial challenge in forthcoming years, and is identifying opportunities to continue to release resources for transfer to community based services which will allow it to continue to progress the transformation agenda.

The council has worked closely with providers to both shape services within the social care market and to address quality shortfalls within individual services. There have been two major consultations with the voluntary and independent sector, “Securing the Future” and “Shaping the Care Market”. The commissioning approach of the council and the PCT including the need to reduce the use of residential options for older people has been shared with providers. Work has been done to encourage the development of more flexible provision to reflect changing demands in line with service transformation and to ensure that the market is more locally responsive. A market development procurement group is leading the work on market reshaping at locality levels. This work has begun in Harrogate and Craven, and will be rolled out in other localities during 2010/11.

Work on improving quality within the care market has continued in 2009/10. A Commissioning, Procurement and Quality Assurance department is now established and this has raised the profile of quality as a key priority with commissioners and providers. A Quality Assurance Framework has been developed and piloted with providers, and this will be taken forward in 2010/11. The framework includes baseline assessment tools which help identify providers who need additional support to improve the quality of their service delivery. The council also works with providers where there are identified shortfalls in quality. There have been a number of examples during 2009/10, where the council and health partners have worked closely with a provider in particularly difficult circumstances to ensure that care needs were met and improved outcomes for people using the service. This positive link between quality development and safeguarding is a particular strength in enabling people to be safe and receive appropriate care within their own local communities where other available options may be limited.

Key strengths

- Use of commissioning approaches to lead transformation of services
- Engagement with voluntary and independent sectors to reshape the market
- Links between quality agenda and safeguarding arrangements
- Continued delivery of planned changes in the context of demographic pressures and financial constraints

Areas for improvement

- Continue to reduce proportion of residential care placements for older people

Outcome 1: Improving health and emotional well-being

“People in the council area have good physical and mental health. Healthier and safer lifestyles help them lower their risk of illness, accidents, and long-term conditions. Fewer people need care or treatment in hospitals and care homes. People who have long-term needs and their carers are supported to live as independently as they choose, and have well timed, well-coordinated treatment and support”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to accept the judgement awarded for Outcome 1 from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform at an excellent level in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor any indicators of change to this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 2: Improved quality of life

“People who use services and their carers enjoy the best possible quality of life. Support is given at an early stage, and helps people to stay independent. Families are supported so that children do not have to take on inappropriate caring roles. Carers are able to balance caring with a life of their own. People feel safe when they are supported at home, in care homes, and in the neighborhood. They are able to have a social life and to use leisure, learning and other local services.”

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to accept the judgement awarded for Outcome 2 from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform at an excellent level in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor any indicators of change to this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 3: Making a positive contribution

“People who use services and carers are supported to take part in community life. They contribute their views on services and this helps to shape improvements. Voluntary organisations are thriving and accessible. Organisations for people who use services and carers are well supported”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to accept the judgement awarded for Outcome 3 from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform at an excellent level in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor any indicators of change to this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 4: Increased choice and control

“People who use services and their carers are supported in exercising control of personal support. People can choose from a wide range of local support”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to accept the judgement awarded for Outcome 4 from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform at an excellent level in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor any indicators of change to this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 5: Freedom from discrimination and harassment

“People who use services and their carers have fair access to services. Their entitlements to health and care services are upheld. They are free from discrimination or harassment in their living environments and neighborhoods”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to accept the judgement awarded for Outcome 5 from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform well in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor any indicators of change to this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 6: Economic well-being

“People who use services and their carers have income to meet living and support costs. They are supported in finding or maintaining employment”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to accept the judgement awarded for Outcome 6 from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform well in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor any indicators of change to this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 7: Maintaining personal dignity and respect

“People who use services and their carers are safeguarded from all forms of abuse. Personal care maintains their human rights, preserving dignity and respect, helps them to be comfortable in their environment, and supports family and social life”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

During 2009/10 the council has continued to address its key priorities to implement plans to strengthen and improve safeguarding arrangements. Dedicated administrative support is now in place and there are revised protocols regarding the recording of referrals. Agreed procedures have been launched within the voluntary sector and there has been further development of operational guidance within member agencies of the safeguarding board. A safeguarding protocol for collective care settings has been introduced supported by a process to ensure that serious concerns are positively addressed.

The safeguarding adults board is supported by four locality boards, and there is appropriate representation from partners to support these arrangements. During 2009/10, the board has strengthened governance arrangements and the performance framework. There is close monitoring of the implementation of the boards business plan and evaluation of referral and outcome data to improve practice. The council has improved the arrangements for user involvement through links with user led partnership boards and the introduction of interviews with people who have used the safeguarding process. This work should be progressed and ways of involving people who have used the service more directly in the boards decision making and development should be explored.

Action has been taken to further raise public awareness and the council has continued to use its links with local libraries to extend the range and increase the impact of these messages. There has been a significant rise in the number of referrals to safeguarding in 2009/10 (from 383 to 1062). This is linked to the improvement in recording practice, the action taken to raise public awareness and continued positive engagement with partners. The rate of referrals is now a more appropriate reflection of the work being done by the council to promote safety and wellbeing across the community.

The council is committed to the training of its own staff and has continued to engage with the independent sector to ensure staff are aware of safeguarding issues and how to report concerns. The proportion of independent sector staff trained with the support of the council has risen, which is a positive step forward, but needs to improve further in 2010/11. The council reports that all its

staff have received appropriate training and certificate level training has been made available for safeguarding officers. A competency framework for safeguarding has been introduced and promoted for all staff through the safeguarding boards training sub-group. Safeguarding figures prominently in the council's supervisory framework for staff. Arrangements are in place to ensure that Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards are properly addressed. Briefings and training have taken place during 2009/10 to raise awareness of this issue across all sectors and the council is working closely with the PCT to pool knowledge and growing expertise.

The views of people who use services are systematically gathered through reviews, surveys and community engagement. Results confirm high levels of satisfaction and that people feel that they are treated with dignity and respect. The council has taken action to increase awareness of its dignity charter principles, including county wide events and some focussed work with the independent sector. Dignity and respect principles were a key priority for the council's in-house services in 2009/10 and the dignity standards were launched across the independent sector in February 2010. An audit tool to ensure its own services meet the required standards, has been developed by the council and its Quality Assurance Framework applies to all providers including in-house services.

The quality of services available within the council area is improving and the council's commissioning of placements reflects this. There are, however, issues about the quality of care within nursing homes for older people in some parts of the county which has meant an increase in the proportion of people living within services rated as poor (from 1% to 7% in the September 2009 data capture). The council has responded positively to this and where problems are identified it has worked closely with health colleagues to improve care practice routines and promote better outcomes for people in such placements. There are a number of examples which evidence the success of this joint approach.

Families and carers are well supported across the county. Assessment and specialist staff within the council have been briefed about the importance of engaging positively with families and carers and treating them as partners in the planning and delivery of care packages. Carer awareness training has been made available for groups of staff who may come into contact with carers, these include GPs and library staff who are playing an increasing part in ensuring that information and advice is universally available. The carer's grant has been used to fund peer support and individual sessions at Carers Centres to provide emotional support.

Key strengths

- Continued positive development of safeguarding arrangements across the county
- Improvement in referral rates
- Joint work with health to address poor quality care in nursing homes and improve outcomes for people

Areas for improvement

- Further extending safeguarding training opportunities in the independent sector
 - Exploring ways in which people who have been involved in safeguarding issues can more directly contribute to the safeguarding boards decision making and development
-