

**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
21 DECEMBER 2021**

ADULT SOCIAL CARE OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform members on the progress in determining a revised Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF).
2. To give an overview of Darlington's performance against ASCOF over the past three years.

Summary

3. ASCOF was first published in March 2011 and is reviewed annually to update the measures to reflect outcomes for adults and carers.
4. ASCOF measures how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to people. The ASCOF is used both locally and nationally to set priorities for care and support, measure progress and strengthen transparency and accountability. Performance against the ASCOF is published annually by NHS Digital. The Department of Health and Social Care also provides an annual report on the national picture.
5. Darlington continues to perform well against the ASCOF measures and in most cases performs better than the North East average.

Recommendations:

6. It is recommended that:
 - (a) Members note the content of this report.
 - (b) Members receive a further report when the revised framework is published.

**Joss Harbron
Assistant Director – Adult Services**

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Sharon Raine: Extension 9061

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no specific crime and disorder implications in this report.
Health and Well Being	There are no issues relating to health and well being which this report needs to address.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no specific carbon impact issues in this report.
Diversity	The report does not contain any proposals that impact on diversity issues.
Wards Affected	All wards are affected.
Groups Affected	No specific groups are particularly affected.
Budget and Policy Framework	This decision does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	The report does not require a key decision.
Urgent Decision	The report does not require an urgent decision.
Council Plan	The subject matter of the report gives an overview of performance against a number of measures in the Council Plan
Efficiency	The report does not have any efficiency implications.
Impact of Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

What is ASCOF?

7. The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) measures how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to people. The ASCOF is used both locally and nationally to set priorities for care and support, measure progress and strengthen transparency and accountability. Performance against the ASCOF is published annually by NHS Digital. The Department of Health and Social Care also provides an annual report on the national picture.

When it commenced in its current form

8. ASCOF was first published in March 2011 and is reviewed annually to update the measures to reflect outcomes for adults and carers.

Drivers behind ASCOF

9. ASCOF enables every local authority to see how they are performing in implementing local changes required as a result of the Care Act 2014. This includes supporting people to maintain their independence and their connections to the community, and ensuring they have control over the care they receive.

10. ASCOF is used both locally and nationally to set priorities for care and support, measure progress, strengthen transparency and accountability.
11. ASCOF provides comparable information on the outcomes and experiences of people who use adult social care, and carers.

The key roles of the ASCOF

12. The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework includes a Handbook of Definitions. This document describes the key roles of the ASCOF as:
 - (a) Locally, the ASCOF provides councils with robust information that enables them to monitor the success of local interventions in improving outcomes, and to identify their priorities for making improvements. Local Authorities can also use ASCOF to inform outcome-based commissioning models.
 - (b) Locally, it is also a useful resource for Health and Wellbeing boards who can use the information to inform their strategic planning and leadership role for local commissioning.
 - (c) Locally, the ASCOF also strengthens accountability to local people. By fostering greater transparency on the outcomes delivered by care and support services, it enables local people to hold their council to account for the quality of the services that they provide, commission or arrange. Local authorities are also using the ASCOF to develop and publish local accounts to communicate directly with local communities on the outcomes that are being achieved, and their priorities for developing local services.
 - (d) Regionally, the data supports sector led improvement; bringing councils together to understand and benchmark their performance. This, in turn, stimulates discussions between councils on priorities for improvement, and promotes the sharing of learning and best practice.
 - (e) At the national level, the ASCOF demonstrates the performance of the adult social care system as a whole, and its success in delivering high-quality, personalised care and support. Meanwhile, the framework supports Ministers in discharging their accountability to the public and Parliament for the adult social care system, and continues to inform, and support, national policy development.

The revised Framework

13. In late 2019 the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) was commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to undertake a project to explore potential revisions to the existing Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) to ensure that the framework offers a vehicle for providing the 'right narrative' for adult social care, and which better reflects how it is meeting changes in national and local policy and its statutory responsibilities defined in the Care Act (2014).
14. The Institute for Public Care (IPC) were appointed to undertake the first phase of this work on behalf of ADASS in 2019/20.

15. The output of this work was that two reports were produced the first on Reviewing the Current ASCOF, the second exploring the options for developing the right 'performance narrative' for Adult Social Care.
16. Two recommendations were included in the second report:
 - (a) To refresh the current framework with reference to the suggestions and comments gathered through the engagement and survey activity.
 - (b) Explore an alternative ASCOF
17. The second recommendation was taken forward as the preferred option by both ADASS and DHSC. As a result, a second part to the project was commissioned, with ADASS again partnering with IPC to deliver the work on behalf of DHSC. The focus of this phase was to further refine the initial tranche of indicators identified to form a revised ASCOF through a brief engagement process with ADASS and other key stakeholders.
18. The work addressed the overwhelming view from stakeholders that ASCOF is limited in what it can report about adult social care. It currently omits large parts of the day-to-day business of councils to meet their requirements under the Care Act 2014.
19. IPC suggested that DHSC (NHS Digital) collects a different set of data. The current returns for ASCOF and for Short and Long Term Services (SALT) would be scrapped in favour of a single return that captured the suggested data fields – many of which are already within either ASCOF or SALT. This proposal just enables the data to be collected in a way that better supports the overall business of adult social care. This approach does not (at this stage) include financial activity. This is in part because of the way that the Local Government Association has already developed a tool (LGA Inform) to capture the financial data from Councils. It is proposed that the development of Option Two sits alongside “LGA Inform” to assist in telling the social care story.
20. Of particular note, is the suggestion that the current user and carers surveys are completely revised. Therefore, it is recommended that the current areas of the users and carers surveys are removed from any refreshed ASCOF.
21. There is no current indication of a publication date for the revised ASCOF, a further report will be presented to Members once this is received.

Three Year ASCOF Performance

22. Data against each of the ASCOF measures for the years 2018/19 to 2021 is contained in **Appendix A**, in summary this illustrates that Darlington performs:
 - (a) better than the North East average on 10 of the 13 indicators in 2020/21
 - (b) better than the England average on 12 of the 13 indicators in 2020/21
 - (c) consistently well over the three year period.