

**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
7 JANUARY 2025**

CQC ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK – UPDATE

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update members on the CQC Assurance Framework.

Summary

2. The CQC Assurance Framework for Local Authorities in England, introduced by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), is a structured approach to evaluating the performance of local authorities in delivering Adult Social Care services. It aligns with the goals of the Health and Care Act 2022, which aims to ensure high-quality, equitable, and sustainable care for individuals in need.
3. The framework evaluates how local authorities:
 - a) Assess needs: Identify and understand the care and support needs of their population.
 - b) Provide support: Deliver timely, effective, and personalised care.
 - c) Ensure safety: Protect adults at risk from harm and ensure high standards of care.
 - d) Leadership and workforce: Exhibit effective leadership and maintain a skilled, motivated workforce.
4. Assessment Criteria: The CQC uses four key themes:
 - a) Working with people: Involves engagement with service users, families, and carers.
 - b) Providing support: Focuses on commissioning and direct service provision.
 - c) Ensuring safety: Covers safeguarding and risk management.
 - d) Leadership: Examines strategic direction, governance, and staff wellbeing.
5. Methods of Evaluation:
 - a) Data and Evidence: Review of qualitative and quantitative data from local authorities and service providers.

- b) Inspection Visits: On-site evaluations to observe practices and gather insights from stakeholders.
 - c) Stakeholder Feedback: Input from people using services, their carers, and partner organisations.
6. Outcome Ratings:
- a) Local authorities are rated on their performance, using categories such as Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement, or Inadequate.
7. Improvement Focus:
- a) The framework emphasises continuous improvement by identifying strengths and areas for development, supporting local authorities to enhance service quality.

Conclusion

- 8. The CQC's assurance process aims to create transparency, foster accountability, and drive better outcomes for individuals relying on adult social care services.
- 9. This report seeks to update Scrutiny members on the requirements of the CQC assurance framework, the duties and responsibilities of the Local Authority and provide an updated timeline of the inspection.

Recommendation

- 10. It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report in the form of a presentation

Joss Harbron
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Background Papers

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

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Council Plan	The report and the activity to support the preparation for regulation and inspection is aligned to the Council Plan priorities.
Addressing inequalities	This programme has no specific impact on protected groups.
Tackling Climate Change	All consideration was undertaken with sustainability in mind and aim to reduce the carbon footprint, and re-use energy and environmental resources where possible.
Efficient and effective use of resources	Key aims with Adult Services is to deliver efficient, effective and person-centred care which supports a strength based approach aligned to the requirements of the Care Act and includes effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	The strategy outlined in this report will continue the Council's drive to deliver services and support that enhance people's life chances and opportunities to thrive.
S17 Crime and Disorder	N/A
Wards Affected	All Darlington Wards.
Groups Affected	All adults with social care needs in Darlington.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This report is an update.
Urgent Decision	N/A
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The proposed projects have no specific impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

Climate Considerations

11. This report has considered climate impact and change. All consideration was undertaken with sustainability in mind and aim to reduce the carbon footprint, and re-use energy and environmental resources where possible. The feedback and evidence for CQC assurance framework has been developed electronically and shared via emails, Teams or in the main through virtual events. Adult Services have appointed practitioners to lead on climate change within the service and develop literature and information to share with people who access services.