

Appendix 1

Adult Social Care Strategy Development Update February 2026

The Council's Adult Social Care Strategy is currently in development and will form a core component of our continued improvement journey following the CQC local authority assessment. The strategy is being shaped by the findings of the CQC report, staff feedback gathered through the Striving for Excellence programme, and our refreshed improvement plan. Five priority areas have been identified for the strategy: *Carers, Waiting Times, Prevention, Partnership Working, and Accessibility of Information and Services*. These priorities reflect both local need and national expectations and are aligned with the improvement activity already underway across the Council's Adult Social Care department.

The strategy will be co-produced with people with lived experience, carers, staff, and partners, and will be evidence-based to ensure transparency, accountability, and measurable impact.

Delivery Approach

The development of the strategy is structured into three phases:

A. Phase 1: Evidence Building (In Progress)

Work is currently underway to build a robust evidence base for each of the five priority areas.

- **Carers**
The Council already has a comprehensive Joint All-Age Carers Strategy and action plan. The new Adult Social Care Strategy will not duplicate this work but will align with it and reinforce key commitments. Existing data provides a strong foundation for this priority area.
- **Waiting Times**
Waiting times remain one of the most visible areas of concern for residents and were a key finding in the CQC assessment. Internal performance data is being analysed to understand delays at every stage (from first contact to the start of support). This will inform clear, targeted actions in the strategy.
- **Prevention**
CQC identified that prevention is not yet consistently embedded across the service. A full review of existing documents and projects has been completed, with activity mapped against the national prevention framework (prevent, reduce, delay). Early findings show strong pockets of preventative work but a fragmented overall offer. The next step is to produce an overarching prevention framework and set of strategic prevention commitments.
- **Partnership Working**
Strong partnership working is central to achieving our purpose of *Supporting the Life that Matters to You*. Work is underway to define partnership principles that

reflect the strengths of our multi-agency system and to draft a workplan to enhance consistency, communication, and shared responsibility.

- **Accessibility of Information and Services**

The CQC highlighted accessibility of information as an area requiring improvement, especially for people who are digitally excluded or who need non-digital formats. A stakeholder workshop will be held to gather lived experiences of accessing information and services. This will define what good accessibility should look like and identify the changes required to achieve it.

B. Phase 2: Drafting the Strategy

Once the evidence base is complete, drafting will begin. The strategy will include:

- A clear articulation of our shared purpose of *Supporting the Life that Matters to You*
- Cross-cutting themes reflecting equality, inclusion, workforce, and person-centred practice
- Strategic commitments and outcome measures for each of the five priority areas
- Alignment to the refreshed Adult Social Care Improvement Plan

C. Phase 3: Co-production, Consultation and Finalisation

A full formal consultation will take place once a draft strategy is available. Co-production will remain central throughout this stage to ensure the strategy is shaped by those with lived experience as well as partners, voluntary sector organisations, and staff. Feedback gathered through consultation will inform the final version of the strategy.

Progress to Date

We are currently in Phase 1 and progressing with the evidence base for all priority areas. Work has begun to draft sections relating to Prevention and Carers, using existing frameworks and data. Engagement activity and internal analysis relating to Waiting Times, Partnership Working, and Accessibility of Information and Services is also underway.

Timeframe

The Adult Social Care Strategy is expected to be completed by summer 2026. Consultation will commence once the draft strategy is available, with timelines planned flexibly to ensure meaningful participation from residents, carers, staff and partners.