

Overall summary

Local authority indicative rating

Good: Evidence shows a good standard

Summary of strengths, areas for development and next steps

There was a real focus on prevention, independence and maintaining and developing people's own skills to prevent and delay the need for more formalised care and support. There was a range of services on offer to people with the aim of supporting their wellbeing. The frontline teams used a strengths-based approach to assessment and support planning, which enabled them to consider people's strengths as well as areas of their life where they may need some support. This approach was being rolled out to partner organisations to ensure a consistent approach.

The focus on partnership working and collaboration was strongly embedded with staff supporting this approach. The expectation of staff to build relationships and work effectively with partner organisations, even in the teams that were not fully integrated, was clearly understood.

There was clear leadership with effective governance and risk management systems in place. Staff morale was high, with staff confirming they had good opportunities for learning and development. Investment has taken place to develop the workforce internally as well as in partnership with regulated providers to try to address some of the workforce challenges in the area. The local authority had a commitment to commissioning other organisations to provide services where it was felt that they had the skills and experience to do so to a high standard.

All staff and leaders had a good understanding about the inequalities within the area and the challenges of the geography. These priorities were clearly identified in formal strategies.

People who required an initial assessment or further support did not have to wait long. The waiting lists were low, with a risk-based approach to managing them with action taken if risk increased.

There have been issues with the arrangements for financial assessments to be carried out for direct payments and delays in the actual payment of these. The local authority was already aware of these issues and had started to take action to address these.

The pathway for autistic people was not entirely clear, with no social work team identified specifically to support them. They were allocated to either the learning disability team, the mental health team or the adult frailty and long-term conditions team. The local authority is a key partner in the Autism Partnership Board, and it is expected that further work will be developed in respect of the support offer for autistic people.

The re-provision of the homecare contracts has led to clear benefits in terms of the reduction of missed calls and 'hand back' of contracts. There are processes in place to offer an alternative provider if a person doesn't wish to use the identified provider for that area or they can choose to have direct payments. The local authority is due to carry out another survey of people receiving homecare, so will be able to review how effective the new commissioning model is, including people's views regarding choice.

While the local authority is meeting its Care Act duties regarding the management of safeguarding concerns, there were still times when partner organisations did not understand the criteria for a s42 enquiry or what action was being taken if a formal investigation did not take place. The local authority needs to continue with its ongoing communication with partner organisations about safeguarding.

The pathway for young people in transition to adult services was not always clear, with some young people moving to social work teams without dedicated transitions staff.

Summary of people's experiences

The majority of people with lived experience had positive experiences. They spoke about the assessment process and the subsequent support planning, which had mostly led to positive outcomes for them, including for unpaid carers. The main challenge for people who had a less positive experience was the lack of a clear pathway for autistic people and for young people transitioning to adult services.

Some people found the website was not easy to navigate and found that it was not always clear to understand who provided the Wellbeing services, while others found it a helpful resource.

The local authority's own surveys, and our own discussions, found that people spoke highly of the individual members of staff and of the time they took to fully understand their needs.

People told us about the opportunities for them to be involved in co-production and their confidence that action would be taken in response to gathering their views.

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