

Governance, management and sustainability

Indicative score:

3 - Evidence shows a good standard

The local authority commitment:

We have clear responsibilities, roles, systems of accountability and good governance to manage and deliver good quality, sustainable care, treatment and support. We act on the best information about risk, performance and outcomes, and we share this securely with others when appropriate.

Key findings for this quality statement

There was stable leadership within the local authority with effective governance and accountability processes. There were clear lines of accountability for the senior leadership team, including performance, quality, risks, and assurance to the Director of Adult Social Services and to cabinet and councillors. Policies and strategies went to cabinet with additional challenge through scrutiny. Challenge and accountability were also managed through partnerships and integrated working, particularly where joint strategies and policies were developed, for example safeguarding and commissioning. Risks were well managed including, for example, risks relating to partnership working, as well as demography and projected changes in the ageing population. There was awareness of these risks among both senior leaders and councillors and there were systems in place to monitor and manage them.

Staff spoke positively about the leadership team, describing them as approachable and easy to speak with. There was a feeling of a 'One Council' approach at all levels. Strategies were embedded and well understood within the local authority from frontline staff through to leaders, for example the adult social care model focusing on a preventative approach to address the pending issue of the rapid increase in the number of people aged over 65. Staff felt supported in their roles and listened to. There were opportunities for staff to undergo professional development through apprenticeships in partnership with local education providers. This had helped with retention of staff and local knowledge, resulting in a stable supportive staff team.

There was a culture of working openly with partners, and partners spoke positively about their engagement with the local authority. There was a feeling that relationships were robust and open to challenge. There was widespread agreement that partnerships had developed over the past 5 years to a partnership of equals, and that this is now developing from partnerships to a "system". The ambition is that the focus moves from the 'system' to person-centred service delivery, looking at the person and their journey rather than the system. This was reflected in positive working 'on the ground' with a wide range of partners in health and the voluntary and community sector, and a focus on a person-centred approach producing positive outcomes for people.

The voluntary sector providers spoke positively about recent changes in the relationship with the local authority, which they felt had enabled voluntary and community groups to influence the strategy and the approach of the local authority in a way that resulted in positive outcomes for people.

There was a desire to use data to inform the adult social care strategy and understand people's journeys. There was an understanding that more work was needed both to improve the available data and the supporting intelligence underneath the data. For example, in the data available to identify people with protected equality characteristics and identifying hard to reach or hidden communities. Data had been used to evaluate the effectiveness of the preventative approach over the past 7 years. However, further work was required to predict forward to ensure that preventative work would continue to offer savings to continue to meet population needs as the number of people over 65 increased.

Data and feedback from people and partners, was used to inform the local authority about strategies, the effectiveness of interventions, the targeting of resources and what action was needed to improve outcomes for people. People who had been involved in co-production said they felt valued, felt they had made a difference and said they were recognised by leaders when they visited the local authority buildings.