



ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
19 JANUARY 2026

FOR INFORMATION

CARE QUALITY COMMISSION ASSESSMENT 2025
IMPROVEMENT PLAN DELIVERY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update of the progress made to deliver the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Improvement Plan, attached as an Appendix to this report.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. On 3 November 2025, the Committee received a report summarising the CQC Assessment findings, highlighting key strengths and areas for development. A summary Improvement Plan was presented which outlined the actions that will deliver improvements identified in the CQC Assessment report. The Committee requested quarterly progress updates to align with the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) reporting cycle.

Background

3. The CQC published its assessment report of Leicestershire in September 2025, giving an overall rating of Requires Improvement.
4. Authorities achieving a Requires Improvement rating are required to develop an Improvement Plan and provide quarterly reporting to the DHSC demonstrating progress with improvement actions.
5. DHSC contract with Partners in Care and Health (PICH) to work with councils assessed as Requires Improvement. The PICH Improvement Advisor is working with Leicestershire to co-ordinate the response, ongoing review and support activities, outlined below:
 - a) Stage 1 - response to the CQC Assessment report, submitted 27 September 2025 included: response to the CQC findings, emerging improvement priorities and action planning.

- b) Stage 2 – reporting includes the Improvement Plan and oversight arrangements and the support required to deliver the Improvement plan, submitted 17 December 2025.
 - c) Stage 3 – quarterly updates to DHSC and ongoing support arrangements will commence March 2026.
6. Programme management and governance in place to deliver the CQC Improvement Plan; internal oversight of progress is through the monthly Departmental Transformation Delivery Board.
 7. Scoping and detailed workstream planning is complete, with short-term resource in place, the long-term resource needed to achieve and sustain delivery of the Improvement Plan actions will be determined through scoping and business case development.
 8. Communication and engagement with staff and people who draw on services has begun and will be key to delivering many of the improvement priorities.

Improvement Plan Delivery Update

Timeliness of Assessments and Reviews

9. Temporary resource is in place to address the current waiting lists for Care Act assessment; process reviews have commenced with opportunities to rationalise processes identified. Tableau reporting changes are in development, with revised dashboards undergoing testing for accuracy.

Access, Information, Advice and Guidance

10. An Information Maturity Self-Assessment has been completed, with a follow up workshop, facilitated by PICH, taking place early February 2026. Opportunities identified to use artificial intelligence to enhance availability of information about local support options and to make better use of community venues to disseminate information about adult social care services.

Reablement and Hospital Discharge

11. An analysis of reablement has been completed which is informing development of the Reablement Team. Work is underway to revise Home Care Assessment and Reablement Team roles.
12. Hospital discharge improvement activity is in the early stages, initially the focus is to review cases to determine any inconsistencies in discharge pathways between different hospitals in Leicestershire and out of county, variation in timeliness of commissioning at weekends and understanding variations in the timeliness of discharge.

Carers Strategy and Support Service

13. Engagement with carers is underway and expected to conclude in January 2026. Several engagement events have been held to inform the draft Carers Strategy, with

formal consultation expected to take place, pending approval of cabinet in March 2026. Engagement feedback will also inform the development of a revised specification for the Carers Support Service in Leicestershire.

Sufficiency of provider services

14. Market stimulation for supported living is planned for early 2026 and new extra care developments are being discussed with developers. Re-commissioning of Community Life Choices day services is due to commence early 2026. Scoping of a commissioning dashboard is underway which will support identification of any gaps in commissioned services.

Equity of access and experience

15. Activity is in the early stages, initially the focus is to work with partners and communities to understand the barriers people in rural communities and the homeless face when accessing adult social care services.

Safeguarding

16. A review of the current safeguarding pathway and governance is underway, options are in development to make changes that address the issues identified, including timeliness of assessment, provider portal information and data recording.

Pathway for Adulthood

17. This area of work is being delivered as part of the Corporate Preparation for Adulthood Review. This Committee received a progress report on this review on 1 September 2025.
18. A comprehensive review of data, processes and commissioning practice is complete. Findings and recommendations will be considered by the project board January 2026, followed by implementation of the agreed changes.

Workforce

19. The Adult Social Care Workforce Plan is being drafted in preparation for consultation with key staff. Initial analysis of demand and caseloads is complete, and recommendations will be implemented once agreed. A new audit assurance group is being established to provide assurance that current practice audits are effective and driving improvements in practice.

Partnerships in joint funding

20. This area of work is being delivered in collaboration with the ICB. Initiatives completed by the ICB and Accommodation Review Team to review potential funded nursing placement have achieved a small increase in determinations. A revised policy and action plan is being developed with partners.

Performance and Oversight

21. Providing over-arching assurance to all improvement workstreams, that reporting developments meet the needs of the department and the CQC Assessment ask.

Key risks

22. Failure to make adequate progress with the improvement actions identified will result in further intervention from DHSC.
23. A second consecutive Requires Improvement rating will lead to enhanced support and monitoring including direct engagement by DHSC.

Resource Implications

24. Significant resource is required to deliver the improvement actions identified in the CQC Assessment report. Approximately £4m of Growth has been allocated in the Adults and Communities MTFS to meet this resource requirement.
25. Additional staff resource is required to ensure sufficient capacity to reduce the waiting time for assessments. Longer-term reviews of demand and capacity undertaken as part of the Improvement Plan will inform any staffing establishment change required in key teams such as Occupational Therapy to ensure sustained performance.
26. Technology will be used wherever possible to improve access to information and streamline processes to which will support improvement activities. Business Intelligence Service resource will be required to deliver enhancements to performance reporting and oversight.

Timetable for Decisions

27. Progress with delivering the CQC Improvement Plan will be presented to this Committee on a quarterly basis to align with the DHSC reporting cycle.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

28. None.

Equality Implications

29. There are no equality implications arising from this report. Any proposed changes to the Council's policies, procedures, functions, and services which may arise from delivery of its Improvement Plan will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessments.

Human Rights Implications

30. There are no human rights implications arising from this report. Any proposed changes to the Council's policies, procedures, functions, and/or services which may arise from delivery of its Assurance Improvement Plan will be referred immediately to the Council's Legal Services for advice and support regarding human rights implications.

Appendix

CQC Improvement Plan

Background papers

- Report to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 3 November 2025 Care Quality Commission Assessment of Leicestershire County Council's Delivery of Care Act 2014 Duties
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s192588/CQC%20ASSESSMENT%20OF%20LOCAL%20AUTHORITIES.pdf> - item 36
- CQC Leicestershire County Council local authority assessment published 17 September 2025
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/care-services/local-authority-assessment-reports/leicestershire-0925>
- Report to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 1 September 2025 – Preparation for Adulthood Review
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=7854&Ver=4> – item 22

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