

Contact Officer: Nicola Sylvester

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL

Wednesday 14th January 2026

Present: Councillor Bill Armer
Councillor Eric Firth
Councillor Alison Munro
Councillor Habiban Zaman

Co-optees Helen Clay

In attendance: Michelle Cross, Executive Director, Adults & Health
Cath Simms, Service Director, Adults Social Care Operation,
Saf Bhuta, Service Director, Strategic Commissioning, Partnership and Provider Services
Jill Greenfield, Service Director, Communities and Access Services Communities
Alexia Gray, Head of Quality Standards & Safeguarding,
Councillor Nosheen Dad, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care,

Apologies: Councillor Jo Lawson (Chair)
Councillor Darren O'Donovan
Kim Taylor (Co-Optee)

- 1 Membership of the Panel**
Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Jo Lawson, Councillor Darren O'Donovan and Kim Taylor (Co-optee).

Councillor Bill Armer was appointed Chair for the meeting.
- 2 Declaration of Interests**
No interests were declared.
- 3 Admission of the public**
All agenda items were considered in public session.
- 4 Deputations/Petitions**
No deputations or petitions were received.
- 5 Public Question Time**
No public questions were received.

6 CQC's Inspection Report and Rating for Adult Social Care

The panel received a presentation on the CQC's Inspection report and rating for Adult Social Care.

Michelle Cross, Executive Director of Adults Social Care, Cath Simms, Service Director for Adults Social Care Operation, Saf Bhuta, Service Director, Strategic Commissioning, Partnership and Provider Services, Jill Greenfield, Service Director, Communities and Access Services and Alexia Gray, Head of Quality Standards & Safeguarding advised that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) had carried out an inspection of Adults Social Care Services in Kirklees with onsite visits over 3 days from 26th May 2025. The overall outcome of the inspection was that Kirklees Adult Social Care Services 'required improvement' with a score of 59, falling just short of a 'good' rating which would have required a minimum score of 63.

The presentation provided an update on the wide areas of strengths, along with areas for development, and how these would be addressed. Most of the areas were already being actioned through a multi-year change programme focused on redesigning pathways, integrating services, considering commissioning needs and investing in digital and community-based solutions.

Questions and comments were invited from Members of the Health and Social Care, and Children's Scrutiny Panels, and the following was raised:

- Adults Social Care had signed up to the National Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standards with the Executive Director overseeing the work,
- Plans were to include inclusive recruitment, training, leadership development and workforce data analysis,
- Officers confirmed website improvements were a priority as residents found the council's website difficult to navigate, especially regarding services and equipment. A lack of information left residents feeling confused and unsupported,
- Emphasis was placed on communicating earlier with residents, so that individuals and carers knew their entitlements before crisis point,
- Digital access was to be improved but not relied on exclusively,
- Library hubs, phone contact through Kirklees Direct and Social Worker presence in the community was available to residents,
- The Improvement Plan would be built through wide consultation with communities, partners and staff, with work underway to simplify pathways and make processes clearer,
- Peer review feedback on preparing for Independence showed the need to start planning from the age of 14, with work being undertaken on a 12-month programme to strengthen early planning and tracking of young people,
- Better long-term commissioning would reduce out-of-area placements and the "Cliffe Edge" families faced at transition,

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- Work was ongoing with providers for accommodation for young adults to ensure the right kind of accommodation was flexible and progression-focused,
- There was less of an issue regarding buildings for young adults, it was more about alignment between housing, social care and providers,
- It was noted that the needs of younger adults were now more complex with some having a combination of learning difficulties, mental health and forensic needs,
- Kirklees had improved its reablement and intermediate care model regarding hospital discharges. Challenges remained around consistency and capacity pressures,
- End of life support largely sat with health partners, though social care provided equipment and support where appropriate,
- Fast-track pathways ensured that people known to services received support quickly, the Kirkwood and community nursing teams remained central to end of life provision,
- National changes to ICB funding and staffing remained a concern although there was a strong partnership with Adults Social Care, the Integrated Care Board and National Health Service,
- Work was underway regarding care market sustainability with a move from percentage uplifts to a “fair price for care” based on level of need,
- Quarterly data reviews regarding risk, data transparency and Inequalities to improve how staff used dated and insight would be carried out.

RESOLVED-

- 1) That the CQC’s Inspection Report and Rating for Adults Social Care be noted.
- 2) That Officers across all teams involved in the inspection be thanked for the outstanding work undertaken.

7 Work Programme 2025/26

The Panel reviewed the work programme for 2025/26 and suggested that End of Life Care be added to the work programme for 2026/27.

RESOLVED- That the work programme be noted.