

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Adult Social Care Waiting Times
Meeting date	02 December 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To provide an update to the Health and Adult Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the Adult Social Care (ASC) demand management of the waiting times for individuals who have requested a Care Act Assessment (CAA) from BCP Council.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: Committee members are requested to note and respond, as appropriate to the update provided, with a recommendation that a further update is presented in twelve months (December 2025).
Reason for recommendations	To ensure that the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee are fully cited on the ASC waiting times for individuals who have requested a Care Act Assessment.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr David Brown, Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing
Corporate Director	Jillian Kay, Corporate Director for Wellbeing
Contributors	Betty Butlin, Director of Adult Social Care
Wards	All
Classification	For Update and Information

Background

1. The ADASS Autumn Survey (November 2023) reported that just under a quarter of a million people nationally were waiting for an assessment of their needs. In common with this nationally reported position, BCP Council has a growing demand for services and we hold a waiting list of people who require an assessment of their care and support needs.
2. The waiting lists for those requiring a CAA have been decreasing over the last 18 months. However, due to the historical numbers and an increase in current demand, the waiting lists continue to be an area of focus.
3. The Care Act 2014 holds Councils to account for assessing peoples' needs and it could pose a risk to our statutory duty when we are not able to do this in a timely way.
4. As a result of focussed work around demand management, which has included reconfiguration of some of our resources and developing more efficient systems, we have been able to reduce the number of people waiting by 53% during the past 18 months. It is our intention to continue to reduce the number of people waiting and get to a position where no one is waiting more than necessary for a CAA.
5. In order to support our demand management, we have introduced tools for our practitioners such as Managing Demand Guidance and Performance Data PowerBI reports so work can be allocated efficiently and safely.
6. CQC inspections of ASC Services will consider the level of risk held by Councils and the effectiveness of arrangements to manage said risk. It is important to note that we see people on a risk basis with those at highest risk seen first. All those waiting over 28 days are of normal or low risk. We are clear in our communications with people that they can alert the council if their circumstances change resulting in an increase in their risk and their need to be assessed.
7. There is a robust governance structure in place to monitor the progress on reducing waiting times for people. We hold monthly Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI) Board meetings and quarterly Executive PQI Board meetings (Chaired by Graham Farrant Chief Executive and attended by the Council Leaders and Social Care Portfolio Holder) to ensure accountability and focus is maintained, and risk can be escalated if necessary. In between these meetings regular Head of Service conversations are held and quality improvement work is monitored to ensure we are on track.
8. We have recently started to roll out our ambitious Transformation Plans where demand management is a key priority. As part of this work we are developing our contact centre who will be better equipped to deal with the demand in the first instance and using a strengths based approach will signpost people and support them to access more community based solutions and opportunities, avoiding the need for more traditional, long term social care services. We are also working with [Social Care Future](#), a public led organisation, who are supporting people and practitioners to embrace these changes.

9. Members are advised that they can approach the Overview & Scrutiny Committee working party or the Director of Adult Social Care if they would like more detail how demand management.

Adult Social Care Waiting Times

10. In Autumn 2024, all Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) committees were invited to establish a working group to contribute to the 2025/26 budget. Through their work, each group contributed to a focussed period of scrutiny during October 2024.
11. The working group was able to bring robust test and challenge and to make recommendations.
12. As part of its focus, the working group chose to look into the ASC waiting lists for those requiring a CAA of their care and support needs. Members were able to identify Key Lines of Enquiry and requested detailed information in advance of the working group meeting to analyse and discuss the data and information provided.
13. Each working group will put forward recommendations that will be shared with the committee.
14. Information in the following areas was presented to the working group:

Adult Social Care Budget

- Budget Breakdown

Adult Social Care Demand

- Demand Data

Performance Data

- Number of people waiting Care Act Assessments
- How we manage risk whilst people are waiting
- Occupational Therapy assessments
- Carers assessments

Summary of financial implications

15. A delay in undertaking Care Act Assessments can impact on budget and spend as there will be a percentage of individuals that may require care and support.

Summary of legal implications

16. There is a risk of failing to meet statutory requirements. Risk to increased complaints and reputation.

Summary of human resources implications

17. None

Summary of environmental impact

18. None

Summary of public health implications

19. None

Summary of equality implications

20. None

Summary of risk assessment

21. None

Background papers

None

Appendices

No appendices