

ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 8 MARCH 2011

Annual Report by the Care Quality Commission on Adult Social Care

Introduction

1. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) provides an annual performance assessment of all authorities in England with responsibility for adult social care. The report for Oxfordshire County Council is attached as annex 1. It provides an overall judgement on how well the authority is performing. CQC can award a rating of 'performing poorly', 'performing adequately', 'performing well' or 'performing excellently'. Oxfordshire is described as 'performing well', which means CQC's assessment is that Oxfordshire is 'consistently delivering above the minimum standard required for people'.
2. Within this assessment the council is judged on seven key outcomes. On 5 of these outcomes Oxfordshire is assessed as performing well. On the other two outcomes 'Making a positive contribution' and 'Economic well-being' the council is described as performing excellently.

Current Ratings

3. Of the 152 authorities nationally, none are described as performing poorly, 7 are performing adequately, 108 are performing well and 37 are performing excellently. In the South East, all 19 authorities are described as performing well.
4. Whilst Oxfordshire's overall rating is the same as last year, there were positive changes in the rating of three of the seven individual outcomes. These are shown in table 1 below:

Areas for judgment	Grade 08/9	Grade 09/10
Improved health and emotional well-being	Well	Well
Improved quality of life	Well	Well
Making a positive contribution	Well	Excellent
Increased choice and control	Well	Well
Freedom from discrimination and harassment	Well	Well
Economic well-being	Well	Excellent
Maintaining personal dignity and respect	Adequate	Well
Performance Rating	Well	Well

5. 'Making a positive contribution' and 'Economic well-being' moved from performing well to performing excellently and 'Maintaining personal dignity and respect' moving from performing adequately to performing well. Being assessed as excellent on 'making a positive contribution' means that in Oxfordshire, people who use services and carers are supported to take part in community life. They contribute their views on services and this helps to shape improvements. Voluntary organisations are thriving and accessible. Organisations for people who use services and carers are well supported. Being assessed as excellent on 'Economic well-being' means that in Oxfordshire people who use services and their carers have income to meet living and support costs. They are supported in finding or maintaining employment.
6. The improved rating on 'Maintaining personal dignity and respect' reflects the council's response to the 2009 inspection on Adult Safeguarding. The report notes that 'there were a number of areas for improvement identified, especially during the service inspection, and the Council has worked hard to address all of these.' The report particularly notes the work of the Adult Safeguarding Board to increase awareness amongst both the public and partner organisations. The report lists some of the work undertaken by the Board and notes: 'The impact of these initiatives has helped improve awareness of adult protection issues across partner organisations and provided a much tighter tracking of responses from initial alert to the completion of the investigation ... it was agreed that action plans implemented by the Council to encourage improvement in its delivery of safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable adults were helping to deliver more positive outcomes for people.'
7. The report highlights key strengths and areas for development. The council will draw up action plans to address the areas for development and monitor progress monthly through the balanced scorecard for the directorate.

Performance Summary

8. CQC's summary of Oxfordshire's performance says 'Oxfordshire County Council has had a very productive year and has achieved well on the key outcome areas. It has strong leadership and tight financial controls in place that have enabled it to deliver significant efficiency savings and a slight budget under-spend ... There were a number of areas for improvement identified in both last year's annual performance assessment ... and the Council has worked hard ... deliver better outcomes for people ... of particular note are the improvements made to safeguarding ... The Council has introduced a number of initiatives to increase opportunities for people to make a positive contribution and the economic wellbeing of people has been enhanced due to some very good work on helping them to claim benefits due to them.'
9. As well as producing reports on individual councils, CQC also provided a national report. This included 49 examples of good practice from individual councils (although they are not named) under the headings of the 7 outcomes. Three of these are taken from the Oxfordshire report. Two relate to 'Making a Positive Contribution' and can be found on page 15 of the national report. They refer to the role service users played in the development of self directed

support and how service users and carers are able to influence the council's priorities:

"Individuals who use services contributed to the evaluation of the self directed support pilot to help ensure developing systems put the individual and their carers at the heart of decision making about services accessed."

"There have been a number of key activities this year that have helped people make a positive contribution. Individuals and their carers, through the local LINK, recently identified their key improvement priorities for adult social care during 2010/11. In response, the council agreed to the priorities and identified targets to determine their delivery. Importantly, the council agreed to publicly report progress against these targets to the LINK and its own scrutiny committee"

10. The other reference to Oxfordshire is around the growth of safeguarding referrals from agencies other than adult social care, demonstrating greater public and partner organisation of adult safeguarding.

"There is a continued increase in safeguarding referrals from a variety of agencies, reflecting awareness raising activities."

Future reports

11. On 3 November 2010, Paul Burstow, Minister of State for Care Services, announced that CQC will, with immediate effect, no longer conduct an annual performance assessment of councils' commissioning of care under the existing framework.

John Jackson
Director for Social & Community Services

Contact Officer: Steve Thomas