

Questions to Cabinet
Responses for the Cabinet Meeting on
2 December 2021

Responses to the questions asked at the meeting

| 1. | Questioner: County Councillor Erica Lewis | Respondent: County Council Susan Whittam (attending in place of County Councillor Graham Gooch at the meeting) |
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| | <p><u>Item 5 - Adult Social Care Winter Plan 2021/22</u></p> <p>What assurance mechanisms are in place to ensure that care funded by Lancashire County Council is delivered in all settings?</p> | <p>The Winter Plan contains proposals for developing and expanding a number of key services to support vulnerable people and the wider health and social care system in Lancashire in the coming months. It is therefore important that the council and the public have confidence in the arrangements in place to ensure that the care we have planned and so I welcome the question as a chance to explain that.</p> <p>In the main it is Independent and voluntary sector social care providers who we have asked to deliver the additional services that are contained in the Winter plan. We have held extensive and in-depth meetings with senior management in these organisations over recent months to explain what we need for winter, and to check that they have the knowledge, track record and resources to run these additional services safely and effectively. In each case there is now a clear contract in place setting out the service requirements and price for these services to be set up and run.</p> <p>However, we are mindful of the risks that some of these services will still face in providing services to the levels we need. It is probably clear to everyone that workforce recruitment and retention challenges will pose the highest risk.</p> |

So, own internal Intermediate Care Services Board – which has senior management involvement (Sue Lott) - will meet every fortnight though the coming months to monitor we are making the right progress, things are working well and the causes of any gaps or shortfalls in performance the services are understood and being addressed.

We have also set out a number of initiatives to support the home care sector which here in Lancashire and elsewhere is under particular pressure. There are a range of financial and other improvement measures that we have explained to homecare agencies which we believe will make it more likely they can provide the quality and volumes of services that we need to support people at home.

For individuals and their families, it is of course meeting their own particular needs and arranging support that will matter most. Adult Services has a Contract Management and Quality Improvement Team whose job it is to ensure that the care we pay for is delivered and of a good standard. This includes care homes, homecare, supported living, extra care and day services.

Each type of service is subject to regular contract monitoring which involves a review of written evidence such as policies and procedures and a physical visit to the location. We also listen carefully to any concerns or complaints from families and also consider information from partners such as the NHS, Healthwatch and the Care Quality Commission. Undertaking this work has been more difficult during the pandemic – some of our staff have been deployed to other duties such as outbreak management and infection control, and there have

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| | | <p>been restrictions on visits to services and to meet and hear from the people who use them. That situation has been easing more recently, and there has been a steady increase in more intensive work by our staff in those services where there are concerns</p> <p>Of course, where such concerns are substantiated, and especially where there are safeguarding issues, we work closely with partners and the management of the service to make sure problems are addressed. and the service moves back to operating safely and effectively as soon as possible. If improvements aren't achieved, and there are serious risks to people as a result, there are options in the contracts which, as a last resort, allows us to cease funding a particular service and transferring it to another organisation who can step in and provide what is needed.</p> |
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Responses to written questions

| 1. | Questioner: County Councillor Erica Lewis | Respondent: County Councillor Jayne Rear |
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| | <p><u>Item 9 - School Place Provision Strategy 2022 to 2025</u></p> <p>The window for the school places strategy of just three years 2022 – 2025 does not seem realistic in terms of bringing new school places on line. Could further explanation be given as to why this time frame is so narrow and what this means for the phrases 'short-term delivery', 'medium-term delivery', and 'long-term delivery'?</p> | <p>The timeframe aligns with the Education Strategy which also runs 2022-25. Short-term refers to activity that aims to address an immediate place pressure or is in the planning process, Medium-term is where activity is being scoped out for delivery in the next 3 years. Longer-term is where we are working with local planning authorities (district councils) with regard to their Local Plans which may create a level of demand for places to the extent that a site for a new school site is required or has been secured.</p> |

