

Adult Social Care Services

Council Name: Central Bedfordshire

This report is a summary of the performance of how the Council promotes adult social care outcomes for people in the Council area.

The overall grade for performance is combined from the grades given for the individual outcomes. There is a brief description below – see Grading for Adult Social Care Outcomes 2008/09 in the Performance Assessment Guide web address below, for more detail.

Poorly performing – not delivering the minimum requirements for people

Performing adequately – only delivering the minimum requirements for people

Performing well – consistently delivering above the minimum requirements for people

Performing excellently - overall delivering well above the minimum requirements for people

We also make a written assessment about

Leadership and

Commissioning and use of resources

Information on these additional areas can be found in the outcomes framework

To see the outcomes framework please go to our web site: [Outcomes framework](#)

You will also find an explanation of terms used in the report in the glossary on the web site.

Delivering Outcomes Assessment
Overall Central Bedfordshire Council is performing:

Due to the transition to unitary status in April 2009 the Care Quality Commission will not be making a judgement about the performance of Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to this outcome.

Outcome 1:

[Improved health and well-being](#)

The Council is performing: **Not rated**

Outcome 2:

[Improved quality of life](#)

The Council is performing: **Not rated**

Outcome 3:

[Making a positive contribution](#)

The Council is performing: **Not rated**

Outcome 4:

[Increased choice and control](#)

The Council is performing: **Not rated**

Outcome 5:

[Freedom from discrimination and harassment](#)

The Council is performing: **Not rated**

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Outcome 6:

[Economic well-being](#)

The Council is performing:

Not rated

Outcome 7:

[Maintaining personal dignity and respect](#)

The Council is performing:

Not rated

Click on titles above to view a text summary of the outcome.

Assessment of Leadership and Commissioning and use of resources

Leadership

As a result of Local Government Review, Bedfordshire County Council's key focus during 2008 / 09 was preparing for the transfer of responsibilities to the two new unitary councils in April 2009. This coupled with the early turnover of senior staff (including the Director of Adult Social Care) resulted in a lack of consistent strategic leadership and had a detrimental impact on the pace of improvement. The governance and reporting framework in place was weak and failed to identify or rectify barriers to achieving Adult Social Care improvement targets and performance in most areas deteriorated. The recommendations made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) in 2008 to improve the councils safeguarding arrangements were not achieved and little progress was made in developing personalised and self directed support services. Positive outcomes for people who use services and their carers could not be evidenced or validated.

This meant that in April 2009, that the new unitary council, inherited an under performing Adult Social Care department. Extensive data cleansing and validation activities have been undertaken by the new unitary council. This has identified a number of quality and accuracy issues in relation to the data and performance information provided by Bedfordshire County Council. In some areas validated performance is significantly lower than had been previously reported; including the level of direct payments in use, the amount of helped to live at home activity and the completion of adult safeguarding referrals. The strategic framework put in place across Adult Social Care by Bedfordshire County Council lacked specific detail and in many instances strategies and partnership arrangements could not be sourced back to the initial agreements, objectives or work plans. This lack of clarity lead to ongoing funding disputes with the PCT regarding continuing care funding and the re-provision of NHS services for people with a Learning Disability.

The Central Bedfordshire Council is new to the delivery of Adult Social Care; however there is the determination and commitment to review all aspects of adult social care and to significantly improve outcomes for the local community. Focused corporate and political support has been evidenced and the portfolio holder and lead member have agreed the key priorities and will be closely involved in monitoring progress. The Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Directorate Plan has been agreed and sets challenging and stretching targets; it is strategically aligned to the Council's objectives and budget setting processes. There is a clear intention to improve and transform adult social care and a determination to develop services that focus on outcomes for the individual. Improving and maximising partnership arrangements are at the heart of the Council's plans to drive forward the required changes. The Council recognises the need to provide strong leadership and to develop governance arrangements across all services and within partnership agreements. Safeguarding is a key priority area and focused attention is evidenced with a commitment to improve this critical aspect of service delivery. The Council

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recognises the cultural shifts and workforce development strategies that will be required to take this work forward and plans to progress this jointly with partners.

There is a significant improvement journey to be achieved and a key success factor will be the Council's ability to continue to provide the leadership and corporate support required to drive this agenda forward. Capacity building, workforce development and aligned financial support will be critical enablers, along with the ability to maximise partnership opportunities. It is essential that governance and monitoring arrangements are integral to the new performance management strategy to ensure that services delivered and commissioned by the Council are timely, to a high standard and meet the needs and expectations of people living in the local communities. The Council appears to be developing the foundations on which improvement can be achieved and progress will be monitored closely by the Care Quality Commission.

Commissioning and use of resources

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment provides a wide range of information about the needs of the community and identifies a number of health inequalities particularly in relation to BME and economically disadvantaged groups. Further work is required to make it more accessible and to ensure that it is used to inform commissioning strategies. Market development activities have not yet secured the range and variety of services required to meet need or to steer the development of personalised care. There is a recognised reliance on residential care and prevention services are underdeveloped. Mapping and scoping of the independent and voluntary sector is required in order to identify future development needs and to assess its readiness and capacity to contribute to the transformation agenda. Contract compliance and close partnership working has secured improvement in regulated care services and there was a reduction in the number of 'poor' services. However there are a significant percentage of regulated services which are rated as adequate and focused attention is required to drive improvement in the quality of these services.

Central Bedfordshire Council has identified that the social care improvement journey requires a focus on efficiencies and improved commissioning. It has set out the initial priorities, including a range of core activities; a review of and improved use of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, ensuring partnership and strategic frameworks are appropriately focused and incorporate improved performance and delivery of outcomes for the customers. The Council is to review commissioning and the services provided for people with learning disability and to determine with partners the future commissioning arrangements across mental health services. A core priority is to ensure that value for money principles underpin all commissioning activities.

Engagement with providers and partners will be critical. People need to know the direction of travel and also to be able to access the necessary support to help them understand what is required of them to make this 'vision' a reality. Commissioning strategies need to drive the required change and ensure that services focus on personalisation and outcomes from a people who use services' or carers' perspective. Safeguarding considerations need to be embedded in all strategies and developments; these must achieve a balance between protection, personalisation and increased choice and control.

Summary of Performance

Brief overview of performance and progress

During 2008 / 09 Bedfordshire County Council focused on transition and failed to drive the necessary improvement or to develop the conditions to transform Adult Social Care. The inconsistent strategic leadership and the lack of a cohesive operational priorities resulted in an inability to sustain previous performance and a general deterioration in outcomes for the people

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of Bedfordshire. Governance and monitoring arrangements were weak and failed to secure key improvements or to identify and rectify barriers or issues impacting on the pace of improvement.

This has meant that in April 2009, Central Bedfordshire Council inherited an under performing adult social care department and a challenging improvement agenda. It has responded swiftly and proactively to this realisation and has a detailed action plan for improvement in place. Focused leadership and corporate support is evident and there is a determination to review and improve all aspects of adult social care. Central Bedfordshire Council has a clear vision for the future and is passionate and energised in its determination to significantly improve outcomes for people. A range of actions have been implemented and there are early signs of improved relationships and a more cohesive and strategically aligned management approach. Revised engagement strategies and the openness of the new Director of Adult Social Care has been positively received and appears to be impacting on peoples hopes and aspirations for the future.

Outcome 1: Improved health and well-being

The Council is performing: Due to the transition to unitary status in April 2009 the Care Quality Commission will not be making a judgement about the performance of Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to this outcome.

During the transition to unitary status Bedfordshire County Council continued to support a number of initiatives and strategies designed to help people improve their health and well being. However these lacked a coherent strategic framework to drive forward the required improvements. There continues to be a need to evaluate and evidence the impact and outcomes of these strategies for the community. More work is required to maximise partnership opportunities in this area. There continues to be significant health and well being inequalities amongst some communities and the number of people with long term conditions is increasing.

Central Bedfordshire Council recognises the need to make considerable improvements in this area and has outlined its initial priorities aimed at driving forward the required change. These include the Council's plans to improve strategic partnership arrangements, agree how the Healthy Communities' Strategy is to be delivered and improve the range of intermediate care services. In order to achieve its challenging change and improvement agenda the Council will need to fully understand the needs of the community and maximise partnership working opportunities. It will need to stimulate the market by articulating a vision for the future and by providing the necessary leadership. Engagement with key partners and stakeholders, supported by a systematic approach to governance and monitoring arrangements, will be essential and integral from the beginning.

Outcome 2: Improved quality of life

The Council is performing: Due to the transition to unitary status in April 2009 the Care Quality Commission will not be making a judgement about the performance of Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to this outcome.

There was an overall lack of progress made by Bedfordshire County Council in addressing key areas for improvement in this area. Early intervention and prevention services are underdeveloped and there remains a need to scope and map the services provided by the voluntary sector and to evaluate its capacity to meet the growing needs of prevention and early

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intervention strategies. Little progress had been made in evaluating and evidencing the outcomes and experiences of people signposted to other agencies or to demonstrate the effectiveness of these services in meeting needs and providing good value for money. There is a need to systematically review carer services and to ensure the strategic framework that is in place supports the development of a wide range of relevant support services, including services targeted at the needs of young carers’.

Central Bedfordshire Council accepts the need to make and demonstrate considerable improvement and has identified its initial priorities. Amongst these it intends to work with its partners to review and increase the use of intermediate care and reablement services, improve the quality of care services, increase the number and timeliness of major adaptations and increase the number of carers receiving a break. The Council recognises the need to build in mechanisms and systems to evidence the impact of these service developments on the lives of people who use services and carers and to evidence how services reduce the need for longer term or higher level care and enhance people’s quality of life.

Outcome 3: Making a positive contribution

The Council is performing: Due to the transition to unitary status in April 2009 the Care Quality Commission will not be making a judgement about the performance of Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to this outcome.

There are a range of forums in place to enable people who use services and their carers to have a say in design, planning and review processes. There is some evidence that these contributions have helped shape commissioning and planning processes. People who use services and carers are now involved in the safeguarding board and awareness raising activities have commenced to improve peoples understanding of safeguarding processes. There is a need to evaluate the impact of these awareness raising strategies and to maximise the engagement opportunities presented through the partnership boards. A strengthened feedback loop is required to help people recognise the value and difference that their contributions have made.

Central Bedfordshire Council has identified a number of ways in which it intends to enable people who use services and carers to make a positive contribution. The intention is to ensure that people who use services, carers and the voluntary sector are all engaged in the development of personalised services and that it works closely with the Bedfordshire LINK. It recognises the importance of volunteering and plans to ensure the voluntary sector has the capacity to help deliver the transformation of services and that care providers are encouraged to facilitate volunteering opportunities. A key success factor will be the Council’s ability to develop a consistent strategic framework, which strengthens engagement activities across all community groups and which integrates user and carer contributions into all aspects of service planning, review and governance. To this end it intends to use customer feedback to drive forward improvements and will work to encourage a cross Council approach to its community engagement and involvement strategies.

Outcome 4: Increased choice and control

The Council is performing: Due to the transition to unitary status in April 2009 the Care Quality Commission will not be making a judgement about the performance of Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to this outcome.

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During 2008 / 09 Bedfordshire County Council made limited progress in relation to transforming adult social care and there is a significant amount of work required to make 'Putting People First' a reality. Systems and processes required to progress self directed support are under developed. The planned increase in the uptake of direct payments was not achieved and there are no individual budgets in place. The timeframe for the completion of assessment processes remained stable. However the number of reviews completed reduced. The number of complaints received about adult social care continued to fall and there is a need to fully evaluate and understand the reasons for this reduction. Information leaflets and advice sources need to be fully reviewed and action taken to ensure that these are relevant, provide the information required by people and that everyone who accesses services are involved in any planned development activities.

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to developing services and support systems by which people are able to exercise greater choice and control. It has set out its initial priorities in this area and these include adopting the Central Bedfordshire Transformation Strategy and action plan to deliver personalised outcomes for people. This will involve improving the options for self directed support, improved advocacy and better information. Success will require corporate leadership and support, a market development strategy supported by aligned budget and a focused workforce development strategy.

Outcome 5: Freedom from discrimination and harassment

The Council is performing: Due to the transition to unitary status in April 2009 the Care Quality Commission will not be making a judgement about the performance of Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to this outcome.

Bedfordshire County Council made some progress in improving access to adult social care. A single point of contact had been introduced, people are offered advice, information and where appropriate are signposted to other agencies and partners. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment helped identify key development areas in relation to minority communities, particularly within the BME and economically disadvantaged groups and market development activities now need to be progressed.

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to promoting equalities within its work force and across services and has set out its initial priorities. It intends to strengthen the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, enabling it to fully understand the needs of all groups within the community and to focus its market development and commissioning activities. Equality impact assessments will help secure improved access to services for under represented groups within the community and the Council aims to commission a floating support service to address the needs of Gypsy and Travellers sites and to help strengthen these relationships. There is a need to systematically evaluate the experience, impact and outcomes for everyone who engages with social care including those people signposted to other agencies.

Outcome 6: Economic well - being

The Council is performing: Due to the transition to unitary status in April 2009 the Care Quality Commission will not be making a judgement about the performance of Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to this outcome.

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Bedfordshire County Council supported a range of long standing strategies to help people maximise income and to support them into employment. These included a benefit outreach service into Sikh temples and mosques offered by the welfare rights service, help for cancer sufferers from the McMillan welfare rights service and home visits by community financial advisors. These have helped people claim a significant level of additional benefits. Some specific work has been carried out in relation to carers i.e. the introduction of a 'paying for care' leaflet and 'moving forward' training. However there is a need to strengthen the strategic framework in place and to provide focused leadership to drive the carers agenda forward, including evaluating the impact of strategies to support carers into employment.

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to improving performance on this outcome. The initial priorities are to work with partners to promote financial inclusion, improve sign posting to money management services and review the fairer charging policy within the transformation programme. It also aims to help people maximise income through supporting them into employment and through the input of its welfare rights and customer financial advice services. There is a need to develop a cohesive and strategically aligned framework to support this across all groups and to integrate these priorities into all assessment, review and support planning processes.

Outcome 7: Maintaining personal dignity and respect

The Council is performing:

Due to the transition to unitary status in April 2009 the Care Quality Commission will not be making a judgement about the performance of Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to this outcome.

Bedfordshire County Council made limited progress in addressing the development needs within adult safeguarding processes and focused attention is required to drive the required improvement. The action plan developed as a result of the Commission for Social Care Inspection in January 2008 needs to be strengthened and carefully monitored. Governance arrangements failed to ensure that the required improvements occurred and to ensure that referrals were tracked, monitored and outcomes recorded. Referral levels have continued to increase. However the numbers of inappropriate referrals suggest that people still do not understand safeguarding or that they are unaware of alternative routes to raise a concern. Therefore the adequacy and impact of awareness raising strategies needs to be evaluated. Work has commenced to strengthen the interagency safeguarding board, including expanding membership to people who use services, carers and the independent and voluntary sector. There remains a significant improvement agenda to be achieved including a step change in the level of staff training and in the assessment of staff competence.

Central Bedfordshire Council has recognised the need for ongoing work both strategically and operationally to secure the required improvement across safeguarding processes and the need to achieve better outcomes. It is committed to driving forward improvement and has highlighted its initial priorities. These include securing commitment to safeguarding across the whole Council, embedding improved governance, revitalising the safeguarding board and increasing awareness in local communities about safeguarding issues. Interim arrangements have been implemented across mental health services and a competitive re-tendering process has commenced. It is essential that the Council maintains the leadership it has shown to date and that governance and monitoring arrangements are central to strategic and operational plans. The involvement of all strategic partners in securing the required improvement is critical and membership of the board should be at a senior level within partner organisations to facilitate timely decision making. All partners need to ensure that respective policies and protocols are aligned to the overall aims, objectives and priorities of the safeguarding board.

