

# Adult Social Care Committee

Item No:

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Norfolk's implementation of the Care Act SCIE Review</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>5 September 2016</b>
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	<b>Catherine Underwood, Acting Executive Director of Adult Social Services</b>

## **Strategic impact**

The Care Act introduced the most far-reaching changes in social care legislation in 60 years. Implementing its measures and embedding the required change in social work practice across the county is essential if the council is to meet its statutory duties. The Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) review provides an independent assessment of the council's progress to date.

## **Executive summary**

Norfolk Adult Social Services Department commissioned SCIE to carry out a review of its progress in implementing the Care Act. The decision to do so was made in response to a local user-led organisation's request to the Care Quality Commission, to investigate what it claimed was 'systemic failure' in care and support planning in Norfolk.

The report identifies the opportunity to build on areas of good professional practice and focus on other areas which require improvement to bring them fully in line with the Care Act.

An action plan is being developed in co-production with the stakeholders who contributed to the review. The Norfolk Making it Real group have been asked to monitor progress.

## **Recommendations:**

**The Committee is invited to:-**

- a) note and discuss the contents of the report**
- b) consider and comment on the proposals for implementing the recommendations**

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The SCIE review was commissioned by Norfolk County Council in response to a request to the regulator, the Care Quality Commission, to investigate allegations that the council was 'disregarding' its statutory duties.
- 1.2 Under the Care Act, the government has the power to order a CQC inspection of a council in exceptional circumstances. The Department of Health declined to order an inspection in view of the close working between the Council, ADASS and the Local Government Association, which resulted in the commissioning of the SCIE review (part funded by the LGA).
- 1.3 SCIE is a leading improvement support agency and an independent charity working with care and support services across the UK and was chosen because it is a well-respected organisation that has carried out similar reviews with other local authorities since the implementation of the Care Act.

## **2. SCIE Review – Objectives, scope and methodology**

- 2.1 The objectives, scope and methodology of the review were defined in partnership between SCIE and NCC.
- 2.2 The core objectives were to identify whether the tools put in place by NCC and current practice complied with the Care Act principles and duties, with a view to formulating advice and recommendations to promote best practice and consistency going forward.
- 2.3 The scope of the review encompassed the core frontline functions of assessment, review, support planning and personal budgets, including the provision of information and advice on support planning.
- 2.4 It also aimed to take advantage of SCIE's experience of working with other local authorities to put the findings in Norfolk in the context of Care Act implementation in other parts of the country.
- 2.5 SCIE reviewed NCC documentation, 30 individual cases, carried out interviews with service users, carers, NCC staff, councillors, providers and user-led organisations – as well as feedback via letter and emails.

## **3. SCIE Review – Key findings**

### **3.1 Overview of key findings:**

- 3.1.1
  - a) all local authorities are on a journey towards implementing the Care Act 2014: it is the most significant change in adult social care law in the last 60 years, involving important changes to councils' duties, which will take time to implement to the full desired effect in Norfolk as elsewhere
  - b) there were clear examples of good practice and some innovative pilot schemes and initiatives but these were yet to be universally and consistently implemented across the county
  - c) there was a perception that the imperative to make savings has impacted on practice
  - d) communication between NCC and stakeholders has been eroded and would benefit from reinvigoration and improvement
  - e) there was a willingness and clear commitment from all parties to move things forward and make improvements

### **3.2 Recommendations:**

- 3.2.1 The report made 22 recommendations, which are listed in full on pages 25-30 of the SCIE report. They can helpfully be grouped under five headings and summarised as follows:

- 1) Engagement
- 2) Terminology
- 3) Consistency
- 4) Workloads
- 5) Process and Practice

#### **3.2.2 a) Engagement - To improve engagement with stakeholders by:**

- i. reviewing mechanisms for engaging with the range of stakeholders across the council (providers, service users, carers, community organisations, etc.)
- ii. making sure people using services can submit support plans in formats of their own choosing

- iii. working with stakeholders to further develop staff's understanding of disabilities and their impact on people's lives
- b) Terminology** - To bring the terminology on NCC forms, processes, factsheets and other guidance in line with that of the Care Act to provide clarity and consistency for staff and the people who use our services
- c) Consistency** - To create opportunities, forums and task-groups across the county to transfer information and learning and share good practice between colleagues at all levels
- d) Workloads** - To carry out an analysis of workloads and time required to deliver quality practice. To review and improve supervision and performance management techniques
- e) Process and practice** – To review and clarify process and practice around aspects of:
  - i. eligibility determination
  - ii. support planning
  - iii. closure of cases
  - iv. resource allocation system
  - v. reviews

## 4. Review Workshop

- 4.1 A workshop was held on 15 July for SCIE to present their completed report and outline the findings and key themes to all those who had been involved in the review. This was followed by an action planning session during which attendees were invited to contribute towards planning the way in which an action plan should be formulated and implemented.
- 4.2 The questions – designed to address the key findings listed at paragraph 3.1 above – that the workshop focused on were:
  - (1) How can the Council work with stakeholders going forward to build trust and a great working relationship?
    - Opportunities for involvement and working together
    - Opportunities for feedback and learning
  - (2) Budgets – the reality
    - How should the Council work with stakeholders to ensure information about financial constraints is clear and understandable?
    - How can partners and people who use our services contribute meaningfully to the discussion on how we can make the money we do have to spend go as far as possible?
  - (3) Consistency across the county – getting the balance
    - How can we make space for local innovation and differences whilst ensuring that people who use our services receive equitable outcomes?
    - How can we ensure that learning about great practice and/or services is shared?
  - (4) Social care practice
    - How can practitioners get a stronger understanding of what assessment and support planning feels like – and what makes it feel better?
    - How can practitioners learn more about disability and the impact it has on an individual's life?
    - How can we approach stakeholders in developing our strengths based approach to social work and Signs of Wellbeing?

## 5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The recommendations from SCIE can be divided into those which are primarily administrative, such as changes to the wording of forms, and those which require co-production, such as how engagement with stakeholders can be improved and how people using services can interact more effectively to influence the practice of social care.
- 5.2 The table below shows that progress is already being made with the administrative recommendations.

Action	SCIE recommendations	Underway	Completed
Amend best practice guidance and procedures	1,2,3,5,6,7,11,21		✓
Promote Signs of Wellbeing	1,2	✓	
Amend training materials	2,3,4,5,6,7	✓	
Revise CareFirst forms	3,4,5,6,12,13,14,15,22	✓	
Revise supervision procedures	9	✓	
Improve communications at end of assessment	17		✓
Time based costings exercise	19	✓	
Evaluate pilot exercises and roll out to rest of Norfolk	16	✓	

- 5.3 The outputs from the review workshop will form the basis of an action plan, which will be discussed at a further workshop to be arranged for late October. All those who contributed to the review will be invited. The purpose of the workshop will be to distill the ideas from the earlier meeting and considering how the Council and its stakeholders can work together to identify practical tasks which can be completed to meet the recommendations in the report. This will lead to a full action plan identifying tasks, timescales and resources required to ensure the recommendations are implemented in a timely way which meets the expectations of the Council and all stakeholders.
- 5.4 The Making it Real Board have agreed to monitor progress against the action plan, ensuring that stakeholders will have an ongoing role in holding the Council to account for the delivery of the action plan.

## 6. Issues, risks and innovation

- 6.1 The Council's duties in relation to providing care and support to adults are governed by the Care Act 2014. Failure to comply with these duties could leave the Council open to legal challenge. Responding positively to the recommendations of the SCIE review will provide reassurance that the duties are being fulfilled in a way that complies with both the letter, and the spirit, of the law.

- 6.2 Creating stronger engagement with stakeholders will help ensure that services develop in ways that are more responsive to the needs of people requiring care and support and their carers. Working closely with other organisations will help maximise the benefits of more integrated approaches to social care.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 Any changes as a result of the SCIE recommendations will be delivered within existing budgets.

## **8. Background Papers**

- 8.1 External Care Act Implementation Review in Norfolk County Council (June 2016)  
Social Care Institute for Excellence -

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media/norfolk/downloads/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/care-support-and-health/external-care-act-implementation-scie-review-in-ncc.pdf?la=en>

## **Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

<b>Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel No:</b>	<b>Email address:</b>
Lorna Bright	01603 223960	<a href="mailto:lorna.bright@norfolk.gov.uk">lorna.bright@norfolk.gov.uk</a>



If you need this report in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.