Portfolio Holder Briefing

Adult Social Care - Councillor Pedley

3 November 2025

Walsall Council

Adult Social Care & Health

Cllr Kier Pedley

Areas of Responsibility	Lead Executive Director
• Social Care Services for older people and people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities or mental health needs • Health Partnerships • Integrated Care Board, Health Interface Lead • Safeguarding and Safeguarding Partnerships • Protection for Vulnerable Adults • Transition arrangements between Childrens and Adult Care • Early Intervention and Prevention • Ofsted and CQC • Adult Social Care Transformation & Reform • Adult Social Care Commissioning • Market Shaping and Management • Adult Social Care Brokerage • Adult Social Care Finance – Charging, Debt Recovery and Payments	Kerrie Allward (DASS) – Adult Social Care and Health

Partnership Board Membership

- Member of Health and Wellbeing Board
- Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Council – 3rd November 2025

Portfolio Holder Report – Adult Social Care

1. Foreword

As the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care (ASC), I have noted the ASC service sustained commitment to evaluating and enhancing service provision for residents, while promoting continuous improvement. The accompanying portfolio report details the breadth and complexity of ASC's operations, highlighting both achievements and relevant outcomes that reflect our work. These findings are presented in the context of current economic pressures and rising needs among Walsall's population.

2. Strategic Context

Adult Social Care in Walsall is committed to fostering a culture of excellent practice, robust governance, and equity, with our workforce at the heart of everything we do. We leverage data-driven decision-making to ensure our actions align with the Council Plan 2025/29, the We are Walsall 2040 vision, and the Walsall Together Strategy. Recognising the increasing complexity of needs and pressures on the ASC system, we are evolving our model to emphasise prevention, early intervention, and the development of resilient, self-supporting communities.

Our approach prioritises the efficient use of resources and supports resident independence, prompting us to continually reassess and refine our support strategies in collaboration with partners. In 2024/25, significant investment enabled the launch of the Pathway to Independence service, empowering adults to achieve personal goals and greater autonomy. By promoting dignity and self-determination, we aim to enhance quality of life and well-being, enabling individuals to realise their aspirations and contribute meaningfully to the community.

Despite ongoing financial challenges—including long-term funding cuts, rising population, inflation, and workforce pressures—Adult Social Care has secured substantial investment, demonstrating the council's commitment to supporting those in need. Our partnerships remain strong and wide-ranging, spanning health, education, housing, police and the voluntary sector, all united in the goal of improving outcomes for Walsall residents. We continue to champion co-production, involving people with lived experience in shaping future support models, and remain focused on building a sustainable, responsive, and inclusive adult social care system.

3. Key achievements, impact and ongoing work

Our outcomes and markers of success are aligned to our Council's area of focus for Healthy and Well – A wellbeing-centred borough where people are healthy and live full and active lives, with the support they need to achieve a good quality of life. This includes living in safe and suitable homes and creating an environment that helps people make healthy choices.

Outcomes and Impact achieved since end of 2023/24	
Demand on services	**Reablement Services (ICS)**
• The number of people who received a period of reablement following a hospital episode and did not require long-term services was 1,229. This represents a	• The proportion of new people exiting reablement not requiring any long-term support saw a decrease from **76.6%** in

4.6% increase compared to 1,175 people in the previous year.	2023/24 to **74.5%** in 2024/25; the outturn increased to **75.1%** in 2025/26 Q1.
Timeliness of Effective Service Delivery:	**Community Based Services**
• **88%** of Care Act assessments completed within 28 days. • **97%** of annual reviews completed in 2024/25. • **93%** completion rate for DoLS applications since April 2024. • **85% of people receiving Intermediate Care Service** are being discharged home.	• There were 2,585 people in receipt of community based services as at 31/03/25, 4.1% higher than 2,465 people receiving services at the end of 2023/24.
Feedback from people:	
• 77.1% of people in Walsall reported that they felt safe placing Walsall 7th place nationally and 2nd in the comparator group and 1st in the region. Overall satisfaction of people who use services has increased from **60.4%** in 2023/24 to **63.7%**.	
Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Clinics	
From the 1st April 2024 – March 2025, 730 OTA assessments were conducted in clinics. This initiative has significantly reduced waiting times for OTA assessments, with clinic appointments now being booked approximately 20 days post receipt of referral and home assessment around 35 days.	
Pathway to Independence	
• Community Reablement went live on 4th November 2024, with 702 people accepted into the Service. • Some individuals exited the service after receiving equipment, adaptations, information and advice. • 457 people required a full individual reablement plan. • Of those requiring a full plan, 401 have now exited the service. • Only 61 individuals require ongoing long-term care and support. • This represents 15% of people exiting the Service following a full reablement plan, and just 8% of total referrals accepted. • The Prevention and Early Intervention Team continues to provide OTA clinics, significantly reducing waiting times for OT assessments to approximately 2 weeks. • Increased recruitment of OT and OTA staff across the Directorate has also reduced OT waiting lists in other areas, such as Learning Disabilities, Mental Health, and Younger Adults. • Ongoing work is being carried out to develop the Community Enablement element of Pathway to Independence, which will align with Community Reablement but focus on younger adults with learning disabilities, mental health diagnoses, or neurodiversity, supporting those transitioning from children's to adults' services. Development and growth of Shared Lives and Employment services continues alongside Enablement initiatives.	

- ## Our accomplishments and successes

Annual Celebration Event	**ASC Workforce**
• In April 2025, we held our third annual celebration event. • 29 certificates were awarded for post-qualifying achievements. • Five Best Interest Assessors recognised for supporting human rights in care settings. • Three Social Work Practice Educators completed stage 2 training; four completed stage 1. • Fourteen newly qualified Social Workers finished their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE)	• Walsall ASC has a positive, diverse workforce of over 400 professionals, recognised as its greatest asset. • There is a strong commitment to workforce development, with continuous learning and training opportunities. • The Workforce Strategy ensures the staff reflect the diversity of the community, supporting culturally sensitive services and innovation. • Engagement with staff and providers has led to learning needs analysis and capability audits. • Investments have been made in comprehensive training for social workers and Occupational Therapists, increasing Occupational Therapist posts by seven to boost prevention and early intervention. • Apprenticeship Programmes now include Occupational Therapy Degree Apprentices and a new foundation degree in Rehabilitation Work (Visual Impairment). • The Learning Disabilities team has adopted a named worker approach to build better relationships and improve outcomes.

	• 70% of staff have over three years' experience in the sector. • Staff turnover in Walsall stands at 21.6%, below both the regional (26.7%) and national (24.8%) averages
Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE):	**Assessed and Supported Year in Practice (ASYP)**
• Our ASYE programme has been recognised by Skills for Care for best practice as an outcome of National Quality Assurance Panel (Skills for Care December 2024).	• The introduction of ASYP and an enhanced induction for Occupational Therapists new to Adult Social Care has significantly boosted recruitment, with applicants now exceeding vacancies—contrary to regional and national trends. As a result, we currently have no vacancies in these roles.
Compliments	**Market Position Statements (MPS)**
• Received 248 compliments in 2024/25. • 75 compliments in Q1 2025/26, a 31% increase from last year. • Complaints are decreasing; positive feedback is rising.	• We co-produced our Market Position Statements (MPSs) with providers. • Our three MPSs outline market analysis and actions to meet care and support needs in Walsall. • MPSs help us anticipate growth, adapt service locations, and address gaps in areas such as dementia, respite, step-down from supported living, and complex bed-based care. • We have introduced fairer, evidence-based fee rates set within a three-year plan.
All Age Carers	**Contracts**
• This year has seen the implementation our All Age Carers strategy which focuses on identification of carers and enhancing the support offer.	• Walsall's market sustainability is solid as of late 2024/early 2025. • Supply exceeds demand for most key commissioned services. • Few package hand backs, offering contingency options. • Low levels of contract returns, with some new contracts and services starting. • Three homecare providers exited the market in the last 12 months.
Financial Assessments	
• Average financial assessment completion time reduced from 28 days (2024/25) to 23 days. • 2025 process improvements and increased team capacity to enhance user experience during waiting periods. • Additional assessment officers and debt officers appointed. • Debt Officers collaborating with Income and ASC Operational teams to reduce client debt and intervene early in new debt cases.	

- **Ongoing Work- Care Quality Commission (CQC):** When building our evidence for CQC were able to identify a number of areas of strength and focus which are being developed through our continuous improvement programme and service plans.

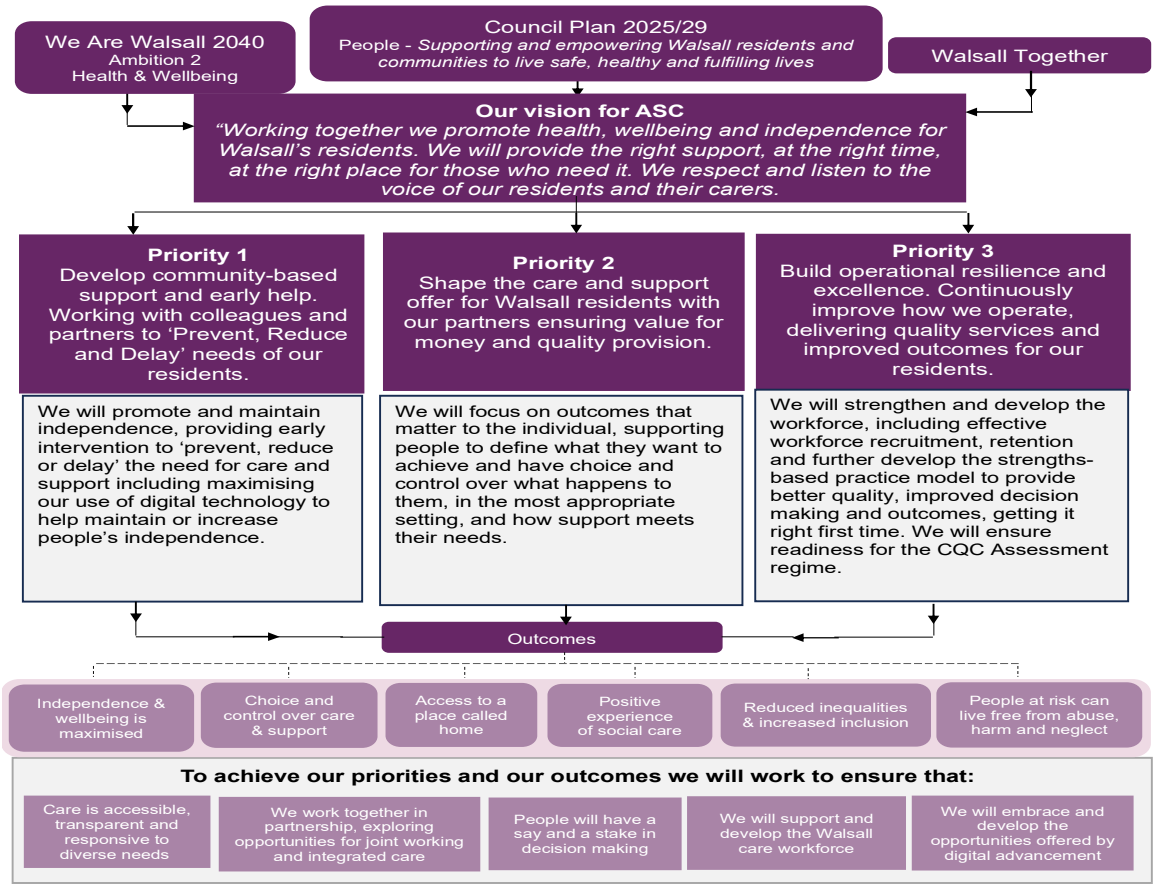
CQC completed their onsite assessment of Adult Social Care in August 2025, we are currently awaiting the outcome in the last quarter of this year.

Commissioning: Walsall has a broad range of providers, and commissioning has advanced in the last two years with clearer strategies and action plans. These measures aim to boost provider engagement, co-production, and quality improvement. With Impower's support, we

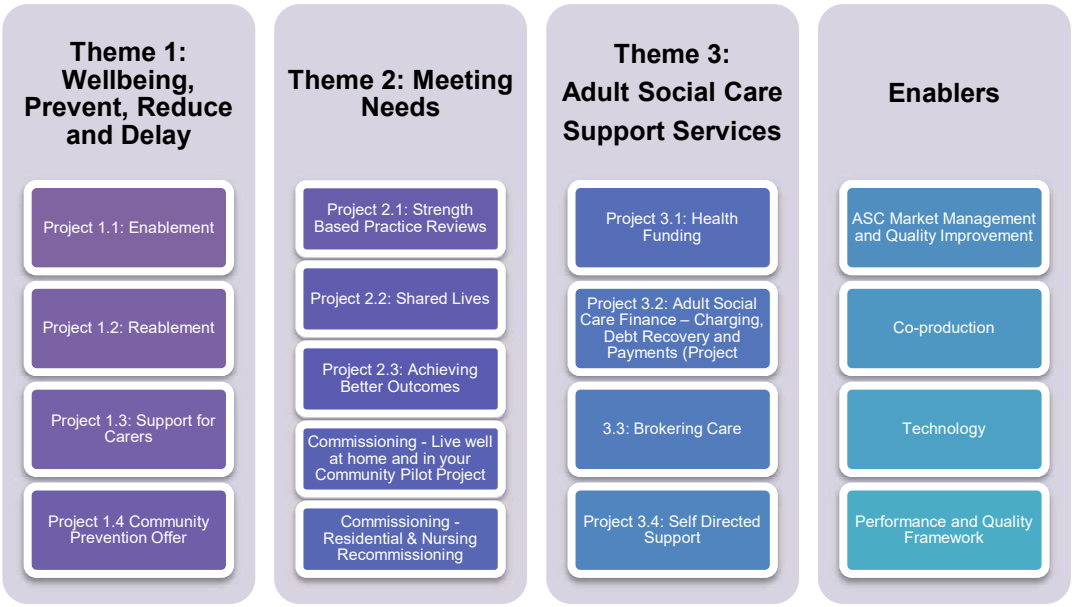
are adopting a new commissioning model and best practices, investing in team capacity, and consulting staff before implementation.

4. Future Priorities and Plans

For 2025/26, our three main priorities will help us strive towards ASC's vision and improve outcomes for residents.



- **Our Continuous Improvement Programme:** Our Continuous Improvement Programme demonstrates our commitment to excellence, with 16 active projects focused on wellbeing and prevention, strength-based practice for better outcomes, and improved operational resilience. Supporting initiatives include market management, co-production, technology, and a thorough performance and quality framework. The programme is backed by the council transformation team and governed by the Council Transformation Board through established processes.



5. Thank you

Thank you to everyone who plays a part in supporting Adult Social Care in Walsall. To our carers—your dedication and compassion are the foundation of our community, and your efforts are deeply appreciated. To our partners and providers, your collaboration and commitment help us deliver better outcomes for residents every day. And to our staff, your professionalism, resilience, and care make a real difference to the lives of those we serve. Together, we are building a stronger, more inclusive Walsall where everyone can thrive.

Councillor Kier Pedley

Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care