Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key

Report to:	Cabinet	**Date:** 08 July 2026
Subject:	Outcome of CQC local authority assessment of Adult Social Care	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform	

Summary

1. To share the results of first CQC assessment of Bury Local Authority and summarise the key strengths and areas where improvement is required from the draft Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment of Bury Council's adult social care responsibilities.

Recommendation(s)

2. To note outcome of the CQC inspection of Adult Social Care.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

3. To note outcome of the CQC inspection of Adult Social Care.

Alternative options considered and rejected

4. N/A

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Purpose

To share the results of first CQC assessment of Bury Local Authority and summarise the key strengths and areas where improvement is required from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment of Bury Council's adult social care responsibilities.

Overall Position

- The overall assessment finds that Bury delivers **GOOD** standard of adult social care, with strong leadership, effective safeguarding, good partnership working and a clear strategic vision.
- Some operational shortfalls remain, particularly around timeliness, consistency of experience, carer support, out-of-hours arrangements, which the Council has largely already recognised and begun addressing.

Quality Statements	Assessing needs	Supporting people to live healthier lives	Equity in experience and outcomes	Care provision, integration and continuity	Partnerships and communities	Safe systems, pathways and transitions	Safeguarding	Governance, management and sustainability	Learning, improvement and innovation
Overall numerical score	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3

Background

CQC assessments of councils are a formal, statutory regulatory regime for adult social care introduced under the Health and Care Act 2022. They involve the Care Quality Commission (CQC) independently assessing how well a local authority discharges its duties under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014 and delivers adult social care across the whole system (not just council-run services).

Each authority receives a single overall rating: Outstanding / Good / Requires Improvement / Inadequate

The framework is structured around 4 themes; working with people, providing support, ensuring safety, leadership

Adult Social Care Services in Bury have been judged to be **GOOD**.

Amongst many strengths it highlights **strong, visible leadership and supportive culture** saying there was a stable and experienced senior leadership team, and that senior leaders and staff were passionate and committed, with leaders having created a positive, supportive workplace culture.

The report states people received Care Act assessments from **"skilled, knowledgeable and committed staff"** and describes assessment and care planning as **person-centred and strengths-based**, with many positive examples of staff adapting communication, building trust, and focusing on people's strengths and goals

The report is clear that there were **effective systems, processes and practices** to keep people safe and protected from abuse and neglect, and it also references **strong multi-agency safeguarding partnerships**

The report highlights **good partnership arrangements** and collaborative working across internal and external stakeholders, including the role of **Integrated Neighbourhood Teams** bringing together health, social care and voluntary sector services. It also notes a **nationally recognised Hospital Discharge Programme** with streamlined processes to reduce delay.

CQC say people with lived experience were able to shape strategies and services through co-production, and that organisations/people involved in co-production gave **"extremely positive feedback"** about their experiences. They cite examples such as the co-produced **Bury Adults Carers Strategy 2025–2029.**

There are things we need to improve to be even better and what was reassuring is that we already knew about them and are already working on them.

It was highlighted that we need to improve our waiting list and timeliness of assessments and our support for carers, especially the availability of respite services. We knew this already as our carers had told us when we were developing our carers strategy. Whilst work is underway and our most recent carers survey results now show things are improving it wasn't fast enough to be evident at the time of the CQC's visit. The most recent carers survey results are found later in this report where we are now above England averages.

We have been told, and it is correct, that we need to improve access to information and advice. The inspection found people reporting being digitally excluded and some people with sensory impairments struggling to find information. We know this and our sensory impairment strategy will address how people with impairments can be supported to find information and advice. Information on our website continues to improve but much more still needs attention.

And finally, some people reported challenges accessing support in a crisis especially out of hours so again we will look at this. We now have overnight services provided by our rapid response service and a commissioned care provider, we have emergency respite beds available and people can be admitted at very short notice to our intermediate care beds, so we think that the findings in the report relate to a lack of awareness within our system, rather than a lack of service.

All of the improvements required have been built into our next 3-year business plan and will be overcome in coming months and the relevant elements of the plan are appended to this report.

A huge thanks to all our workforce and all our partners across our integrated health and care system who contributed to this great result.

LET'S gives us these rock-solid foundations here in Bury to firther improve our work with communities in our neighbourhoods and if we resolutely continue with the ambitions of LET'S, working locally with our communities, taking a strengths-based approach, being innovative and enterprising with our commissioning and working together with all our partners whilst benefiting from strong stable, consistent leadership, we will improve further.

What the Report Says is Working Well (Strengths)

1. Leadership, Governance and Culture

- The Council has a stable, experienced and visible senior leadership team, with strong political and executive oversight of adult social care performance.
- Governance arrangements are clear, with regular Cabinet reporting, strong use of data dashboards, and clear escalation of risk.
- A positive, supportive workplace culture was evident, with staff feeling valued, supported and encouraged to innovate.

2. Person-Centred and Strengths-Based Practice

- Care Act assessments are generally person-centred, strengths-based and respectful, with people feeling listened to and involved in decisions.
- Staff demonstrated flexibility and commitment, including working creatively with people who are homeless, in transition, or with complex needs.
- The "My Life, My Way" assessment approach was highlighted as a strong enabler of personalised care planning.

3. Prevention, Early Help and Community Support

- Bury has a strong preventative offer, including Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, Staying Well services, reablement and intermediate care.
- Intermediate care and reablement outcomes compare well to national averages, supporting independence and reducing hospital stays.
- Innovative use of technology-enabled care, including award-winning digital approaches to falls prevention.

4. Safeguarding

- **Safeguarding arrangements are effective, with** no waiting list for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) authorisations.
- A central safeguarding team and transformation programme have improved consistency and oversight.
- Strong multi-agency working, including effective Safeguarding Adults Board leadership and learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

5. Partnership Working

- Very strong integration with NHS partners, including hospital discharge, mental health and intermediate care.
- Bury is recognised regionally for its integrated working within Greater Manchester.
- Positive, collaborative relationships with providers and the voluntary, community and faith sector.

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- The Council has a clear understanding of local demographics and uses data to identify and address inequalities.
- Strong examples of culturally competent practice and targeted engagement with under-represented communities.
- Co-produced strategies and growing use of lived experience to shape services.

7. Learning, Improvement and Innovation

- A strong learning culture, with reflective supervision, peer learning and continuous improvement embedded in practice.
- Positive feedback from external reviews (including LGA peer review).
- Strong co-production examples influencing recruitment, service design and communication.

Where the Report Says Improvement Is Needed

1. Timeliness and Waiting Times

- Although waiting times are improving, delays in Care Act assessments, reviews and carers' assessments were identified, particularly during periods of staff capacity pressure.

2. Consistency of Experience

- While many people had positive experiences, others reported variation depending on team, pathway or timing. This includes inconsistencies in carers being offered assessments, advocacy or timely reviews.

3. Support for Unpaid Carers

- Feedback from unpaid carers was mixed.
- Access to respite and emergency replacement care, particularly out-of-hours, was highlighted as a weakness.

4. Advocacy and Early Referral

- Advocacy is available and valued, but referrals are not always made early enough, limiting its impact.

5. Data Quality and Information

- Information and advice are improving, but digital exclusion remains a barrier for some residents, particularly older people and those with sensory impairments.

6. Transitions and Out-of-Hours Arrangements

- Transitions (including hospital discharge and service changes) are generally effective but not consistently experienced.

Key Message

- The report presents a positive picture of adult social care in Bury, with strong leadership, safeguarding, partnership working and a clear strategic direction.
- Most areas for improvement are already known, are operational rather than systemic, and are being actively addressed through workforce investment, commissioning plans and service redesign.
- There is no indication of unsafe practice, but continued focus is needed on timeliness, carers, and consistency of experience.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

The outcome of this inspection demonstrates the departments commitment to LETS.

From our commitment to co-produce with our local residents, to our strong partnerships, to our innovative commissioning and positive strengths based approaches to delivery, all are highlighted in this report.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

There are no equality impact considerations of noting this inspection outcome

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Environmental Impact and Considerations:

N/A this report is for noting

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
N/A	

Procurement Implications:

5. No Procurement implications.

Legal Implications:

6. There are no legal implications however this report provides Members with the outcome of the CQC inspection and details how the Council meets its statutory duties under the Care Act 2014, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Mental Health Act 1983 and what improvements can be made.

Financial Implications:

7. There are no financial implications, or changes required to the councils MTFS, as a result of the recommendations in this report.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - List of Improvement actions

Appendix 2 - Full CQC outcome report

Background papers:

None

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning

Appendix 1

The following improvement actions contained within the Department's new business plan which is available on request

- Reduce waiting lists for social work assessments to less than 10 – Director of Social Work Operations
- Reduce waiting lists for Occupational Therapy Assessments to less than 50 – Principal OT
- Improve timeliness of advocacy referrals – Principal Social Worker
- Improve business processes and ensure consistent experience and Improve transitions between services – Director of Social Work Operations and Senior Programme Manager
- Continue to embed carers strategy – Strategic Lead for Carers
- Improve information and Advice services – Strategic Lead of Carers

Progress against the business plan will be reported quarterly to executive and to cabinet

Appendix 2

Full CQC report can be found on this link https://www.cqc.org.uk/care-services/local-authority-assessment-reports/bury-0626