

Minutes of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

18 June 2026

-: Present :-

Councillor Johns (Chairwoman)

Councillors Barbara Lewis, Long and Spacagna (Vice-Chair)

Non-voting Co-opted Member
Sarah Lonton (Healthwatch)

(Also in attendance: Councillors Tranter and Chris Lewis)

8. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bryant, and Non-voting Co-opted Members - Pat Harris (who was represented by Sarah Lonton) and Amanda Moss.

It was also reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Liberal Democrat Group, the membership of the Sub-Board had been amended to include Councillor Long in place of Councillor Douglas-Dunbar for this meeting only.

9. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Board held on 21 May 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

10. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

11. Adult Social Care Commissioning Plan

The Sub-Board received a presentation from the Divisional Director of Adult Social Care, Emma Crowther, as set out in the submitted document outlining the Adult Social Care Commissioning Plan, including the approach to needs analysis, service design, co-production and market shaping, who also responded to questions together with the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities, Councillor Tranter.

Members asked the following questions:

- What was the role of health (Integrated Care Board - ICB) commissioners in shaping the care market to meet local needs?
- How will commissioning responsibilities operate following changes to Section 75 arrangements?
- Is there sufficient capacity within the Council to deliver the range of commissioning workstreams?
- How can the public voice and user engagement be incorporated effectively into commissioning decisions?
- What are the future requirements for care home provision, particularly for complex needs and dementia?
- How will the Council support providers to adapt to future demand and service expectations?
- How will current pricing arrangements for providers be reviewed and updated?
- What impact will local government reorganisation have on commissioning responsibilities and structures?

The following responses were provided:

- Joint working with health partners continues through established governance arrangements, including commissioning oversight meetings where information is shared and co-ordinated approaches are developed.
- Section 75 changes will require clearer separation of commissioning responsibilities, alongside continued collaboration with health partners to ensure services remain aligned.
- Additional posts have been introduced in key areas; however, the scale of work means prioritisation is required and capacity remains a challenge.
- Public and service-user voice will be incorporated through co-production approaches, with further work needed to strengthen engagement mechanisms.
- The care home market is varied, with many smaller providers; challenges include ageing infrastructure and the need to adapt to increased levels of complexity and dementia care.
- Providers will need clearer direction on future service requirements to enable investment and potential changes to operating models.
- Current pricing frameworks are outdated and are being reviewed to reflect market conditions and support sustainability.
- While final arrangements for local government reorganisation are unknown, the need for commissioning functions will remain and continue to be a core responsibility of the Council.

Sarah Lonton from Healthwatch advised that although Healthwatch was expected to cease in March 2027, the Partnership was proactively looking at how they can drive forward the user voice in a more modernised way. It was agreed that representatives from Healthwatch would meet with Emma Crowther to see how they could join up their work effectively moving forward.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the ICB be requested to provide assurance to the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board that they understand their commissioning responsibilities at place and confirm that with the ending of Section 75 agreement, additional resources will be made available to support the market development work required; and
2. that the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board monitor progress on the delivery of the Adult Social Care Commissioning Plan every six months.

12. Adult Social Care Transformation Programme and new ways of working for 2026/2027

The Sub-Board received a presentation from the Director of Adult and Community Services, Anna Coles, as set out in the submitted document outlining the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme, including planned changes to governance, systems and delivery, who also responded to questions together with the Divisional Director of Adult Social Care, Gary Patch and the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities, Councillor Tranter.

The Transformation Programme focussed on the following four key areas:

- safe transition/due diligence;
- transformation;
- improvement/assurance; and
- cost recovery.

Members asked the following questions:

- What are the risks to successful delivery of the transition from Section 75 arrangements?
- Is there agreement between the Council and NHS Trust on the work required and delivery timescales?
- How confident are officers that sufficient resources and capacity are in place to deliver the programme?
- What impact is the transition having on workforce stability, including recruitment and sickness levels?
- How will hospital discharge arrangements operate under the new system?
- Are current processes ensuring that individuals are placed in the most appropriate care settings?
- How will the Council ensure readiness for future Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections?
- What governance arrangements are in place to oversee delivery of the transformation programme?
- Is there clarity on roles and responsibilities between health and social care services going forward?
- What can Members do to support successful delivery of the programme?

The following responses were provided:

- Key risks include workforce uncertainty, service disruption and the complexity of disentangling long-standing integrated arrangements; these are being managed through structured programme governance.
- Joint governance arrangements are in place between the Council and the NHS Trust, including a Programme Board with representation from both organisations to oversee delivery.
- Significant additional resources have been mobilised; however, the scale of the programme means prioritisation is essential and some transformation ambitions may need to be phased.
- Workforce challenges include increased uncertainty, higher sickness levels and recruitment pressures linked to the transition.
- Hospital discharge processes are under review, with consideration being given to different models and how responsibilities will operate in the future. Work is underway to review existing processes and ensure that individuals are supported to access the most appropriate care options.
- Preparation for future CQC inspection is ongoing, with a focus on assurance, performance data and demonstrating system awareness and improvement. A formal programme structure has been established, including leadership oversight, defined workstreams and regular reporting arrangements.
- Work is ongoing to define clear roles and responsibilities between organisations following the end of Section 75 arrangements.
- Continued cross-party support from Members was identified as important to maintaining momentum and providing stability during the transition.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board receive quarterly updates on the Torbay Adult Social Care Transformation Programme; and
2. that the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board request that Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust attend a future meeting to seek assurances that the Trust understand the complexity and have the Transition Team in place to manage the transfer to the Council within the proposed time frame.

13. Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Action Tracker

The Sub-Board noted the submitted action tracker.

Chair