

# People & Health Overview Committee

28 June 2022

## Developing Commissioning Strategies for Adult Social Care

### For Review and Consultation

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr P Wharf, Adult Social Care and Health

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Executive Director:** V Broadhurst, Executive Director of People - Adults

**Report Author:** Mark Tyson  
**Title:** Commissioning Consultant  
**Tel:** 01305 224825  
**Email:** mark.tyson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

**Recommendation:**

1. People & Health Overview Committee are recommended to review, note and comment upon the drafts of the commissioning strategies attached to this report; and
2. People & Health Overview Committee are recommended to review the outline timetable for co-production activity, and provide proposed amendments or ways in which it can be strengthened.

#### Reason for Recommendation:

Over the past three months, work has been underway to form various commissioning intentions and priorities into a coherent overall suite of commissioning strategies that can govern and shape the relevant work of the Council for the coming five years. The intention is to present a comprehensive overview of the future direction for the development of commissioned services, and to set out some clear principles for how commissioning is undertaken. As a first comprehensive account of the future priorities for commissioned services, these documents need to be shared, discussed and shaped with the involvement of local people, partners and providers, which is proposed to start after the Overview Committee in June and run through the summer. Accordingly, there are still elements of the documents that need to be developed further, shaped and finessed.

#### Attachments:

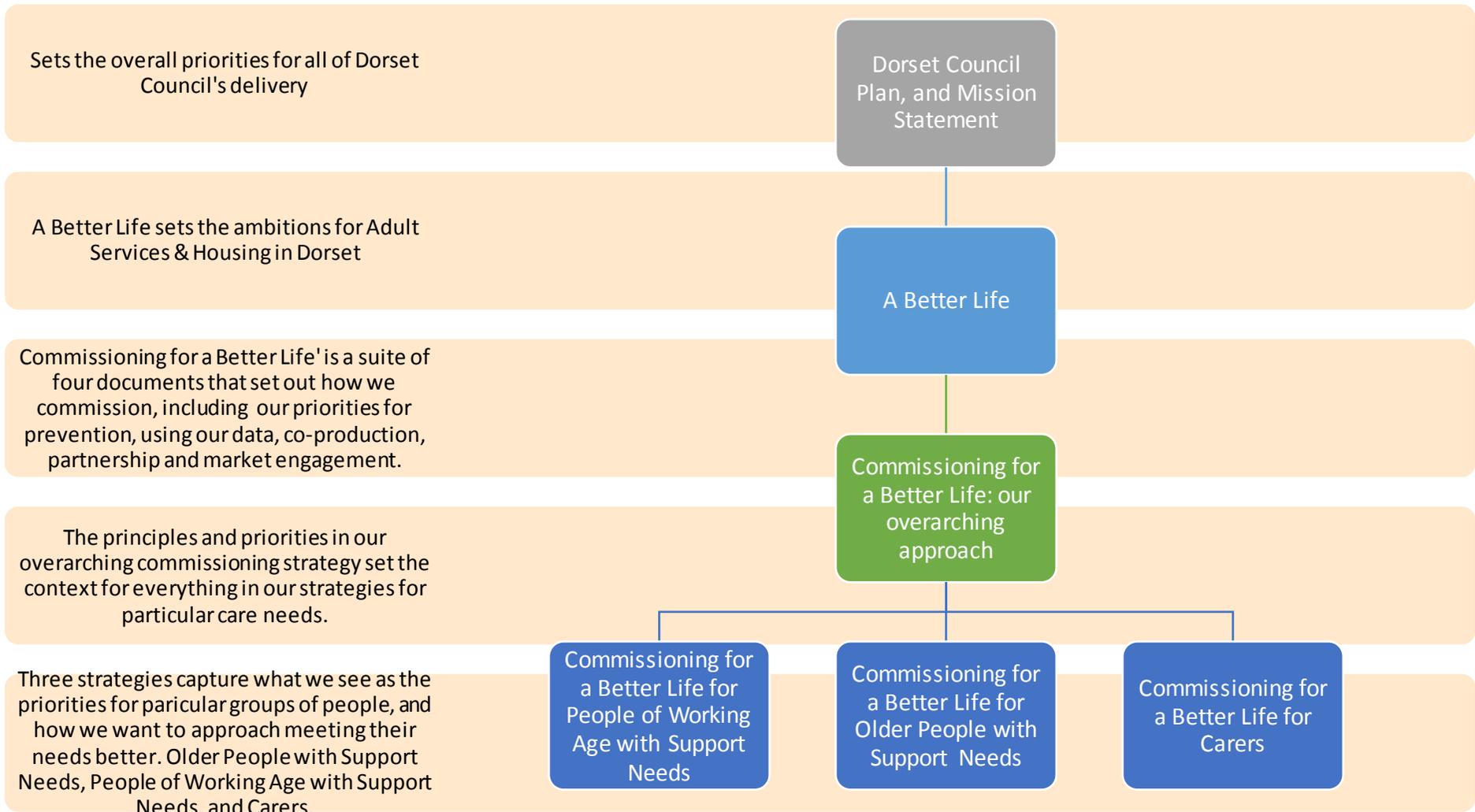
1. Commissioning for A Better Life: Our Overarching Approach
2. Commissioning for A Better Life for Older People with Support Needs
3. Commissioning for A Better Life for People of Working Age with Support Needs
4. Commissioning for A Better Life for Carers

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The strategies attached are the product of a lot of work undertaken within the Adult Commissioning team through 2021 and into early 2022. They start to build a framework, which seeks to present a coherent narrative on the way our services need to develop to meet the needs of the local population.
- 1.2. By setting out those intentions in this way, it is intended that it becomes easier for people to engage with Dorset Council about how future services should evolve: they can see our thinking, and they can engage more directly with how to shape it. At this point, Overview Committee are not being presented with 'final drafts' for sign-off. This is the start of a process to develop these documents into something that everyone recognises as the right way forward for local support and services, or at the very least that people have had the opportunity to engage with and shape. The discussion at Overview Committee is the start of a process to take place over the summer, with the intention of bringing a more final draft for adoption by Cabinet by end of the calendar year. Even at this point, it is still the intention that the documents will continue to evolve in some form as further analysis, engagement and commissioning work continues to develop our collective view on future need.

## **2. A Better Life**

- 2.1. The strategies are all themed to fit within the Directorate's overall vision expressed in 'A Better Life'. Accordingly, the documents are:
  - Commissioning for A Better Life: our overarching approach
  - Commissioning for A Better Life for Older People with Support Needs
  - Commissioning for A Better Life for People of Working Age with Support Needs
  - Commissioning for A Better Life for Carers
- 2.2. It is important to note the 'for' in each title: it is not intended to set out that the Council is commissioning 'a better life' for people, but that our commissioning activity is creating the conditions in which people can live a better life with varying levels of support need.
- 2.3. The vision for each strategy has been gathered under 'right support; right place; right time', and this is intended to strengthen the connection between commissioning activity and the directorate strategy. Importantly, the service has been on a journey over the past few years to build strengths-based practice as the foundation of our approach to delivering personalised social care. These strategies now seek to embed this approach in how we plan and commission services as well.
- 2.4. The overall strategic thread through each document is captured in the diagram replicated in each strategy:



- 2.5. At the outset, the documents try to capture the ways in which we are setting out to improve people's lives. These are expressed as four outcomes in each document, and they are very much open for debate, challenge and further development through the co-production process. Setting out these outcomes then allows us to explain further what some of the current barriers are, and what we will need to put in place to address them. We hope that this is a useful way of opening up our thinking to others, and inviting them to shape it with us – and it is very much an early work in progress.

### **The Dorset Council Plan and the Mission Statement**

- 2.6. The Dorset Council Plan sets an important frame of reference, within which these strategies have developed. The recent announcement of a refresh of the Mission Statement, is also timely to inform the development of these strategies.
- 2.7. Adult Social Care is one key priority from the 10 set out in the Mission Statement, but it will be clear from the strategies that there are many wider impacts from the proposals we are making to develop our social care commissioning in the coming years. Improvements in the building stock for residential or day services, or better route management in homecare delivery, will both assist in delivering the climate change ambition; our plans will contribute significantly to the economy and skills agenda, as social care is a significant local workforce; and digital innovation is also a major theme of our strategy. These are just a couple of examples, but the strategies set a strong foundation for developing partnerships with other parts of the Council, with external partners and communities to delivery on Dorset Council's wider ambition.

### **Links to national approaches on adult social care reform**

- 2.8. In a separate report on this agenda, an overview will be given of the national adult social care reform programme and its potential impact on services in Dorset. The strategies make reference to this in places, but it is very much a developing programme at present, still with a number of unknowns. However, there is high confidence that the broad programmes set out in the strategy create the right conditions through which reform can be implemented.
- 2.9. Some of the key areas referenced include:
- Building on our links between housing strategy and adult social care strategy, which will be the basis for implementing the intention to make every decision about care a decision about housing;
  - The aspirations set out in the overarching strategy with respect to technology-enabled care delivery speak directly to the reform programme's ambition about the potential of technology to improve people's lives;
  - The prevention agenda as described is the foundation for delivering the reform programme's health promotion and prevention intentions, in ways that mean most to the people and community partners of Dorset;
  - In terms of a system that can develop and adopt new ways of providing care and support, the priorities around direct payments, individual service funds and digital access to care information and records are all key;
  - The stated intentions in the overarching strategy around a changed relationship with the market, and specific references in other strategies to understanding and implementing the fair cost of care are critical to the reform programme's priorities around financial reform.

## **3. Governance and next steps**

- 3.1. The documents have been shared with the Stakeholder Advisory Group for A Better Life as part of their journey of development so far, and their comments are being gathered in, as well as plans made for further involving them over the summer. This report marks the first public presentation of the documents, and initiates a process over the coming months to involve key stakeholders and local people in their further development.

3.2. Co-production is about more than engagement processes or consultation. The Council generally adopts the Think Local, Act Personal (TLAP) definition of co-production, which is

*“...an approach where people, family members, carers, organisations and commissioners work together in an equal way, sharing influence, skills and experience to design, deliver and monitor services and projects.”*

3.3. The principles that underpin this are set out in the overarching strategy itself. The plan is still being worked up, and we have invited partner and stakeholder input to this process, alongside commissioners identifying the priority themes for opening up discussion. The Committee is also invited to comment upon and shape the plan, which in summary will include:

- Opportunities to engage the wider staff team at Dorset Council in exploring what the strategies mean for delivering the A Better Life vision, and so that they are supported and energised to engage in wider conversations through the summer;
- Pulling together a set of resources – printed and online – that are accessible for people to be able to engage with the strategies and what we are trying to say about the future of social care services;
- A set of meetings, in-person workshops and webinars to explore key themes from the strategies in more detail, some of which may be for particular audiences (such as partners, or providers, or community groups) and others may involve a mixture of people;
- A planned programme of open sessions in key venues, advertised with help of partners, where people can drop in to give views and find out more about our plans; and
- An online system, that will be open throughout the process, for people to submit comments (using webforms or similar).

3.4. Elected Members will be invited to participate throughout the engagement programme described above, including Ward Members and Town & Parish Councillors, particularly where we are exploring how to commission the right services for local places.

3.5. By the end of the calendar year the reworked drafts of the strategies, reflecting fully the engagement that has been undertaken, will come back to Overview and then be presented to Cabinet for approval and adoption. This will allow us to take into account the contribution of the wider community, partners and the social care provider market. This will include detail on how the documents will be monitored and managed, and how they will be developed over time to ensure that they remain ‘current’.

#### **4. Brief overview of the strategies**

4.1. These documents are a strong starting point for discussion on the future of adult social care services in Dorset over the coming five years. However, they are not fully polished and finished documents. With so much information and thinking gathered together for the first time, it is inevitable that there continues to be some scope for development. Indeed, if there were not such scope then the purpose of the summer engagement process would be questionable. Some thoughts on how we will continue to refine them, alongside the community and partner discussions, include:

- Data can only ever be a ‘snapshot’ in time, but we will want to continue to ensure that we use good, up-to-date and well-referenced data;
- We will want to employ more consistent referencing of links sources in the documents, as we refine the text;
- There are still some connections to be further evolved between the priorities set out in these strategies and other programmes of work, for example housing strategy and NHS plans, and our engagement processes (internal as well as external) will help to develop these;
- Commissioners are keen to ensure that people have involvement in the iteration of the action plans in particular – these are the expressions of what we are practically going to do, so it is important to involve people – this is more critical in some areas than others, where previous conversations have perhaps been less developed; and

- In time we will ensure that there is a more compelling graphic presentation of these documents – we are aware that they are weighty accounts of our priorities, and we will need to find formats to present them for different audiences, of course including accessibility considerations such as easy-read.

## Overarching Commissioning Strategy

4.2. This document contains the principles and priorities that will define how we approach commissioning. It describes the link between the commissioning and the overall Council Plan and ‘A Better Life’.

4.3. Important sections in this strategy that influence and inform the others include:

- **Working with the Care Market**  
Sets out the links to the Council Commercial Strategy. Outlines the approach to be taken with Market Position Statements and the Market Sustainability Plan. Describes the changes with Care Dorset, as one major new commercial relationship that will need to be nurtured.
- **Commissioning for Place and in Partnership**  
Starts to articulate what is meant by place-based commissioning, with some highlights from other strategies on how place-based thinking is shaping the future of services. Also leads into the major partnership interfaces, especially the ICS, and how Dorset Council engages with this partnership to improve the local relevance of its work.
- **Our Prevention and Community Inclusion Approach**  
Provides a framework for what follows in the other strategies around approaches to prevention. Sets out two key prevention priorities: participation and community resilience; and support for independence.
- **Our digital ambition**  
Gives an overview of digital developments planned over the coming years, and the thinking about how significant digital is for the development of a modern, responsive and enabling service offer.
- **Direct Payments & Individual Service Funds**  
Sets a framework for the delivery of improved uptake for direct payments and individual service funds, both of which are important for increasing individuals’ choice and control over their social care services, and which will then apply to all of the strategies that follow.
- **Co-production and Partnership**  
This section describes how we approach co-production, how important it is for the work we do, and the principles that govern our approach, plus some of the priority areas identified in the strategies.
- **Insight priorities for 2022/23**  
This section, is intended to form a work programme around insight activity so that colleagues can engage and plan the work. It is also about being clear on the ‘what we don’t know’ so that people can engaged with us to help refine our plans.
- **Safeguarding and commissioning for quality**  
This section continues to develop, but is aligned to the annual plan for the Safeguarding Adults Board.

## Commissioning for a Better Life for Older People

4.4. This strategy presents an initial view on a strategy for ageing well in Dorset, as well as for improving the major types of care delivered to older people. The vision will add strength to the conversations happening through NHS partnerships on ‘ageing well’, and potentially help shape future Health & Wellbeing Strategies around ageing.

4.5. The current outcomes to be achieved by the strategy (on which comment is welcomed to ensure that they are the ‘right’ focus) are:

- Dorset is a great place to grow older, with a range of vibrant community activity, giving people better days whether they have support needs or not, and keeping them well connected to the people around them and where they live
- People have access to the information and advice they need to make good decisions for them, at crucial times in their ageing journey
- People have access to excellent care and support in their home, both responsive short-term reablement and longer-term care, which always puts independence at its heart and helps people to continue to live independently for as long as possible, utilising equipment and assistive technology where appropriate
- A good range and choice of residential care is available, in high quality, modern homes, to meet the increasingly complex needs of the local older population

4.6. The document presents a series of sections covering:

- **Ageing in Dorset**  
Gathers some key data about ageing in Dorset, and the developing older population.
- **Our Vision for a Better Life for Older People in Dorset**  
The commitments and intentions, across ageing well, day opportunities, home care and residential care are here grouped (as with other strategies) under Right Support, Right Place, Right Time.
- **A Snapshot of Service Demand**  
Rather than have sections on demand for each type of service, it has been gathered here at the outset.
- **Ageing Well in Inclusive Communities**  
This section seeks to apply the prevention approach to older people's needs. It flows into the ambition around day opportunities as it applies to this population group. Also emphasises an older population as a hugely powerful resource and strength, not only the narrative about being a financial challenge.
- **Care and Support at Home**  
Sets out the challenge, and proposed approach, around care and support at home and reablement. Includes emphasis on 'reablement as a preventive intervention' rather than only a post-hospital intervention.
- **Accommodation with Care**  
This section has developed with housing colleagues, but will likely need continued development beyond the first draft of the strategy, to flag the thinking about how to develop a stronger strategic and forward-looking position on the development of accommodation with care.
- **Residential and Nursing Care**  
Presents overview of demand modelling, and thoughts on the market and its development. Will be developed as the conversation with the market about the sustainability plan develops.

### **Commissioning for a Better Life for Working Age People**

4.7. This strategy gathers the priorities, issues and activities for those aged 18-65 with support needs in Dorset. The largest group is those with a learning disability, as well as those with mental health conditions, autism, physical and sensory disabilities. Bringing all of these different needs together, whilst there are common themes, has been part of the challenge of the document.

4.8. The current outcomes to be achieved by the strategy (on which comment is welcomed to ensure that they are the 'right' focus) are:

- People have choice and control over their lives, including where they live, how they spend their days, and how they are supported when they need it
- People, whether those in need of support services or their families, friends or carers, can access high quality information and advice, in a timely way to support them in decisions they need to make
- People live in communities that support their independence and wellbeing, with health, employment, physical activity and other opportunities available to them

- People have access to high quality support services appropriate to their needs, which promote both their safety and their independence, and work together well to support them through important transitions in life, including from birth to settled adulthood, and later into older age

4.9. The document presents a series of sections covering:

- **Our vision for a Better Life for working-age people with support needs in Dorset**  
Collects together the aims and ambitions under the right support, right place, right time banner. And shapes some common outcomes that the action plan can be built around.
- **People with Care & Support Needs in Dorset**  
Provides an overview of the data and support provided the different types of care needs. Has an overview of spend across these groups. Data is being sourced to strengthen the sections on sensory and physical disability.
- **Shaping Provision**  
This section seeks to present the issues to be addressed for each broad group requiring support, and some of the broad ambitions to meet needs.
- **Birth to Settled Adulthood**  
This sets out an introduction to the programme that is developing around transition, however it will need to be adapted to reflect the deepening shared nature of the programme between Children's and Adults, which is currently under active development.
- **Day opportunities**  
This section describes a proposed approach to day opportunities that will be explored as part of a continued conversation from the summer of co-production work in 2021. The way forward here will eventually help shape the future of Care Dorset's service offer. These are early thoughts about a way forward, and so it is framed as exploratory, rather than "we will...", and we hope that people will engage to develop this vision further.
- **Accommodation with care**  
This section presents some of the issues with current supported living, quantum purchased, etc. and plans. Again, this will be iterated to present the joint adults and housing approach to developing a strategy. Includes reference to shared lives.

### **Commissioning for a Better Life for Carers**

4.10. The strategy for carers has been influenced and shaped in its development by the work led by Cllr Cherry Brooks to identify some of the issues with services for carers. There is also a partnership strategy that is due a refresh, so in time these two documents will "talk to each other".

4.11. The current outcomes to be achieved by the strategy (on which comment is welcomed to ensure that they are the 'right' focus) are:

- Carers are respected and valued across social care and other council departments, and are included and involved
- Carers can find the information that they want, when they want it, and in formats that work for them
- Carers have access to a range of support, responsive to their needs both in the community and from the council
- Carers receive meaningful assessment, with responsive options for receiving the support that they need

4.12. The document presents a series of sections covering:

- **Who is a carer?**  
Deals with definitions and terminology, and sets out different 'types' of carer. Responds to carer feedback about terminology.
- **Vision for Carers in Dorset**  
Uses the Right Support, Right Place, Right Time grouping to outline the strategic intent. Also references the partnership strategy which is being refreshed at present, and the objectives from which are grouped against the action plan, later in the document.

- **Services for Carers**  
An account of the services currently available and commissioned for carers. Also includes some 'additional impacts' that presents some of the needs that carers have beyond those covered in the service discussion.
- **Our Improvement Priorities**  
Sets out the main areas that will need work in order to develop a more comprehensive and consistent support offer for carers. Starts by setting out national messages, and what carers have told us in their engagement with us. Includes discussion on issues of culture, respect and recognition, and on personal budgets and direct payments.

## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1. These strategies present the first comprehensive overview for Dorset Council of the intentions and plans for commissioning adult social care support for the years ahead. They are not yet in final form, but they lay the basis for a dialogue with those who access support, those who provide it, and those who work with us in the system, about the direction ahead.

## 6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. These strategies are based on a coherent gathering of the plans already set out and formed through a number of decisions taken at points over the past months and years. The year one plans are largely already therefore costed into current planning. Longer term aspirations will need to be subject to specific decisions, with associated budget commitments, as they are shaped and agreed.
- 6.2. Most significantly, the Council is embarking under a distinct programme on implementing the Government's reform of the financial system that supports adult social care. This will have very significant cost implications, which are currently being worked through, and for which an allocation of Government funding is anticipated. There are national debates underway about whether this will be sufficient to meet the future challenge, and the outcome of this will be critical for the sustainability of adult social care both locally and nationally, and therefore for the deliverability of the commitments in these strategies.
- 6.3. Many of the plans set out in these strategies also underpin savings and efficiency proposals, and the framework that the strategies seek to set out is intended to support such efficiency activity into the future.

## 7. Well-being and Health Implications

- 7.1. The intentions set out in these strategies seek always to improve the health and wellbeing of those with need for adult social care support, and those who provide care to them. By starting with living well in supportive communities, each strategy seeks to set out how we will build on the natural assets of local people and communities and support them to build healthier environments and lives. In terms of health ageing, the strategies start to set out some thinking that can inform future developments of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy to articulate what makes Dorset a great place to retire and live into older age.

## 8. Climate implications

- 8.1. As set out in section 0 above, there are many potential interventions that can seek to reduce the climate impact of the delivery of adult social care services. Many centre around plans to better support workforce planning so that people can access employment in services near where they live, and that the rostering of the peripatetic care workforce can be more efficiently focused in local 'zones'. However, there are also intentions that would see better use of buildings, which will include opportunities to invest in stock and improve its energy efficiency, as well as making better use of the available property assets.

## **9. Other Implications**

### **Property and Assets**

- 9.1. No specific proposals are set out in the strategies, but the direction of travel will require some thinking about how better, across the whole range of services delivered, to use the property assets within local 'places' more effectively to cater to the range of local needs. Most obviously this affects day services and day opportunities, but the idea around a hub-and-spoke model, set in the context of place-based commissioning, opens up a wider set of possibilities around how to blend a set of services within council and partner buildings in local areas and town centres.

### **Voluntary organisations**

- 9.2. Voluntary organisations are absolutely central to the delivery of these strategies. They start from consideration of the assets of local communities, and this includes the vast network of community activity represented by VCS organisations. For a sustainable social care system to be in place will require a strong partnership to be developed, and the summer of co-production that is planned will be invaluable for promoting the opportunity for our VCS partners to help shape our strategies and have their voice incorporated into the future direction.

### **Safeguarding Adults**

- 9.3. The commissioning intentions represented in these documents are all intended to strengthen local commissioning of adult social care services, and thereby the safety of those who use services. The strategies talk to the Safeguarding Adults Board annual plan and its wider partnership intentions to improve safeguarding practice and awareness. Over the summer, where opportunities become apparent to strengthen the safeguarding vision within the documents, then they will be seized upon.

### **Risk Assessment**

- 9.4. Having just emerged from a pandemic, with all of the additional pressures that it brought, the creation of these strategies is a critical moment in refreshing everyone's commitment to the future direction of adult social care services in Dorset. However, the key risks remain that the sector, which includes the Council workforce, remain stretched by the aftermath of the pandemic, and find it difficult to engage in the development of the new strategy. Whilst we are confident of the delivery of the strategy over its longer term, the early priorities and the ambition that they set, will require careful management to ensure that they are delivered.
- 9.5. The funding situation of the adult social care sector is also at a critical point, post-pandemic. The Government's proposals for market sustainability come with welcome funds, but there are many voices in the sector nationally who are highlighting that the funding is insufficient to meet the real structural challenges in the market. The delivery of these strategies is at risk if this situation is not mitigated by the provision of a robust financial settlement for the future, to come in the later months of this financial year.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 9.6. There are many equalities implications throughout these strategy documents. With a summer of further development ahead, we will be continuing to use the conversations to build our picture of equality impact, so that there is a robust EIA attached to the formal decision to adopt the strategies by Cabinet, anticipated in November 2022.

### **Appendices**

- 9.7. There are four appendices, representing respectively the four strategies of the suite:  
i) Commissioning for A Better Life: our overarching approach

- ii) Commissioning for A Better Life for Older People with Support Needs
- iii) Commissioning for A Better Life for People of Working Age with Support Needs
- iv) Commissioning for A Better Life for Carers

### **Background Papers**

16.1. None