

Title: Adult Social Care**Meeting: Scrutiny Management Board****Meeting date: Monday 6 July 2026****Report by: Statutory Scrutiny Officer****Classification**

Open

Report purpose

To provide background information to support Scrutiny Management Board to meet the objectives listed below.

Background

1. Scrutiny Management Board has decided to focus its scrutiny of the council's financial strategy thematically. It has chosen to look broadly at adult social care for three reasons.
 - a. The 2025 Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Herefordshire Council's adult social care function, contained mostly in the Community Wellbeing Directorate, judged the council as requiring improvement in some aspects of its service.
 - b. Herefordshire Council's draft Medium Term Financial Strategy, covering the period 2026/27 – 2029/30, identified a funding gap of £83.418 million across the strategy period. The strategy notes that a key area of focus and activity will to "deliver efficiencies in high-cost, high demand areas of service delivery". The Community Wellbeing Directorate accounts for 38.3% of the council's revenue budget.
 - c. Increasing demand for adult and children's social care is listed as a key financial risk for the council in its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

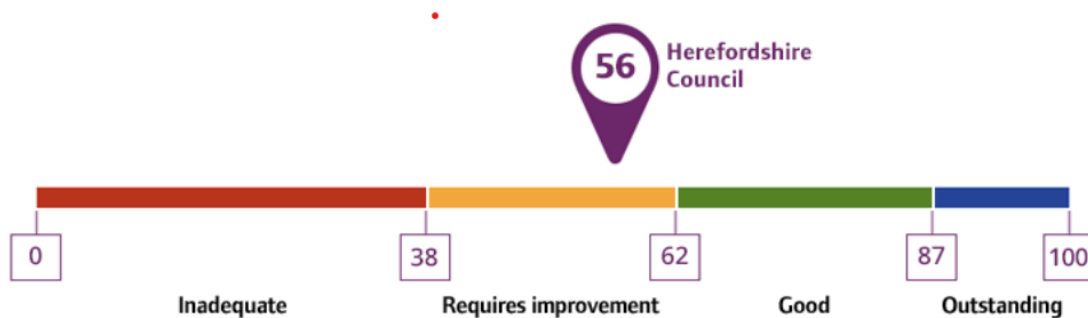
Meeting objectives

2. Scrutinise the recent CQC inspection report on adult social care.
3. Further scrutinise the council's budget and its plan for service transformation in light of budget pressures and the inspection findings

Report information

4. The chairs and vice chairs of the Scrutiny Management Board and Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee met in April 2026 to discuss how best to align two key priorities for their respective scrutiny committees:

- a. A need to scrutinise the recent CQC inspection report on adult social care
 - b. A wish to scrutinise the council's budget and its plan for service transformation in light of budget pressures and the CQC inspection findings.
5. They agreed that they would carry out a piece of scrutiny through Scrutiny Management Board, seeking to answer the following questions:
 - a. How will the council meet the growing demand for its adult social care services?
 - i. What are the emerging findings of the adult social care scrutiny task and finish group?
 - b. What is its plan to transform services to meet this need?
 - i. How will this be reflected in the council's future financial strategy?
 - c. How will this transformation be funded, given the council's identified funding gap for the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - d. What external factors are likely to have an impact on the delivery of transformation?
 - e. What, therefore, is the plan to balance growing service demand with the need to make budget savings?
 - i. What will be the impact on other council services?
 - ii. What will be the risks to the plan, and how will they be managed?
 - f. How will this transformation reflect the findings of the recent CQC inspection report, and how will the council respond to the recommendations of that report?
6. To support this work, the chairs and vice-chairs have requested publication of the following information to support this work.
7. **Care Quality Commission - Herefordshire Council: local authority assessment.** The recent CQC inspection of Herefordshire Council's adult social services judged them as requiring improvement, with elements of the service judged as being good. The inspection report is included in this report as Appendix 1.



8. **Herefordshire CQC improvement plan 2026-27.** In response to the inspection report, Herefordshire Council has produced an improvement plan to deliver the service transformation required to build on the strengths noted in the inspection report and to expedite progress on areas of improvement. The inspection report is included as Appendix 2.
9. **Adult Social Care Demand Task and Finish Group interim report.** The Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has carried out a review of the demand for adult social care services in Herefordshire through a task and finish group. The group has yet to finalise its work but has produced a number of potential recommendations that it will test as it produces its final report. The group chair's interim report and draft recommendations are attached as Appendix 3 of this report.

10. **Community Wellbeing Directorate 2026/27 Budget Position Statement.** At its budget meeting on 13 February 2026, Council received a document outlining key pressures, challenges and savings proposals for 2026/27. This document is appended as Appendix 4. Included as appendices 5-7 are:
- a. 2025-26 Revenue Outturn
 - b. 2025-26 Savings Outturn
 - c. 2025-26 Capital Outturn

Consultees

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Herefordshire Council CQC local authority assessment
Appendix 2 - Herefordshire Council CQC improvement plan 2026-27
Appendix 3 - Adult Social Care Demand Task and Finish Group interim report
Appendix 4 - Community Wellbeing 2026-27 budget position statement
Appendix 5 - 2025-26 revenue outturn
Appendix 6 - 2025-26 savings outturn
Appendix 7 - 2025-26 capital Outturn

Background papers and resources

None identified