

Adult Social Care Demand for Services Task and Finish Group

Terms of Reference

Background

In common with other local authorities, the demand for adult social care services from Herefordshire Council has risen steadily since 2011. This demand is driven by a number of factors:

- Ageing population: Herefordshire has a higher than national average and growing elderly population, leading to a higher need for social care services.
- Rurality: The dispersed rural nature of Herefordshire presents logistical challenges in delivering services.
- Rising costs: The increasing cost of providing adult social care, coupled with fiscal tightening, has created financial strain.
- Dementia: The number of people with dementia in Herefordshire is projected to increase significantly, adding to the demand.
- Increased complexity and longer duration of need.

To address this, the council has a [market sustainability plan](#) that seeks to “assess the sustainability and key risks facing the care sector in the county and demonstrate how the council will ensure the local care market remains sustainable as we prepare for future care reforms”. The demand for ASC services is also interlinked with the council’s commissioning strategy, as set out in the 2020-2025 market position statement.

However what other measures, including those not directly in the control of the service, could reduce, mitigate, or meet the demand for social care?

Objectives

- To understand the extend of demand for adult social care services provided or commissioned by Herefordshire Council.
- To explore the drivers of increased demand for adult social care, and the capacity of the local authority to fund it.
- To identify strategies and work carried out by other local authorities to reduce demand, or to increase revenue to pay for services.

- To make recommendations to the executive on steps that should be taken to reduce service demand and to increase revenue.

Resources and governance

- The chair will appoint 5-7 elected members of Council, to the Task and Finish Group. Those appointed to Cabinet cannot be members of this group. The group will determine its own chair.
- The group can appoint up to two co-opted members to its group, either as expert witnesses or residents of Herefordshire.
- The group will be supported by staff from Democratic Services and the Community Wellbeing Directorate.
- The Scrutiny Management Board will be invited to input into the review and will be kept informed of the group's progress.
- Other committees and boards of Herefordshire Council may be invited to input into the review
- The Task and Finish Group will determine which external organisations will be invited to give evidence to the Group

Indicative timetable

Terms of reference agreed and members appointed	July 2025
Scope and agree an indicative work programme	September 2025
Desk research Initial evidence gathering	September 2025 – April 2026
External witnesses Gathering evidence from external organisations	September 2025 – March 2026
Final report and recommendations	May 2026

The task and finish group will agree its timetable in consultation with relevant officers, representatives of external organisations and its own assessment of the time needed at each step. This indicative timetable is an estimate before detailed information gathering has commenced.