



Adult Social Care – Oldham's Commissioning Approach

**A document outlining the commissioning
approach in Oldham**

May 2025

1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out Oldham Council's approach to commissioning service for adults who meet eligibility criteria.
- 1.2 The document compliments and supports Oldham Council's corporate priorities presented in the [Corporate Plan](#) and wider system strategies that are directed at key user groups and issues. Where commissioning activity is identified, this is set out in more detail in the Market Position Statement and Commissioning Priority documents.

2 Commissioning Commitment

- 2.1 Oldham Council is committed to developing, stimulating and supporting a market which can provide safe, effective, high quality and value for money care and support for the residents of Oldham. This is linked closely to Oldham's Adult Social Care Vision of *supporting you to be independent, health, safe and well*. You can read more about the Adult Social Care Vision later on in this document.

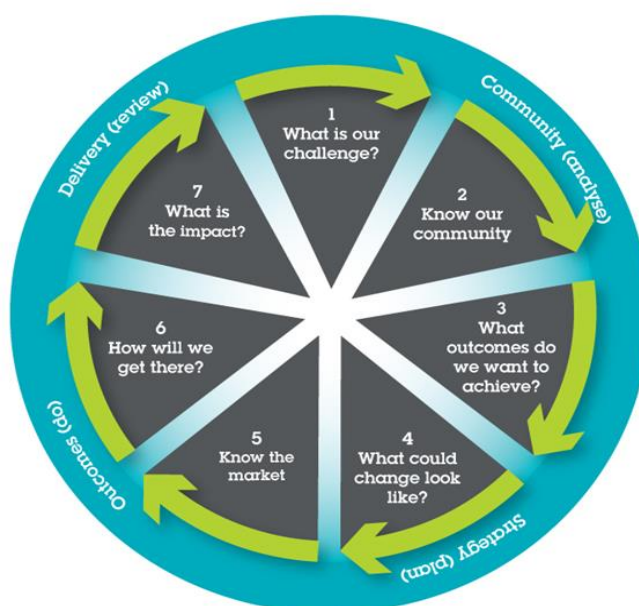
3 Commissioning Intentions

- 3.1 To enable us to meet the adult social care vision of 'supporting people to be independent, healthy, safe and well we are committed to working with care providers to ensure we commission services that are good quality, financially sustainable and create pathways of care for our service users.
- 3.2 Oldham's commissioned services will be based on a strengths-based approach in line with our vision, and we'll continue to look for opportunities to improve and develop services to meet the needs of Oldham's residents.
- 3.3 Through our commissioning approach we make reference to the number of national drivers that continue to shape and drive the current and future provision of adult social care, including:
 - White papers
 - Care Act
 - Continued financial pressures on local authorities to meet their statutory duties
 - Partnership working between health and social care and the formation of integrated care systems

4 Commissioning Cycle

- 4.1 Oldham's Adult Social Care Commissioning services follow the fundamentals of the commissioning cycle which is presented in the diagram below:

Commissioning Oldham's Future



- 4.2 The commissioning cycle is a structured process used to plan, purchase, and monitor services in public sectors, including healthcare and social care. It is the process used by the Adult Social Care Commissioning service in Oldham.

The commissioning cycle typically consists of several key stages that ensure services are effectively delivered to meet the needs of the population. The main stages are summarised below.

- **Assessment of needs:** this initial stage involves identifying the needs of the community or population. It includes gathering data and insights to understand what services are required and the specific needs of different groups within the community.
- **Planning:** based on the needs assessment, commissioners develop a plan that outlines the services to be procured, the desired outcomes, and the resources required. This stage may involve engaging with stakeholders, including service users/residents and their families, to ensure their perspectives are considered.
- **Procurement:** in this stage, commissioners invite bids from service providers to deliver the planned services. This may involve competitive tendering processes where providers submit proposals detailing how they will meet the commissioning requirements.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** after services are delivered, it is crucial to monitor their performance and evaluate their effectiveness. This involves collecting feedback, assessing outcomes, and ensuring that services meet the quality standards set during the planning phase. Adjustment may be made based on this evaluation to improve service delivery.

- **Review and recommissioning:** the final stage involves reviewing the entire commissioning cycle process and outcomes. Based on the findings, commissioners may decide to recommission services, make changes to continue with the current arrangements, ensuring that the cycle is continuous and responsive to changing needs.

4.3 Oldham's adult social care commissioning team recognises the importance of the commissioning cycle for several reasons:

- **Quality assurance:** it helps ensure that services are delivered to a high standard and meet the needs of the community effectively.
- **Resource allocation:** by understanding community needs, resources can be allocated more efficiently, ensuring that funding is directed where it is most needed.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** the cycle encourages involvement from various stakeholders, including service users, which can lead to better outcomes and more tailored services.

To summarise, the commissioning cycle is a vital process in public service delivery, ensuring that services are planned, procured, and monitored effectively to meet the needs of the population. It promotes continuous improvement and responsiveness to changing circumstances in healthcare and social care services.

4.4 Engagement and coproduction through commissioning activity

- 4.4.1 Engagement and coproduction are fundamental to commissioning good practice and are a key feature of Oldham's commissioning activity. Effective engagement and coproduction takes time and there can be challenges experienced by local authorities in building these into commissioning pipelines and projects activity.
- 4.4.2 Oldham's Adult Social Care Directorate is in the process of finalising a new framework for coproduction that will promote best practice across social work operations, direct service delivery and commissioning. The framework has drawn upon models of practice around the country and will be published on the council's website.
- 4.4.3 Through the coproduction framework the Commissioning Service is refreshing its engagement and coproduction plan which will take place as part of all Commissioning Pipeline activity.

5 Our Vision

5.1 Oldham Council – Co-operative Council

- 5.1.1 Oldham is committed to developing a co-operative future; one where citizens, partners and staff work together to improve the borough and create a confident

and ambitious place. Put simply, becoming a co-operative borough is about everybody doing their bit and everybody benefitting.

- 5.1.2 In Oldham, working co-operatively can mean many different things. It's not just about delivering services through co-operatives or mutuals, it's about working in a way which helps to empower residents to take greater control of their own lives but also gets the maximum benefit from the resources that are available to the community and public sector.
- 5.1.3 It also encompasses a much broader range of approaches that reflect the values and ethos of co-operatives working. This means working in ways which are ethical, fair and deliver good social value as well as value-for-money. It also means giving residents the opportunity to work in collaboration with us to design and even help deliver services.

5.2 Adult Social Care in Oldham

Our vision for Adult Social Care is to support you to be independent, healthy, safe and well.

- 5.2.1 Adult Social Care, working with the rest of the Council, the voluntary sector, local communities and NHS partners will encourage and enable you, your family and community to stay healthy, safe and well. The aim will be to enable you to live as independently as possible. Where you need our support, we will help you to identify the best solutions. If you need more help but are not able to arrange your own care, the support we agree with you will help you to live the best life you can with the help you have around you.
- 5.2.2 Having developed the vision for the service, ASC has developed a strategy for 2023 to 2028 which outlined how the Council will work, with its partners, to deliver this vision and turn its ambitions into reality. It has been developed and is based on principles agreed with residents, the people supported by the Council and their carers to set out core values. The strategy document itself is written in an accessible style, with the intention of developing amended versions for easy read, and different languages.

Working together, we will:

- **Encourage and enable you to stay well**
We will encourage you to do as much as you can with support from your family, friends, and community networks.
We will work with other organisations to ensure you can access advice, find out about local support and other services to help you look after yourself in your community.
We will collaborate with the local community, the rest of the Council, the voluntary sector and NHS partners to make local places healthy and safe.
- **Support you to help yourself**
We will provide information and advice about where you can find help when you need it. We will empower you to take control of your life.

We will help you to find support that increases your ability to manage any care needs you might have. We will help connect you to your local community.

- **Work with you when you need help**

We will ensure you have access to social care services that meet your needs and are affordable for the Council.

We will ensure that if you need support, you will receive an assessment and services to enable you to live as independently as possible.

How we work:

We will provide you with good quality information and advice to enable you to make informed choices about how care and support is commissioned.

- We will communicate clearly and consistently.
- We will work together with people with care and support needs, carers, service providers, the NHS, voluntary groups, and local communities to develop effective social care services.
- We will ask for feedback to improve what we do.

5.3 Integrated Care System

5.3.1 Joining up care leads to better outcomes for people. When local partners – the NHS, councils, voluntary sector and others – work together, they can create better services based on local need.

5.3.2 Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) have been set up to make this happen. Their aim is to improve health and care services – with a focus on prevention, better outcomes and reducing health inequalities.

5.3.3 There are 42 ICSs in England, and all are local partnership that bring health and care organisations together to develop shared plans and joined-up services. ICSs were legally established 1st July 2022, covering all of England. These new arrangements build on partnerships that were already in place across the country.

5.3.4 The ICS which Oldham is connected to is the [Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership](#).

5.3.5 The relationship between adult social care and the ICB in Oldham is a mature one and built on strong foundations. We jointly commission work, and always have a focus on integrated pathways, which can be evidenced through our hospital discharge work, underpinned by the Integrated Discharge Hub as well as activity covered in a Section 75 agreement, which includes services such as the Integrated Community Equipment Service.

6 Finance

6.1 Like other local authorities and public bodies, Oldham is required to ensure that services are delivered efficiently, taking a 'value for money' approach.

- 6.2. Oldham, like many other Local Authorities has not been immune to the recent cost-of-living crisis, which has placed additional pressures on the budget, both as a result of the costs of Oldham's response and reduced income from business rates.
- 6.3 In total, there is a reported funding gap of £29m between 2023/24 and 2025/26. The council continues to work to a savings programme to close the funding gap, and as we do this, we keep Oldham residents at the centre of all decision-making.
- 6.4 From an Adult Social Care perspective we ensure that services are procured in an open, fair and transparent way, which ensures that we have framework contracts in place that are able to meet the diverse needs of Oldham's population.

6.5 Fees paid for adult social care services

- 6.5.1 The rates paid to commissioned framework provision are reviewed annually and agreed through the council's budget setting process, which usually takes place at the end of February, or beginning of March.
- 6.5.2 The annual review considers the annual increases faced by employers such as national living wage rises, increases to national insurance and contributions to pensions. The annual review also considers the cost-of-living increases, and we review the Consumer Price Index with Housing related costs (CPIH). We consult with providers ahead of the fees being set for the forthcoming financial year.
- 6.5.3 The agreed rates are published on the council's website with the Market Position suite of documents.

6.6 Out of area placement fee reviews

- 6.6.1 Providers who request an annual fee review will follow a similar process to that outlined above, in that the service can only approve fee increases to the percentage agreed at Full Council budget setting. It's important, and indeed, best practice for commissioners to understand the agreed host authority's rates for where the out of area (OOA) provider is based.
- 6.6.2 When contact is made by an OOA provider, commissioners seek written confirmation on the rate agreed by them for the provision or provider specific, and this also includes requesting understanding of their percentage uplifts agreed. The host's authority rates, and local agreed rates are taken into consideration prior to confirming in writing the agreed rate and percentage uplift applied, including when the provider can expect to receive this.

6.7 Specialist placements

- 6.7.1 The fees for specialist provision, either in Oldham or outside of the borough will be reviewed used the Care Cubed system. Care Cubed has been adopted by Oldham in the last couple of years, and more recently health commissioners have signed up to use it. The system provides benchmarking data using live

information against a range of national data sets and is increasingly being used by children's, adults and health commissioners across the country.

7 Quality Assurance and Improvement

- 7.1 Under our Care Act 2014 duties, Adult Social Care has a responsibility for strategic oversight of the adult social care market in Oldham. Quality assurance and improvement of the care provider market plays an integral role within this.
- 7.2 The approach taken to quality assurance and improvement is very much a partnership one. The emphasis is in working with providers to ensure continuous improvement across commissioned services.
- 7.3 the Quality Assurance and Improvement team works closely with colleagues across the Oldham Health and Social Care system to share intelligence and lever in specialist support when it is required.
- 7.4 in terms of the monitoring approach for CQC registered providers this will include a combination on announced and unannounced visits, a review of data in relation to safeguarding, attendances at hospital, quality concerns, complaints received, feedback from professionals and capacity tracker information.
- 7.5 For further information on Oldham's Quality Assurance and Improvement process, please review the Contract and Quality Assurance and Improvement Approach <https://www.oldham.gov.uk/mps-contract-qa-and-improvement>.

8 Social Value

- 8.1 As a Co-operative council we are committed to acting in a socially responsible way and influencing others with whom we work with to do the same, including our commissioned services, partners and individuals.
- 8.2 In accordance with the Social Value Act 2012 as a public sector service we must consider social value in all our decisions; about how we spend this value and in addition to ensure that who we work with has the potential to make contributions to delivering in a co-operative borough.
- 8.3 We have a social value procurement framework which seeks to secure the maximum possible value from every pound of public money that is spent. The framework seeks to achieve this by ensuring that social, economic and environmental outcomes are systematically incorporated into procurement practices so that we can achieve greater impact from each and every contract.

The framework is divided into four themes:

- Jobs, growth and productivity
- Resilient communities and a strong voluntary sector
- Prevention and demand management
- A clean and protected physical environment.

9 Key Partnerships

9.1 As a Co-operative council, Oldham has established key partnerships working to support its residents. These include:

- Integrated Care System
- Oldham System Delivery Board/Provider Collaborative
- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Northern Care Alliance
- Pennine Care Foundation Trust

The following boards are integral for mobilising our partnerships and a vehicle for mobilising services, promoting partnership working and joined up activity:

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Integrated Care Partnership
- Learning Disability and Autism Collaborative

10 Ongoing engagement

10.1 We appreciate providers interest in delivering services in Oldham because your views, opinions and experience in delivering services really matters to us. We recognise the importance for listening to people who provide and receive care as well as taking account emerging best practice on commissioning models and providing good quality services.

10.2 If you are directly commissioned by us through tendering for one of our frameworks, we have regular partnership boards and forums with service providers. Further details can be obtained by contacting your lead Manager or emailing the Adult Social Care Commissioning inbox on ASCCommissioning@Oldham.gov.uk

10.3 We will ask you to be involved in specific pieces of work and take part in consultations to ensure the work we are doing captures your ideas, builds on best practice, develops new innovations together and supports both meeting Oldham residents' needs as well as a thriving and local care market.

The message to providers is please get involved, if you are looking to develop services in Oldham, or improve delivery please get in touch. We hope this document sets out clearly our commissioning approach with Adult Social Care providers operating in Oldham.