**West Northamptonshire Council**

# SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

## Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## 17 April 2024

| Agenda Item Number | Page | Title | Report Author | Reason for delayed publication |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | (Pages 3 - 10) | International recruitment challenges in adult social care | Stuart Lackenby Executive Director People Services | Report not available at time of publication |
| 8. | (Pages 11 - 20) | Approach to scrutiny of performance | Stuart Lackenby Executive Director People Services | Report not available at time of publication |

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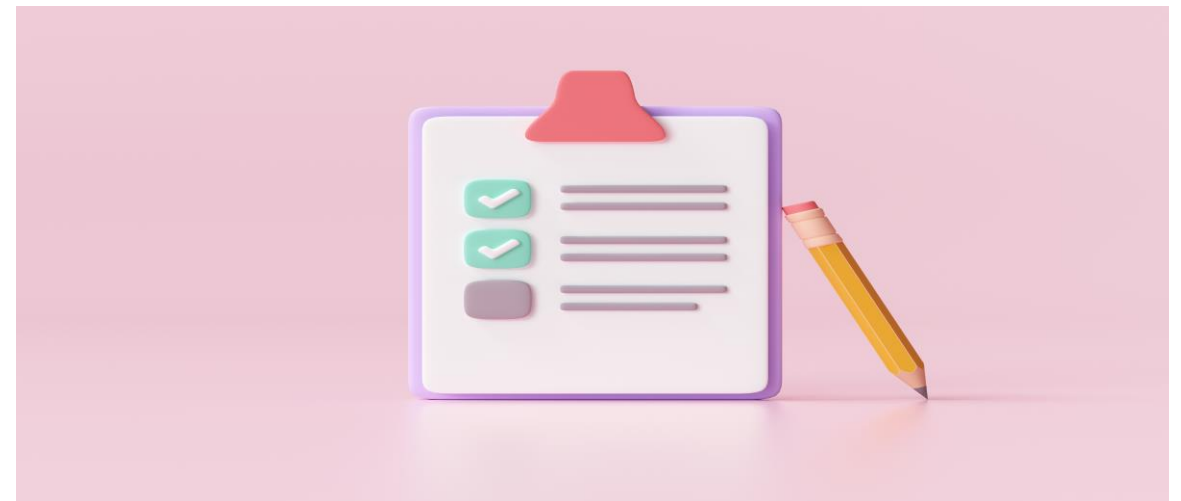
# International Sponsorship Scheme

April 2024

Criteria for Care Workers:

- Must be a qualified Doctor, Nurse or Social Care Professional.
- Must be employed by an employer who is approved by the Home Office.
- Must be paid the minimum wage or going rate for the type of work, currently set at £23,200 per year.
- Must apply for a sponsorship VISA
- Must be able to prove ability to read, write and speak English to level B1 for most Countries, but English speaking countries do not need to prove this.
- Must pay an application fee (from £284)
- Must have at least £1,270 available to support yourself when you first arrive unless your employer will cover your costs.
- Must have a valid passport and criminal records certificate.

Criteria for Social Care Employers:

- Must be registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as a social care provider.
- Must apply for a sponsorship licence.
- Must pay a minimum of £23,200 per year.
- Must offer a minimum of 37 hours per week of work.
- Option to support employees financially via a certificate of maintenance.

# ISS in West Northamptonshire

Survey sent out to all 241 CQC Regulated Care Providers in WNC.

All providers:

| Number of Responses | Number with Sponsorship Licence | Current International Recruits |
|---|---|---|
| 75 | 46 | 655 |

Domiciliary Care:

| Number of Responses | Number with Sponsorship Licence | Current International Recruits |
|---|---|---|
| 41 | 23 | 335 |

Care Homes:

| Number of Responses | Number with Sponsorship Licence | Current International Recruits |
|---|---|---|
| 34 | 23 | 320 |

# Challenges

**Licence Suspension / Revoking**

- WNC has received 14 licence suspensions.
- 1 Licence has been revoked following investigation.
- Home office have report 1,766 VISAs to be affected.
- WNC investigation highlights significantly lower international recruits employed at 121 confirmed.
- Only 2 of the providers are delivering any direct support services.

**Main Reasons for suspension:**

- Not CQC regulated care provider
- Acting as recruitment agency
- Lack of evidence of sufficient hours
- Modern Slavery concerns

**For WNC:**

- Concerns over the stability of the care workforce as licence revoking could lead to increased staffing vacancies.
- There are large volumes of concerns arriving to be supported but no funding for this has been provided from Government.
- Only one concern is a WNC Contracted provider, meaning our powers to resolve are limited.
- Where licences are revoked, WNC could be asked to support with housing etc for those who have a certificate of maintenance and Children.
- It is very difficult to contact Internation Recruits, or to know where they are currently located.

# What is our role?

Home Office – responsible for processing licence and VISA applications. Investigate concerns raised around misuse of ISS.

International Sponsorship Regional Lead – responsible for promoting the scheme with providers. Maintain oversight of current investigations and support LAs to resolve.

WNC Quality Team – responsible for managing the impact of licence suspensions and supporting ISS Staff to find alternative employment.

Example Case

Home Office alert received via regional lead advising that a care provider, based in WNC, had their licence suspended as a result of concerns they are acting as a recruitment agency. 830 VISAs had been awarded via this licence. Passed to WNC to support the investigation. Unannounced visit undertaken where it was discovered that only 5 people were receiving support from the provider, but they were delivering services in many other areas of the Country.

MDT group formed involving ICB, CQC, EM Care, Police and Devon County Council to manage the impact. Wellbeing checks completed on people being supported and eventually, alternative care provider sourced. CQC investigation completed and registration removed. Licence was then fully revoked. Staff supported to move to alternative care provider but only 20 staff identified.

# Conclusion

Since the International Sponsorship Scheme was created in 2022, WNC has seen a more stable care workforce, reduced capacity issues and an improved ability for our care market to respond to the needs of our population particularly in home care. Our market largely feels that it has been a good scheme, with some challenges but the overwhelming response is that it has made a positive impact to their businesses. However, our concern is not with the CQC regulated care market but with those organisations that are acting as recruitment agencies. This area poses the biggest risk to our people at WNC as this can destabilise the care market.

Government has asked key partners for feedback and the following changes have been implemented from 11th March 2024:

- Home Office will ensure licence applicants are CQC Registered before awarding a licence – this will alleviate most concerns and suspensions that we are receiving.
- Home Office have also stopped allowing partners and children to accompany care workers who are recruited via the International Sponsorship Scheme. This applies to care workers and senior care workers only.

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# Proposal – Scrutiny of Adult Social Care Performance

**Stuart Lackenby – Executive Director of People Services**
**Neil Cox – Assistant Director, Safeguarding & Wellbeing Services**

**April 2024**

This document provides an outline proposal for how the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee scrutinise the overall performance of the Adult Social Care (ASC) directorate on a quarterly basis.

Objectives:

It is envisaged that an agreed approach to scrutinising key ASC performance metrics will provide the committee with assurance in the following areas:

- Continuous Improvement: Regular scrutiny will helps to identify strengths and weaknesses in service delivery, leading to continuous improvement initiatives. By addressing areas of concern and implementing best practices, ASC can enhance the quality and effectiveness of care services.
- Accountability and Transparency: Additional scrutiny of performance will promote accountability and transparency within ASC, providing assurance to elected members that resources are used efficiently and services are delivered according to expected standards.
- Quality Assurance: objective scrutiny plays a crucial role in maintaining expected standards across ASC. The monitoring of performance indicators sits alongside the monitoring of compliance with regulations, service user feedback, and quality of care services in ensuring that service delivery can be safeguarded and improved over time.
- Strategic Decision-Making: Insights gained from the robust scrutiny of performance can inform strategic decision-making within ASC. By identifying trends, gaps in service provision, and areas for development, informed decisions can be made to shape the future direction of care services and address emerging challenges.

Challenges and Opportunities:

While scrutiny of performance is essential for driving improvement in ASC there are several challenges and opportunities to which are also linked to this which scrutiny should be aware of:

1. Resource Constraints: Limited resources and budgetary pressures can hinder the ability of ASC invest in improvement initiatives. Finding innovative solutions to maximize resources and achieve better outcomes is crucial in overcoming this challenge.

2. Data Management: Effective scrutiny relies on accurate data collection, analysis, and reporting. ASC is currently in the midst of upgrading its core record keeping system to improve  how information on performance metrics is captured and produced and to ensure data integrity, having identified limitations and challenges with the system that is currently in operation.

3. Stakeholder Engagement: Engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders, including service users, families, staff, and external partners, is essential for meaningful scrutiny of performance. ASC is currently in the process of creating mechanisms for feedback, consultation, and participation to support the scrutiny of performance provided by the committee

4. Innovation and Collaboration: Embracing innovation and collaboration can present opportunities for ASC to enhance their performance and service provision. Exploring new technologies, partnership models, and best practices from other areas are all areas that are pursued to achieve positive change and drive continuous improvement.

# Performance Metrics

ASC currently uses the performance metrics outlined in the CQC Local Assurance Framework as the basis for internally reviewing performance

CQC Local Assurance Framework

The CQC local assurance framework is a system used by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in England to assess how well local authorities are delivering on their adult social care duties as outlined in the Care Act 2014.

It inspects how local authorities meet the needs of adults who require care and support using a subset of quality statements from the CQC's overall single assessment framework structured around four themes:
- Working with people: promoting independence, identifying unmet needs, and information access.
- Providing support: ensuring appropriate services are delivered.
- Safety within the system: safeguarding measures for service users.
- Leadership: effective leadership and governance of adult social care services.

Each theme is further divided into quality statements that detail the expectations from local authorities.

This framework allows the CQC to assess local authorities' performance and identify areas for improvement, ultimately aiming to ensure high-quality and person-centered adult social care.

Proposal

It is proposed that the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee uses these indicators for undertaking their consideration of ASC performance which will subsequently support the

directorates preparedness for its first assessment under the new Assurance Framework.

As the performance measures have been developed and produced by the Care Quality Care commission, and all local authorities have a duty to report them, using this approach will essentially provide scrutiny members with an objective view of 'what good looks like' when considering the performance of WNC's ASC directorate.

The following pages, 5-8, provide snapshots from the performance report that is produced for the ASC Assurance Board, an internal meeting which reviews both the performance and quality of service delivery on a monthly basis.

It is proposed:
- That this report is used as a basis for discussion at the Scrutiny Committee's agenda planning meeting.
- From this discussion scrutiny members can agree which performance measures that they want to look at in more detail during the quarterly meeting of scrutiny committee.
- Prior to the meeting the template outlined at page 10 will be completed to provide further more in depth information to committee members on the reasons for current performance, actions being taken to mitigate this performance and any risks associated with the current level of performance

This will then enable committee members to identify key areas of performance to explore and the mechanism to seek assurance on how performance is being managed.

# Snapshots from ASC Assurance Board Report

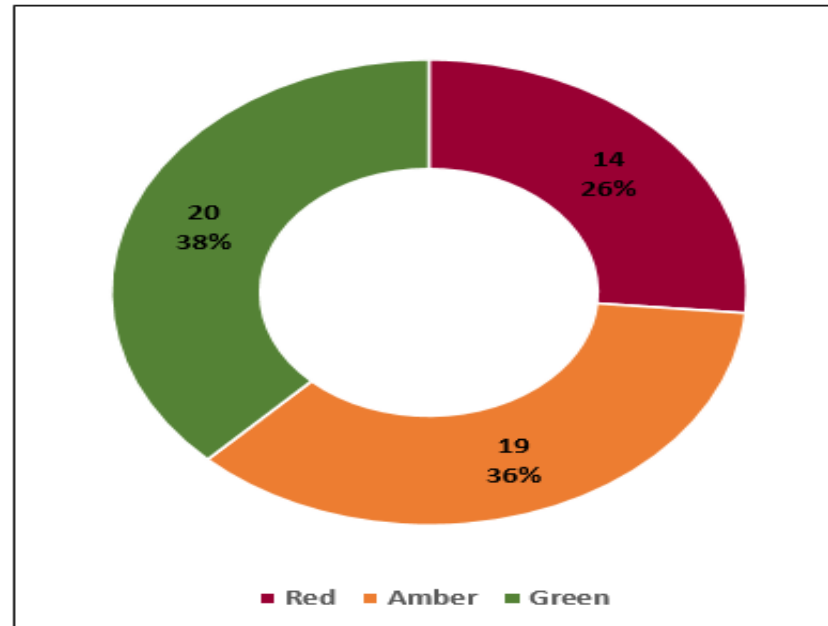**Summary of Performance Indicators by Local Assurance Theme**

| Themes | Red | Amber | Green | Not Indicator | WIP | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Theme 1 | 2 | 2 | 12 | 0 | 3 | 19 |
| Theme 2 | 7 | 10 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 28 |
| Theme 3 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 17 |
| Theme 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 33 | 16 | 56 |
| Total | 14 | 19 | 20 | 46 | 21 | 120 |

| Chart: | Current Month vs Target RAG |
|---|---|

| Themes | | Red | Amber | Green | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | | 14 | 19 | 20 | 53 |

**Themes**
- Theme 1
- Theme 2
- Theme 3
- Theme 4
- Total



- Red: 14 26%
- Amber: 19 36%
- Green: 20 38%

# Summary of Performance Indicators by Local Assurance Quality Statement

West Northamptonshire Council

| Quality Statement | Red | Amber | Green | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 14 | 19 | 20 | 53 |

**Quality Statement**

- General – Activity & need
- General – Deprivation & economic
- General – Determinants of health
- General – Overall spending on ASC
- Quality Statement 1 – Assessing need
- Quality Statement 2 – Supporting people to live …
- Quality Statement 4 – Care provision, integratio…
- Quality Statement 5 – Partnerships & communiti…
- Quality Statement 6 – Safe systems, pathways &…
- Quality Statement 7 - Safeguarding
- Quality Statement 8 – Governance, managemen…
- Quality Statement 9 – Learning, improvement & …
- Total

Red 14 26%
Amber 19 36%
Green 20 38%

■ Red  ■ Amber  ■ Green

**West Northamptonshire Council**
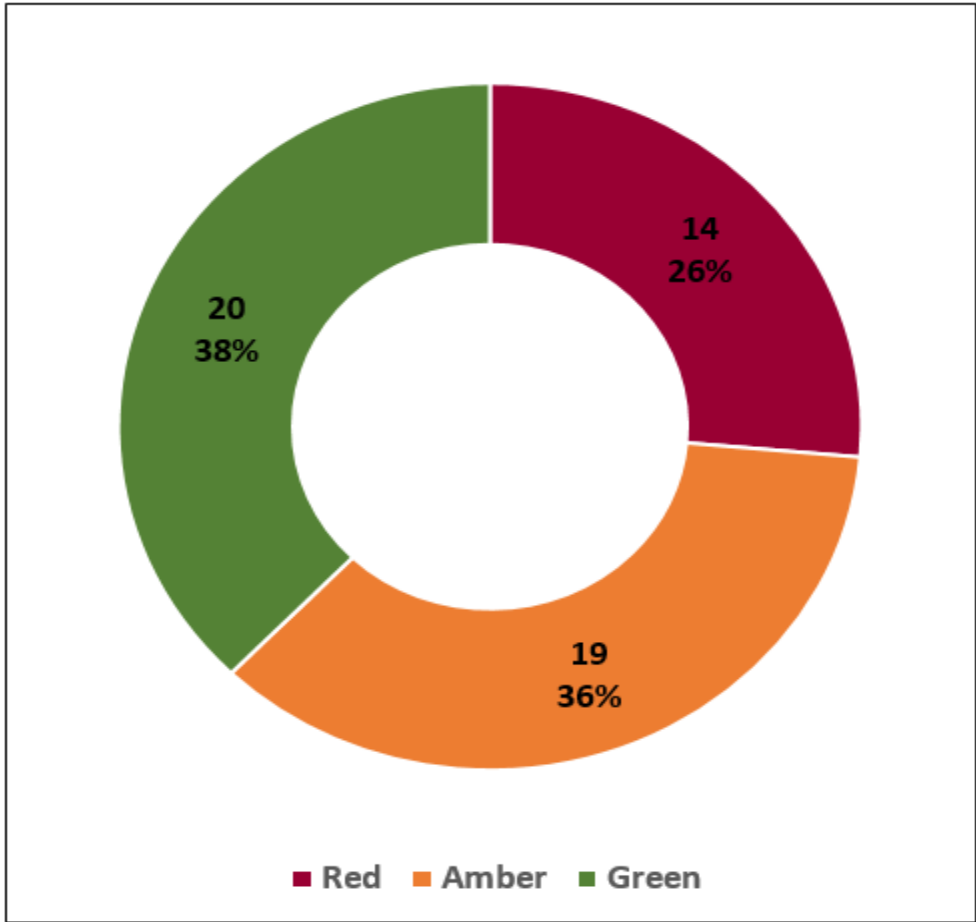
**CQC-90**  **Number of grievance incidents and impact  (Live)**

**Current month**

Jan-24

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **England/Regional** | | **0** | | |
| **Data Format** | **#** | **Direction of Travel** | | **<** |

**Current Month v's target**  Amber

**Current month v's previous month**  Green

**Target**  0.0

**Aspirational Target**  0.0

| | Rolling 12 months | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Feb-23 | Mar-23 | Apr-23 | May-23 | Jun-23 | Jul-23 | Aug-23 | Sep-23 | Oct-23 | Nov-23 | Dec-23 | Jan-24 |
| Indicator Actual | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| Indicator Target | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

**Narrative**

0


Number of grievance incidents and impact  (Live)
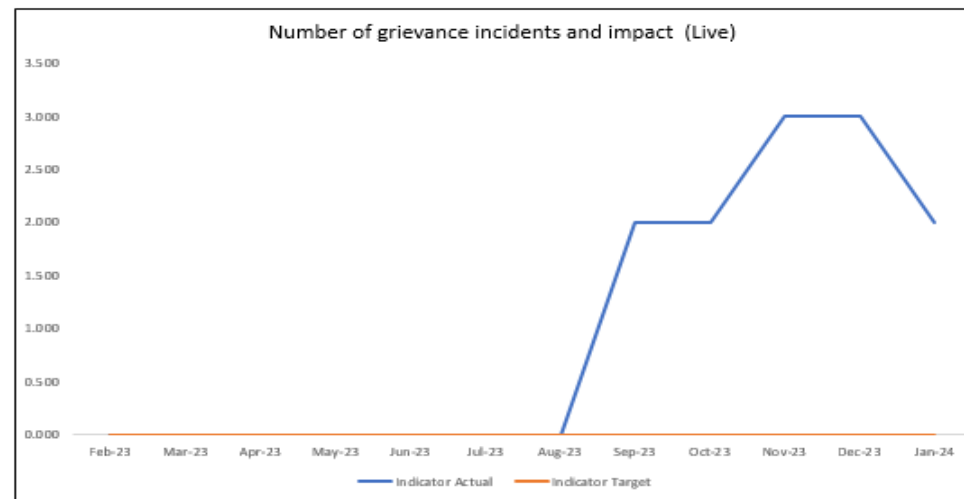
# Proposed reporting template for indicators identified for further discussion

## Details

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Performance Measure | | |
| Assistant Director | | |
| Service Area Responsible | | |
| Date of report | | |
| Performance at date of report | Target | |

## Reasons for current level of performance

## Actions being taken to mitigate current performance level

| Risks and Issues related to current performance level | | | Current Status | Amber |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Previous RAG | New RAG | Risk/ Issues | Mitigation | |
| | | | | |
| N/A | | | | |
| | | | | |

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