

Adult social care spending accounts for more than one-third of councils' overall spending on local services (excluding education). To fund this spending, councils rely on a combination of council tax and business rates revenues and grant funding from central government. Historically, these grants were allocated in a way designed to compensate councils for the negative correlation between local tax bases and local spending needs.

Recent years have seen big cuts to general-purpose grants, resulting in a 21% reduction in councils' overall revenues between 2009–10 and 2016–17. Furthermore, grant allocations have not been updated to reflect changes in the assessed spending needs of different councils since 2013–14.

For a comprehensive overview of the funding challenges facing Adult Social Care follow the link:

<https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/bns/BN227.pdf>

As a result of increasing pressure on public funds, changing patterns of needs, elevated aspirations, joint commissioning, and increased choice, fundamental changes to the way care and support services are arranged are essential.

Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) is currently facing unprecedented financial and organisational scrutiny. Spending controls, coupled with increasingly complex external pressures, are impacting significantly on current and future budgets. The demands and costs of supporting and safeguarding vulnerable people whilst, at the same time, coping with ever diminishing levels of funding from central government present very real challenges.

Notwithstanding the above, NCC remains committed to promoting independence, safety, and wellbeing by offering a range of high quality support for individuals, their families, and their carer's. In order to achieve this, NCC intends to stimulate a diverse provider market, offering people a real choice in relation to their eligible care and support needs. In future, this may come from existing providers, other local businesses, those who do not currently work in the authority, or from entrepreneurial start-ups.

NCC's Contracts and Commissioning Team has produced the following Market Position Statement (MPS) in order to positively facilitate the development of existing, and future, Social Care market provision.

It is an attempt to signal to the market, likely future demand in its broadest sense, whilst recognising the difficulty in providing definitive quantitative statements regarding future commissioning intentions. Nonetheless the council can and should express a strategic vision in the broadest sense.

With this in mind, NCC recognises both the increasing importance and the ongoing benefits of a partnership approach across the Care and Support sector. Such an approach ensures there is increased variety across Adult Services.

This document consists of Market Position Statements relating to the following:

- Adults with Learning Disabilities (LD)
- Living and Ageing Well in Northamptonshire (the Housing and associated support needs of an ageing population)
- Home Care
- Working Age Adults with Mental Health Needs
- Individuals, Families, and Carer's Living with Autism

Each MPS will provide data and intelligence on:

- The local Population
- Details of current services available in the local area
- Evidence of gaps in provision within the local market
- Considerations for the future

The overall document will assist providers of care and support services to understand:

- local need, based on the evidence provided
- how local people want to live their lives
- how and where they invest

It will also signal NCC's intention to explore new opportunities and innovative ways of delivering services in the future.

The financial challenges facing NCC, together with increasing demand across the Adult Social Care sector means that partnership arrangements will need to stimulate personal resilience, community capacity, and networks. By promoting resilience, NCC and its partners will encourage individuals to accept responsibility for looking after themselves, their families and their communities, thereby embedding independence within future generations.

In practical terms NCC and its partners will seek to make best use of community assets by integrating them, wherever possible, with formal care and support provision.

Although the financial costings, customer numbers, and future projections contained within the MPS are a snapshot and are, therefore, correct at the time of writing, patterns of demand will continue to change. This will influence the shape of future markets. The very same change in demand offers huge opportunities to those providers willing to adapt. Sector wide Workforce Development also offers ongoing opportunity.

The Skills for Care report 'The State of the Adult Social Care Sector and Workforce' (2017) shows that about 10,000 new care jobs will be required in Northamptonshire by 2025 to meet the needs of the population – these jobs will be required across both the local authority and independent sectors.

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/NMDS-SC-intelligence/Workforce-intelligence/documents/State-of-the-adult-social-care-sector/2State-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-2017.pdf>

The adult social care workforce is therefore an important issue for both the NCC and the provider market. The Skills for Care report found the following across the East Midlands:

- Staff turnover rates in the care sector were 28%;
- Staff turnover rates for home care were 37%;
- 84% of the care workforce were female with an average age of 43;
- A third of care workers left their role within a year of starting;
- The longer a care worker is in their role the less likely they are to leave;
- Those on zero hours contracts are more likely to leave than those not.

NCC wants to work with the provider market to increase the capacity and capability of the externally commissioned care workforce, including:

- Working with commissioned providers to look at the ways in which care staff can be attracted and recruited into the sector and how to improve the recruitment process e.g. shaping the job offer and using value based recruitment techniques
- Exploring how to improve the image of the care sector through increasing awareness and understanding of the contributions made by the sector as a whole and the good work that most care workers do
- Working with providers to improve retention rates for care staff and to reduce the level of turnover.

Along with its partners, NCC intends to co-produce a strategy designed to improve the capacity and capability of the care workforce in Northamptonshire.

Further Reading

<p>Regulations for Service Providers and Managers (Care Quality Commission)</p>	<p>http://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/regulations-enforcement/regulations-service-providers-managers</p>
<p>White Paper, Our Health, Our Care, Our Say (Department of Health)</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-health-our-care-our-say-a-new-direction-for-community-services</p>

<p>Care Act 2014</p>	 <p>Care Act 2014.pdf</p>
<p>SORP – Financial and Performance Management</p>	<p>http://intranet.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Services/policy/sorps/sorp1/Pages/default.aspx</p>
<p>Contract Procedure Rules</p>	<p>http://sharepoint.lgss.local/Pages/CPR.aspx</p>
<p>Northamptonshire County Council's Constitution</p>	<p>https://cmis.northamptonshire.gov.uk/cm5live/PublicDocuments.aspx</p> <p><i>Click on "The Constitution" on the left hand side and it will bring up the documents</i></p>
<p>Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework 2017/2018 (Handbook of Definitions – Department of Health)</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664582/20171129_ASCOF_Handbook_of_Definitions_17-18.pdf</p>
<p>NHS Outcomes Framework 2016-2017 (Department of Health)</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/513157/NHSOF_at_a_glance.pdf</p>
<p>Adult Social Care Market Shaping (Department of Health)</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-social-care-market-shaping</p>
<p>Adult Social Care Choice Framework (Department of Health)</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-adult-social-care-choice-framework</p>

