

# Executive Summary - The life you want to lead

## Adult social care in West Sussex (2022-25)

### Introduction

People across West Sussex have helped design a new strategy for adult social care. The strategy reflects what people feel is important to them.

The priorities were designed with those who access care, their family and friend carers, organisations who support them, the county council's own social care staff, as well as local people with no current social care needs. We heard from people about what a 'good life' means to them through workshops, group discussion, 1-1 interviews and a public survey.

The county council spends approximately 34% of its total budget on adult and health services, but like local authorities around the country, there are significant funding challenges and the number of people accessing support is set to continue to increase over the next five years. Therefore, we must do things differently. We will only be able to deliver what people have told us is important by collaborating with people who access services, our partners and local communities and by making the best use of available resources.

There are five priority areas. These are supported by a number of 'we will' statements which builds on the commitments in [Our Council Plan 2021 to 2025](#) and will guide decisions for prioritising areas for improvement and how we spend money.

### Priority 1 - Building relationships and connections

People are the most important asset that we have in West Sussex. It is the relationships – between family and friends, between the cared for and the carer, within communities, and between businesses, employees, and customers - that has the biggest impact on people's lives.

- **Families and close support networks** – support families and friends to access support and tackle social isolation.
- **Help and support** – join-up services which put relationships at the centre.
- **Wider social networks** – increase opportunities for people to get involved in their communities, promote inclusion, and enhance the role of peer support.

### Priority 2 – Empowerment

People want to be equal partners or take the lead when making decisions about what happens in their lives.

- **Put people at the centre of care** – care plans developed with people, based on their strengths and vision of a good life, with flexible support.
- **Information, advice and guidance** – make sure people have the right information and advice when they need it.

- **Paid work** – support more people who access care and support to find paid employment.
- **Decision making power of frontline staff and role of positive risk taking** – ensure collaborative and timely decision making which supports people to lead fulfilling lives.

### Priority 3 – Home

People need a home which is safe, warm and accessible, but also one which is connected to the people they care about and their local community.

- **Living in their own home** – support more people to live well in their own home for longer.
- **Living with others** – increase the use of alternative accommodation models such as extra-care and supported housing, and help traditional residential care align with what is important to people.
- **Moving out of the family home** – help young people move out of their family home in a planned way.

### Priority 4 – Addressing gaps

There are four key areas which were identified as key gaps to be addressed.

- **Shortage in care workers** – develop local solutions to attract and retain more social care workers.
- **Potential gaps in understanding and support** - explore and address potential gaps for autistic adults and people with an acquired brain injury.
- **Moving from Children’s to Adults’ Services (transitions)** – ensure young people in their transition into adulthood continue to feel supported.
- **Paying for care** - support people to plan for the cost of care. This should focus on early information, transparency of costs and fairer charging.

### Priority 5 – Inclusion and tackling inequalities

People want to be valued and included, but not everyone has the same access to information, services and support.

- **Inclusion for people facing multiple disadvantage** – building on the good work already started, work to prevent people facing multiple disadvantage; involving people in designing and commissioning services which they access; and exploring alternative accommodation models.
- **Diversity** - understand and improve access to services for diverse communities.
- **Digital inclusion and technology** – promote digital inclusion and the use of assisted technology.

You can find the full strategy available on our website [www.westsussex.gov.uk/ascstrategy](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ascstrategy) together with an easy read version of this summary.