

Lead Member (adult services and public health) report for Scrutiny – January 2026

A. Adult Social Care Update

1. Community Support Contract Awards

Following robust mobilisation and smooth transition, the following six Community Support Service contracts went live on 1st January 2026:

| Service Name | Provider |
|--|--|
| Independent Living Service | Curo Choice Ltd |
| Older Peoples Information and Advice Service | Age UK B&NES |
| Step Up Step Down Accommodation | Curo Choice Ltd |
| Sensory Impairment Support Service | Sight Support West of England |
| Carers and Family Support Service | Bath and North East Somerset Carers Centre |
| Support at Home | Age UK B&NES |

Two further Community Support Service tenders have concluded under the new Procurement Act 2023 using the Light Touch Regime for above-threshold social care contracts in December 2025. Contracts have been awarded to the following organisations:

| Service Name | Provider |
|--|-----------------|
| Adult Social Care Community, Social and Memory Support Service | Age UK B&NES |
| Adult Social Care Memory Enhancement Services | Peggy Dodd |

These two contracts will commence in April 2026, with mobilisation and implementation activity now underway to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of support for residents across Bath and North East Somerset.

This concludes the recommissioning of the Community Support Service contracts undertaken in 2025

2. Newton House update

Adult social care staff have continued to work with families who access care and support at Newton House to shape the future design of respite services. To date, they have held three dedicated sessions focused on service development and defining what "good" looks like for both families and individuals using the provision. This ongoing work will inform the creation of a set of quality standards for inclusion in the new service specification.

In parallel, we have engaged with our procurement and legal teams to explore the flexibilities within the Procurement Act 2023 and identify viable routes to market. In line with our statutory duties under the Care Act 2014 and the Procurement Act

2023, the Council has carefully considered the option of a direct award for respite provision at Newton House, utilising the User Choice provision. This approach reflects the expressed preferences of families and it addresses the critical need to ensure continuity of care for vulnerable adults and their carers.

The direct award mechanism upholds individuals' statutory rights to choose their respite provider and mitigates risks associated with service disruption, safeguarding, and carer wellbeing. It also acknowledges the absence of viable alternative provision within the local market and the imperative to maintain stability in established care arrangements. The option to make a direct award for 5 plus 2 years under the User Choice provisions was not available under the previous procurement legislation and has only become possible with the flexibilities introduced by the Procurement Act 2023.

Families were informed about this development on 6th January via email, followed by a meeting on 13th January for commissioners to explain the details to the families. Our intention is to negotiate a new contract with Dimensions, the current provider, which we have been in regular contact with throughout this process. Over the next three months, we will work closely with Dimensions to finalize operational arrangements and the contracting approach. Robust quality assurance processes will be embedded, and there is a shared commitment to maintaining family involvement throughout all stages of the commissioning process.

We are firmly committed to ensuring there is no gap in service provision from 1st October (when the current arrangement ends), guaranteeing continuous support for all individuals and families relying on respite care at Newton House.

3. Adult Regulated Services

The current CQC ratings are Good for Extra Care (last inspected July 2022) and both Cleeve Court and Combe Lea Community Resource Centres have an overall CQC inspection rating of Requires Improvement.

The report for the CQC inspection at Cleeve Court was published on 26th November 2025. While the overall rating has remained at Requires Improvement the overall score received is 62%, which is 1% point below the threshold of 63% for a rating of Good. This inspection concentrated on the domains of Safe, Effective and Well Led (Safe and Well Led were rated as Requires Improvement at the previous December 2022 inspection) and of the 32 themes inspected across the three domains during July to October 2025, 69% were rated as Good. A huge amount of work has gone into improving these services since taking them back in house in 2020 and we are pleased that significant progress is recognised in the recent inspection report. We will continue our focus on quality improvement and on ensuring that residents receive high quality person centred care to meet their individual needs.

CQC commenced their inspection of Combe Lea in December 2025. As detailed in the November report to Panel for residential services, it is usual practice in care homes for CQC to undertake unannounced inspections. Given that CQC last inspected Combe Lea in October 2022 (overall Requires

Improvement – RI Safe, Effective & Well Led and Good for Caring & Responsive) it is within the three year window for inspection of a Requires Improvement service. 2 CQC inspectors visited Combe Lea on 11th December and another inspector visited the service on 16th December. The management team have also met with inspectors on 7th January for a detailed conversation on the domain of Well Led. During this inspection CQC inspectors have spoken to a number of staff, family members and system partners to seek their views and feedback. Alongside this the Combe Lea management team have submitted a vast range of evidence to inspectors as part of the assessment process.

Both services continue to work diligently on the CQC action plan and a full report will be submitted to panel in the March meeting to outline the key activity and progress on CQC action plan to achieve a CQC rating of Good for Cleeve Court and update Panel on the CQC inspection for Combe Lea.

B. Public Health Update

1. Supervised toothbrushing - (Provided in response to a request for further information about how the scheme runs in schools, and support available to overcome barriers to implementation)

In April 2025 the Government announced funding in 2025/26 for all local authorities to introduce a national targeted supervised toothbrushing scheme and has since committed to allocate further funding for supervised toothbrushing for 2026/27 – 2028/29. Priority populations are 3 to 5 year olds in the most deprived 20% in each local authority area, with some flexibility from April 2026 to provide additional provision beyond the priority populations. At Home Dental has been commissioned to provide the scheme in nurseries and in Reception year in primary schools. (In addition, BSW ICB commissions At Home Dental to deliver a supervised toothbrushing scheme in nurseries across B&NES Swindon and Wiltshire and works closely with the three local authorities in doing this. Collaborative planning across BSW for the ICB-funded and national-funded schemes ensures that they align well together).

A supervised toothbrushing scheme in nurseries or schools is a structured activity where trained staff guide the young children in a group activity to brush their teeth daily with fluoride toothpaste, aiming to prevent tooth decay by establishing good habits, providing equipment, and offering supervision. The scheme supplements home brushing rather than replaces it. Under the scheme the settings receive oral hygiene packs along with training for delivery to ensure fulfilment of the recommendations from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance on oral health for local authorities and partners. The oral hygiene packs include toothbrushes and toothpaste for each child (to be kept in the nursery/school setting), a pack to take home, and information for parents. The settings trained and signed up to deliver the scheme take responsibility for storing the toothbrushes for each child safely and hygienically on site, for allocating part of the nursery/school day to this group activity, and for running the daily group toothbrushing fun activity.

Where nurseries and primary schools experience difficulties in running the scheme (such as finding time in a busy curriculum for group toothbrushing, space to store the toothbrushes etc), At Home Dental support and advise by sharing how other settings have overcome similar difficulties. They also share case studies, provide support via their qualified Dental Educators and offer to visit settings. They also provide updates and run competitions to encourage participation in the scheme. In addition, the supervised toothbrushing scheme is regularly discussed in detail at the B&NES Best Start in Life group and the B&NES Infant Feeding group with the aim of continuing to increase uptake and is regularly promoted via the HUB, Public Health in Schools Newsletter, Public Health Newsletter, Early Years Forum (At Home Dental have attended in person) and generally via the council's Early Years Team. The school nursing team is also kept updated and they support engagement with schools.

2. Child Injury Prevention

The B&NES Injury Prevention Partnership has been working with Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS) to explore the future Child Safety Equipment service following a review of the service in 2025. AF&RS colleagues have now received appropriate training and will be able to fit safety gates as part of their wider Home Fire Safety check service on receipt of referrals from Children's Centres and Health Visitors from April 2026.

3. Health Protection

On the 1 January, the NHS rolled out the addition of a vaccine to the routine childhood programme to protect against chickenpox. NHSE press release: ['Hundreds of thousands of young children now to be protected against chickenpox'](#)

In BANES we are continuing our focus on improving the uptake of childhood immunisation particularly in Twerton & Whiteway, Lansdown and Kingsmead wards where uptake is lower than other wards in BANES. We are working with NHS England and B&NES Enhanced Medical Service (BEMS) to support GP practices and early years settings in these areas to improve uptake and vaccine confidence.

4. SW Good Food Local benchmarking exercise

All local authorities across the South West have agreed to undertake a benchmarking process looking at how the following are approached:

1. Food poverty, diet-related ill health and access to affordable healthy food
2. Sustainability and local food production
3. Local food economy and procurement
4. Raising public awareness and supporting community action
5. Partnership, strategy and governance

This process will be completed by 31st January and the information will be published on the Sustain website in due course. [Good Food Local: get on the map | Sustain](#) This work supports the work on B&NES Food Strategy during 2025 and will support a regional approach to identifying areas for collaboration, co-ordination and action going forward.

6. Active Wellbeing Big Connect Event (16 Dec 2025)

The Big Connect brought together partners from across Bath and North East Somerset to deepen collaboration around active wellbeing, physical activity, and whole-systems approaches to reducing physical inactivity. It aimed to:

- Build momentum toward a new Active Wellbeing Delivery Plan as part of BeWell BANES (a whole-systems health improvement framework for B&NES)
- Strengthen cross-sector relationships
- Share insight and best practice

The successful event held at the University of Bath, featured keynote speakers, workshops, and a mini-marketplace of partner organisations from different local authority teams, NHS and health partners, Third Sector organisations, and sport, leisure and physical activity providers.

Key points arising from the Big Connect session:

- Strong appetite from partners for continued joint work on whole-systems approaches to reducing inactivity and inequalities
- Consistent feedback that the networking and workshops helped strengthen relationships and improved understanding of each other's roles in the system
- Partners highlighted the need for better data-sharing and more coordinated communication across organisations.

What next:

- Insight gathered from the event will be used to shape the new Active Wellbeing Delivery Plan
- Follow up event is planned for February 2026 to maintain the momentum from the event and identify priority areas for joint action and review a draft action
- Cross-sector working group to be established to take forward key themes raised
- Additional engagement activities planned later in the year to support continued collaboration and track progress

Alison Born – Cabinet Lead Adult Services and Public Health