



Department
of Health &
Social Care

From Stephen Kinnock MP
Minister of State for Care

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

29 May 2025

Professor Steven Broomhead, Chief Executive
Caroline Williams, Director Adult Social Services
Cllr Maureen McLaughlin, Lead Member
Warrington Borough Council
By email

Warrington Borough Council – s.50 Notification

Dear Steven, Caroline and Maureen,

As you know, CQC has notified Secretary of State under section 50 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 that they have found **Warrington Borough Council** to be failing to perform a safeguarding function under s.42 of the Care Act 2014 to an acceptable standard. Whilst I am concerned at the CQC's findings, I recognise and welcome the immediate steps you took on receipt of the notification. I am reassured that no individuals had come to harm as a result of this safeguarding failure; and I welcome the changes you have made to the triage system to avoid a repeat. I note also that you are putting in place an improvement plan to address the other issues outlined in the s.50 notification and CQC report.

I have carefully considered the findings and recommendations of the independent assessment provided by the CQC and information provided to me by my officials following their discussions with you and colleagues at the council. I do not consider it appropriate to make use of the intervention powers afforded to the Secretary of State by the Care Act 2014. However, given the serious nature of the failing, I consider it necessary that I have additional line of sight and assurance of the improvement work connected to the s.50 notification.

To that end, it is my intention to appoint an Improvement Advisor to support the council to develop a robust, accountable and sustainable improvement plan with timely and effective measures of success. I understand my officials have discussed with your team in some detail how this can work most effectively. As such I trust that you will accept my offer of support and work collaboratively with the Improvement Advisor.

I encourage you also to use every opportunity to be as transparent as you can at a local level in your improvement planning, using local Scrutiny Boards and Full Council appropriately, including publishing the improvement plans, CQC report and this letter

as part of publicly available papers. Similarly, I am also aware of the Best Value Report commissioned and published by my colleagues in MHCLG and I urge you to consider how the Adult Social Care improvement activity can best complement any improvement efforts around best value.

As you will be aware my department also funds a national improvement offer to help local authorities improve their delivery of statutory duties. I encourage you to work with the DHSC Improvement Advisor to draw on this support wherever relevant.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to formally recognise the report findings that people talked positively about the council staff and described them as caring, compassionate and helpful. I recognise the hard work of many of the staff at your Authority, including yourselves, as the Council is taking the necessary steps to improve the discharge of its adult social care functions.

I look forward to hearing positive news on your progress in the forthcoming months.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Kinnock', with a stylized flourish at the end.

STEPHEN KINNOCK

MINISTER OF STATE FOR CARE

CC James Bullion, CQC