

FREE DIAGNOSTIC

COUNCIL READY™

Provider Readiness Quick Check

Ten questions. Five readiness areas. One clear next step.

Most providers know whether they are CQC compliant.
Far fewer know whether they are ready for local authority work.

QUESTIONS	READINESS AREAS	VERSION	PUBLISHED
10	5	1.0	August 2026

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Strengthening Adult Social Care Provider Markets

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WHY THIS MATTERS

Being registered and being ready are not the same thing

The Council Ready™ Quick Check helps you understand the difference. In ten questions you will identify strengths, highlight potential gaps and see where further preparation may improve commissioner confidence.

WHAT IT DEMONSTRATES

CQC registration

That your organisation meets the regulatory requirements to provide regulated care. It is essential.

Council readiness

That you can demonstrate good governance, financial awareness, workforce capacity, service continuity, performance oversight and the ability to deliver safely under contract.

A USEFUL STARTING POINT

Council readiness does not guarantee work. It helps you understand what may build or weaken a council's confidence before an opportunity arises.

WHY COMPLETE THE QUICK CHECK

- Spot gaps before a commissioner or procurement process exposes them.
- Avoid investing time in opportunities your organisation is not yet ready to deliver.
- Understand the records, explanations and controls that may strengthen confidence.
- Decide whether to build your foundations, strengthen existing arrangements or move to detailed assessment.

The Council Ready™ methodology has been developed from Odelia's research into local authority commissioning, provider due diligence and recurring themes identified across English councils.

HOW TO ANSWER

Choose the answer that best reflects what happens **now**, not what is planned. Discuss each question with another leader where possible.

ANSWER	POINTS	MEANING
Yes	2	We can explain it clearly and show current evidence.
Partly	1	Some arrangements exist, but they are incomplete, informal or inconsistent.
Not yet	0	We have not established this or could not demonstrate it.

KEEP IT HONEST

There is no benefit in achieving an optimistic score. The value comes from seeing what needs attention before the stakes are higher.

THE QUICK CHECK**AREA 1 OF 5****Governance and financial awareness****Q01 Can you clearly explain who makes important decisions and who is responsible when something goes wrong?**

A strong answer may include A clear organisation chart, named responsibilities, escalation arrangements and regular leadership oversight.

YOUR ANSWER ☐ Yes (2) ☐ Partly (1) ☐ Not yet (0)

Q02 Do leaders understand the cost of delivering the service and how growth would affect cash and staffing?

A strong answer may include A basic cost model, cash-flow awareness, realistic pricing assumptions and approval before taking on new work.

YOUR ANSWER ☐ Yes (2) ☐ Partly (1) ☐ Not yet (0)

AREA 2 OF 5

Safe and reliable delivery

Q03 Could you show how concerns, incidents and safeguarding matters would be reported, escalated and learned from?

A strong answer may include Documented routes, local safeguarding contacts, staff understanding, incident records and evidence that learning changes practice.

YOUR ANSWER ☐ Yes (2) ☐ Partly (1) ☐ Not yet (0)

Q04 Could care continue safely if staff, systems, transport or premises were unexpectedly disrupted?

A strong answer may include An accessible continuity plan, on-call arrangements, critical priorities, communication routes and evidence that plans have been tested.

YOUR ANSWER ☐ Yes (2) ☐ Partly (1) ☐ Not yet (0)

AREA 3 OF 5

People and capacity

Q05 Can you demonstrate that staff are safely recruited, trained, supervised and competent for their roles?

A strong answer may include Complete recruitment checks, a current training matrix, supervision records and role-specific competency checks.

YOUR ANSWER ☐ Yes (2) ☐ Partly (1) ☐ Not yet (0)

Q06 Before accepting new work, can you calculate whether you have enough people, skills and management capacity?

A strong answer may include A capacity check that considers geography, travel, visit times, complexity, absence cover and management oversight.

YOUR ANSWER

☐ Yes (2)☐ Partly (1)☐ Not yet (0)**AREA 4 OF 5****Evidence that the service is working****Q07 Have you decided what information you will monitor to know whether care is safe, reliable and improving people's lives?**

A strong answer may include Measures such as missed or late visits, incidents, complaints, training, continuity, feedback and progress toward individual goals.

YOUR ANSWER

☐ Yes (2)☐ Partly (1)☐ Not yet (0)**Q08 Can leaders review that information and respond when performance begins to deteriorate?**

A strong answer may include Named measures and owners, reporting frequency, thresholds for concern and a process for investigating and improving exceptions.

YOUR ANSWER

☐ Yes (2)☐ Partly (1)☐ Not yet (0)

AREA 5 OF 5

Understanding council opportunities

Q09 Do you know how your target councils advertise or arrange care services and what needs they are trying to meet?

A strong answer may include Named target councils, registered procurement portals, awareness of local priorities and an ethical approach to pre-procurement engagement.

YOUR ANSWER

☐ Yes (2)☐ Partly (1)☐ Not yet (0)**Q10 Could you explain why a council should consider your organisation and how you would start safely if selected?**

A strong answer may include A clear service offer, current evidence, realistic capacity, an outline mobilisation approach and honest explanation of risks and limitations.

YOUR ANSWER

☐ Yes (2)☐ Partly (1)☐ Not yet (0)

YOUR RESULT

Add your score and identify your stage

Add the points from all ten questions. The maximum score is 20. Your result is a starting point, not certification or a prediction of contract success.

SCORE	STAGE	WHAT IT MEANS
0–8	Foundation	Important building blocks need attention before you pursue demanding council opportunities.
9–15	Developing	Several foundations exist, but gaps or weak evidence may reduce commissioner confidence.
16–20	Ready to Progress	Your foundations appear promising. A detailed, evidence-based review is the sensible next step.

YOUR SCORE

TOTAL SCORE

/ 20

YOUR STAGE

DATE COMPLETED

WHAT HAPPENS NOW

- Download or request the result guide matching your stage.
- Discuss the result with the people responsible for operations, quality, workforce and finance.
- Do not treat the score as permission to bid; check every opportunity's specific requirements.
- Consider the Council Ready™ Provider Readiness Assessment for a fuller evidence-based review.

The free Quick Check intentionally does not include a detailed action plan. A meaningful plan should be based on fuller evidence and your organisation's circumstances.

THE COUNCIL READY JOURNEY

STAGE

WHAT IT COVERS

**Free
Quick Check**

A short diagnostic that helps you identify your current stage and understand the language of council readiness.

**Paid
Detailed Readiness
Assessment**

A fuller examination of governance, quality, workforce, finance, contracts, safeguarding, resilience, digital capability, performance and council opportunity preparation.

**Premium
Odelia Improvement Support**

A facilitated evidence review and tailored improvement programme, where priorities, ownership, timescales and an organisation-specific action plan are developed.

BE READY FOR THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITY

Readiness cannot create or guarantee council work. It can reduce avoidable mistakes, improve decision-making and help your organisation respond more credibly when a suitable opportunity appears.

YOUR NEXT STEP WITH ODELIA

Choose the result guide matching your score, or contact Odelia to discuss the Council Ready™ Detailed Provider Readiness Assessment.

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A NECESSARY REMINDER

This resource is a general diagnostic and educational guide. It is not legal, regulatory, financial or procurement advice and does not replace CQC requirements, legislation, a council's procurement documents, a service specification or a contract.

NO GUARANTEE OF WORK

Completing this resource or receiving any result does not guarantee eligibility, referrals, placement on a framework or a council contract.

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