

1. Vision & Commitments

Our vision is to empower people to thrive through timely and tailored support that always puts those with care and support needs first.

To secure this vision, we have identified the following four strategic commitments through which we will:

- 1) Help people meet their own needs and aspirations in a safe and supportive way.**
- 2) Provide our communities with a skilled, supported, and adaptable workforce dedicated to delivering high-quality care.**
- 3) Work collaboratively with our partners to provide people with the right support, in the right place at the right time.**
- 4) Provide a wide range of high-quality, accessible care options to meet people's needs.**

These commitments provide the framework for our strategy to deliver better outcomes, and more efficient and effective services. The commitments will be supported by a strategy delivery plan and also supported by an Adult Social Care Service Development Plan which will be continuously refreshed, so that it remains responsive to emerging needs, as well as political, policy and economic change.

2. Developing this strategy

A core principle for the Adult Social Care service is to work collaboratively with residents and carers, to make sure how we work and what we do is shaped by the experiences and view of people who will use the services.

We have developed this strategy through the voice of those who use our services, through our commissioned services and community groups who work within the City of London.

To achieve this, a series of visits to community groups were arranged to listen to what was important to the attendees, both for the approach to co-production and to contribute to the development of this strategy. The information shared during these meetings with community groups has been incorporated into this strategy.

We will look to further co-production with residents and carers as we deliver the strategy through the introduction of an Adult Social Care service user advisory group.

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3. Strategic Context

Local authorities such as the City of London Corporation play a crucial role in the provision of adult social care as mandated by our legal responsibilities. Through the Care Act 2014, we have a statutory responsibility to assess individuals' needs, determine eligibility for support, and arrange appropriate care services. We also have an obligation to safeguard adults at risk, promote wellbeing and support people to maintain their independence and quality of life.

We strive to prevent people wherever possible from developing care needs or delay the onset of such needs arising. This includes measures such as supporting people to stop smoking, support with substance misuse and supporting people to make healthy lifestyle choices.

This strategy for Adult Social Care will deliver our commitment to adults and their carers in our community who need care and support can live fulfilling lives, with respect and the freedom to make their own choices.

Corporate Plan 2024-29

This strategy supports the delivery of three of the six outcomes of the City of London Corporation Corporate Plan 2024-29. These are:

- Diverse Engaged Communities
- Providing Excellent Services
- Vibrant Thriving Destination

Through supporting the delivery of these three key outcomes, this strategy contributes to the overall objective of the City Corporation creating a vibrant and thriving City, supporting a diverse and sustainable London within a globally-successful UK.

National Policy

The Care Act 2014 places several duties on local authorities in England to promote the well-being of adults who need care and support. These duties apply to a wide range of people, including those with physical disabilities, mental health needs, learning disabilities, or older people who need assistance. Local authorities are responsible for:

- **Assessing needs:** Evaluating each person's individual circumstances and care requirements.
- **Deliver care:** To prevent an individuals care needs from becoming more serious, or delay the impact of their needs.

- **Provide choice:** Provide a range of provision of high quality, appropriate services to choose from.
- **Providing information and advice:** Ensuring people are fully aware of all the care options and support services available to them.
- **Preventing or delaying needs:** Taking proactive steps to help adults maintain their independence for as long as possible.
- **Arranging and funding care:** Directly providing or arranging care services for those who meet eligibility criteria.
- **Safeguarding adults:** Protecting adults at risk from abuse or neglect.
- **Supporting carers:** Providing services and resources to help those who care for an adult with care and support needs.

This strategy reflects our commitment to fulfilling these responsibilities and working in partnership with other organisations to ensure the best possible care and support for adults in our community.

London's unique situation

Adult social care in London faces its own specific challenges and possibilities:

- **Younger but ageing:** While London's population is younger than England overall, it still has a growing number of older adults who need care.
- **High cost of living:** The high cost of living in London makes it harder to provide services and for residents to afford care themselves.
- **32 boroughs:** London's division into 32 boroughs and the City of London requires close cooperation between them to ensure smooth care services across boundaries.
- **Integrated Care Systems (ICS):** London is divided into regional Integrated Care Systems for health and social care to deliver a partnership approach to deliver joined-up care based on local need. The City of London is part of the North East London integrated care system.

Our local partnerships

The City of London works closely with neighbouring local authorities. For example, we share a Safeguarding Adults Board with Hackney to make the most of our resources. We're also part of the Northeast London Health and Care Partnership, which through the Integrated Care Board (ICB), plans and funds health services across northeast London to meet the needs of all residents.

The City of London Corporation are also members of the City & Hackney Placed Based Partnership and the strategic commitments they have to ageing well, living well and mental health are shared throughout our service.

This strategy reflects our commitment to tackling the challenges of adult social care in the City of London and working with our partners to ensure everyone receives the care they need.

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4. Background

Adult social care needs in the City of London

The City of London has the smallest population in London, so we receive fewer requests for adult social care than other areas. However, the need for care is growing, especially among older residents.

Key points:

- **165 new requests:** In 2022/23, we received 165 new requests for help, compared to thousands in larger boroughs.
- **Small increasing in demand:** Requests have risen by 6% in the past four years, and by 73% among those over 65.
- **Types of care:** In 2022/23, 19 residents were placed in residential care and 78 received care at home. Almost half of those receiving long-term care were of working age.
- **Supporting carers:** We supported 30 unpaid carers.
- **Safeguarding adults:** Concerns about adult safety have increased by 88% in five years.
- **Commissioned Services:** We commission 24 Adult Social Care services with an annual cost of just under £1 million, with 8 of them being from the voluntary sector.

This strategy addresses the growing need for adult social care in the City of London, aiming to provide the right support for everyone who needs it, at the right time and in the right place.

Strength Based Approach and Anti-Racist practice

Our Adult Social Care model of practice is based on a strengths based approach, as well as being anti-racist in everything we do. A strengths-based approach in adult social care shifts the focus from an individual's limitations to their abilities, skills, and resources. It involves working collaboratively with service users to identify their strengths, set goals based on these strengths, and support them in building upon their capabilities. By emphasising strengths, we foster a positive and sustainable approach to Adult Social Care.

Our adult social care practitioners also work according to our local anti-racist practice standards and always acknowledge the differences between people and treating people's values, beliefs, cultures, and lifestyles with respect.

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5. Our strengths

- Experienced and knowledgeable workforce, with good rates of staff retention, and a workforce who know our residents well and develop positive relationships.
- A Strengths Based Approach Practice model.
- Being strongly anti-racist in everything we do.
- A co-ordinated, multi-agency approach to the assessment and support of our residents.
- A strong hospital discharge model.
- Agile and flexible commissioning approach with the ability to spot purchase to meet needs.
- Well established integrated care models locally and established relationships with health, voluntary and community sector organisations.
- Robust and rapid professional response to safeguarding concerns, incidents and provider issues, ensuring safe and personalised responses.
- Stable political leadership across the City of London Corporation, underpinned by robust and effective financial management.
- Clear visibility and access of senior management within the Department.
- Strong political engagement and commitment from elected Members.
- Listening to service user views.

6. Our challenges

- The diversity and range of need and the size of the city population, there is not a sufficient demand to develop a nursing home within the City of London.
- Some challenges remain outside of our control, such as delayed transfers of care from hospital.
- The City of London has no nursing home within its boundary.
- The City of London has no supported living placements within its boundary.
- Spot purchasing small amounts of care and support when required requires effective collaboration to ensure value for money and quality.
- The size of the City of London's social care workforce and the smaller demand for our services we respond to does not allow for specialism of social work staff seen in other local authority structures.
- Small resident population of the City of London provides challenges of opportunity for co-design of services.

7. Commitment one: Help people meet their own needs and aspirations in a safe and supportive way.

The City of London Corporation believes in your right to live your life the way you want. We are here to support you in leading a safe, healthy, and fulfilling life by putting your needs and goals first.

Our strengths-based approach means we focus on your abilities and work with you to find solutions that fit your unique situation. This can include:

- **Direct Payments:** giving you the freedom to choose and manage your own care and support.
- **Technology:** using the latest care technology to improve your quality of life in a way that suits you best
- **Housing adaptations:** to help you live as independently as possible in your own home, or in a home that best suits you.
- **Local community:** linking you with your local community so you can be actively involved and contribute to society.

To deliver this we will:

- Continue to promote a Strengths Based Approach across all our practice.
- Maintain the high levels of Direct Payments used to provide greater choice.
- Review our 'front door' service to deliver the right information and guidance from first contact.
- Build on our approach to severe weather guidance so people can stay safe and well
- Improve our progression pathways for children with learning disabilities from Children Social Care to Adult Social Care.
- Provide technological solutions that enable remote monitoring, telecare, and virtual consultations, allowing individuals to receive support and care in their own homes.
- Further expand the use of social prescribing to connect individuals to local community resources.
- Collaborate with individuals to co-create plans that reflect their unique circumstances and desired outcomes, and regularly review and update these plans in response to changing needs.
- Offer a wide range of choice and control of placements wherever possible and ensuring access to information and advocacy services so that individuals and families can make the right choice that is best for them.

- Explore alternative approaches to managing personal budgets, including the opportunity to pool budgets.
- Always acknowledge the differences between people and treating people's values, beliefs, cultures, and lifestyles with respect.
- Work with our commissioned providers and engage with non-commissioned providers to share and develop best practice approaches and support in the delivery of care to City of London residents.

Measures of success:

- Percentage of Direct Payments being issued to eligible individuals' year-on-year remains consistent and does not decrease.
- Reduction in the average time it takes for clients to receive a comprehensive assessment and personalised care plan after initial contact.
- Expand on the number of community groups that we socially prescribe people to.
- Increased variety of care technology being used to support individuals and families with their needs.
- Increase in the number of referrals made to social prescribing programs and the percentage of individuals who report positive outcomes from their participation.

Case study - Rough Sleeping Social Worker

An adult was rough sleeping in and around the City of London prior to the Coronavirus pandemic. They made a claim for asylum, but this was declined.

The Adult was experiencing a mixture of mental and physical health problems and was assessed as having care and support needs under the Care Act (2014) and that the local authority had a responsibility to offer support under the Human Rights Act (1998). Following an Occupational Therapy assessment, temporary accommodation was organised.

The adult had a care package of support, which over time was reduced and later discontinued, as they readapted to living independently and their mental and physical health improved.

Our Strengths Based Practitioners supported the adult over time, building their confidence and relationship within the local community and with services.

The strengths-based practitioner helped him look into aspirational training courses which he had identified, such as security and forklift driver, following his lead to help him work out what he can and can't do rather than shutting doors. They also supported him to attend the local library to use their computers, so that he can do his own research.

8. Commitment two: Provide our communities with a skilled, supported, and adaptable workforce dedicated to delivering high-quality care.

We know that our dedicated team is at the heart of everything we do. To provide you with the best possible care, we are committed to supporting our staff through ongoing training and developing an environment that allows them to provide the best possible care to you. This means:

- **Skilled and knowledgeable staff:** Our team is equipped with the latest knowledge and skills to meet your diverse and changing needs.
- **Compassionate care:** We believe in treating you with dignity and respect, and our staff and services provide an excellent standard of support.
- **Valued and motivated staff:** By valuing our team, we ensure they are engaged and fulfilled in their roles, leading to better care for you.

Investing in our staff is not only the right thing to do, it is also essential for ensuring that you receive the highest quality care, now and in the future.

To deliver this we will:

- Deliver an Adult Social Care Workforce strategy.
- Develop a dedicated Adult Social Care training plan for all our Social Care staff.
- Implement mentorship and coaching programmes where experienced staff guide support student Social Workers and agency staff to foster knowledge transfer and professional development.
- Create clear career progression paths within the service offering opportunities for advancement and specialisation.
- Support ongoing social work learning through workshops, conferences and professional qualifications to keep staff up to date with the latest practices and research.
- Promote critical analysis and reflective practice to create space to explore experiences, intuition and ways of knowing to enable learning to help transform our practice.
- Provide a positive workplace culture that values staff contributions, encourages open communication, and provides opportunities for feedback and recognition.

- Collaborate between different health and social care disciplines (such as social workers, nursing staff and occupational therapists) to provide a holistic approach to care and maximise positive outcomes for individuals.

Measures of success:

- Completion of a comprehensive workforce strategy, including clear goals, times, and assigned responsibilities.
- Increase in staff completing specialised training courses
- Increase in the percentage of staff promotions, new specialisms or role changes into higher level of specialised positions within the Corporation.
- Increase in the number of staff obtaining relevant professional qualifications or certifications.
- Improved staff satisfaction scores (via staff survey or other mediums)
- Our adult social care workforce remains stable whilst benefiting from fresh perspectives and new ideas from new members of staff.

Case study:

We have a full-time stand-alone post of Principal Social Worker, and our Senior Occupational Therapist is a member of Principal Occupational Therapists Network. These practitioners enable local and national networking, share policies and guidance, and make improvements to our processes and practice.

We also have a “Staff Suggestions digital box” system, where our staff can make positive suggestions and share their views, and we learn from our Exit Interviews, which are reviewed by the Principal Social Worker.

We invite external guests and speakers to our events, to boost our engagement in ASC national and local agenda, such as at World Social Work Day or visit by Chief Social Worker, Lyn Romeo.

Staff feedback: “I think there is a well-balanced understanding of case workload and stress. I feel listened to and understood, for example if I ask for a little space/time to finish off work before new cases are allocated.”

9. Commitment three: Work collaboratively with our partners to provide people with the right support, in the right place at the right time.

We know that providing the best possible support means working together collaboratively. That is why we collaborate with a range of organisations, including:

- **Healthcare providers:** Ensuring smooth transitions between health and social care, such as when you are discharged from hospital.
- **Community and voluntary groups:** Connecting you with local resources and networks that can enhance your wellbeing and independence.
- **Other key partners:** Working together to tackle important issues like safeguarding and keeping you safe and protected.

By sharing knowledge and resources with our partners, we can understand your needs and provide support better than we can do alone. The services we provide you can be tailored to meet your unique circumstances and are delivered in a joined-up approach, regardless of which organisation you reach out for support in the first place.

To deliver this we will:

- Strengthen collaboration between health, children's social care and social care providers to ensure seamless transitions and coordinated care pathways.
- Build on our strong partnerships with local GPs, community nurses, and other healthcare providers to ensure a joined-up approach to preventive care.
- Work with social housing providers to ensure that homes are safe, accessible, and adapted to meet the changing needs of residents.
- Work with our care providers to focus on the upcoming themes and trends related to the quality of care to enable us to identify issues at an early stage and share learning.
- Work with our neighbouring local authorities to deliver consistency in quality monitoring methods and improve good practice and avoid duplication.
- Maximise the use of community and voluntary groups to provide information and advice to service users.
- Work with partners across North East London Integrated Care System to deliver a systemwide approach to address health inequalities.
- Continue to work in partnership with unpaid carers in the City of London to deliver the Carers Strategy.

- Deliver new models of integration through the City & Hackney Strengths Based Partnership.

Measures of success:

- Delayed transfers of care between health and social care settings kept as low as possible.
- Increase in the number of individuals receiving preventative care interventions based on referrals from health partners.
- Increase in the number of adaptations carried out within homes to adapt them to resident needs.
- Increase in number of service users accessing information and advice through community and voluntary groups or commissioned local services.
- Reduction in health inequalities amongst specific target populations within the Northeast London Integrated Care System.
- Increase in the number of unpaid carers accessing support services and reporting improved well-being.
- Increase in number of referrals to social community groups and voluntary organisations.
- Positive feedback from our partners and local community groups.

Case Study – Hospital Discharge, Care Navigator

The Care Navigator from Age UK worked with an Adult in hospital who had been struggling at home for some time but had been reluctant to ask for help and to share information. However, working with the Care Navigator, the individual wanted to be fully involved in their discharge planning but had a difficulty hearing, so by using email, they were able to provide more information about needs and requirements to help with the discharge home.

The Care Navigator acted as a bridge to adult social care to create positive outcomes for the adult by ensuring equipment such as key safe and pendant alarm were in place to prevent delays and ensure a safe discharge. Finally, the Care Navigator ensured relevant details were shared with the GP including the arranged outpatient appointments.

10. Commitment four: Provide a wide range of high-quality, accessible care options to meet people's needs.

We are committed to building a strong and diverse care system that can meet the needs of everyone in our communities. This means commissioning the right care providers who can offer you different options for high-quality care and support, whenever and wherever you need it.

Our strong care system benefits you in several ways:

- **More choices:** You will have more options to find care that suits your individual needs and preferences.
- **Better quality:** Commissioned care providers are monitored to constantly improve their services.
- **Prepared for the future:** Our diverse care system will be more adaptable to changes in the population and unexpected challenges, ensuring long-term access to care.

As a smaller local authority, we carefully choose the best care providers and options to ensure you receive the most suitable and cost-effective care possible.

To deliver this we will:

- Work in partnership with local care providers to ensure we have a social care market that can meet the needs of City residents.
- Spot purchase care provision using commissioning arrangements that provide the best value and the right support.
- Work with providers to develop and test emergency plans for situations such as pandemics and unexpected closures to ensure continuity of care.
- Require providers to demonstrate cultural awareness so that they provide services that respect the diverse backgrounds, beliefs and preferences of service users.
- Update our market sustainability plan and market position statement on a regular basis to ensure we have the correct support available based on local need.
- Explore how we can maximise diversity in the care market through the development of new and innovative care models.
- Continue to undertake fair cost of care exercises and review the rates we pay care providers to make sure they are sustainable but also provide optimum value for money.

Measures of success:

- Increase in the number of commissioned care providers with fully developed and tested emergency plans, including contingency plans for alternative care arrangements in case of disruptions.
- Percentage of service users reporting satisfaction with the cultural sensitivity and responsiveness of care providers, based on regular feedback surveys.
- Yearly review and update of the City Corporation's market sustainability plan and market position statement.
- Increase in the number of new and innovative care models piloted or implemented within a specified timeframe, increasing the range of care options available to residents.
- Positive feedback from service users reported to us through the Adult Social Care Advisory group.
- Feedback from service users through the regularly commissioned questionnaires.

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11. Implementation

This strategy has been developed amidst ongoing reforms to the adult social care sector and its funding landscape. It serves as a cornerstone for the City Corporation to achieve the objectives outlined in its Corporate Plan, working in synergy with the implementation of both the City Corporation's Carers Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This approach ensures a comprehensive and integrated support system for individuals in need of care.

The strategy will also be implemented by promoting its priorities with our partners, our workforce and with City of London residents.

This strategy also aligns and delivers priorities identified within the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan for 2024-29 and supports the objectives of the City Corporation's People Strategy to delivery a strong and stable workforce. Additionally, the strategy also aligns to the City Corporation's Adult Social Care Development Plan 2023-28, which is the main vehicle of delivery of the strategies five identified priorities.

Oversight and accountability for the Adult Social Care Strategy rests with the City Corporation's Community & Children's Services Committee, which is responsible for its approval, renewal, and ongoing monitoring to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in addressing the evolving needs of the community. This dynamic framework allows the strategy to adapt and respond to emerging challenges within the sector, while maintaining a focus on person-centred care, strong partnership working, safeguarding the most vulnerable and promoting proactive and preventative approaches.