



# INDEPENDENCE STRATEGY

ENABLING: **GROWTH • INDEPENDENCE • LIVEABILITY**

2015 - 2018





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# FOREWORD FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL



This Administration is ambitious for Croydon and wants to make it a place where everyone is proud to live and work. The activity within this Independence Strategy has been developed on the basis of the vision that we set in our ‘Ambitious

for Croydon’ manifesto. Within the strategy are 18 promises which we are committed to deliver and these form the basis of how we will achieve the ambition to unlock the aspirations of local citizens, improve their quality of life and promote their independence.

Our vision for this strategy is to maximise the life chances and outcomes for everyone in Croydon. We will achieve this through:

- Empowering communities to support and take responsibility for each other
- Providing access to high quality learning and empowering individuals and families to be personally and financially resilient, to maximise their quality of life and live in housing appropriate to their needs
- Safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm
- Enabling individuals and families to have a single, joined-up service where possible (within the Council and with partners) and as early as possible, improving the difference the Council makes to the lives of the people of Croydon at less cost to the public purse

The activities in this strategy are based on a ‘Whole Family Approach’ to services which means considering the needs of the whole family. We will achieve this through better co-ordination and integration of services – a principle that will inform our wider approach to promoting independence within Croydon.

We have made strong progress in promoting independence in Croydon. This is reflected in our improving school standards, strong performance on some key health outcomes like smoking and taking an innovative approach to getting people in to employment. This strategy will build on these successes, and take an ambitious approach to what we are able to deliver over the course of the three years that this strategy covers.

There is still much to do and this Independence Strategy outlines how we will achieve our ambition in the context of having to make savings and meet a rising demand for services. However, through working differently and innovatively with our partners and our residents, I am confident that the activities the Council will undertake over the next three years will help residents be as independent as possible.

Tony Newman  
Leader of the Council



# INTRODUCTION

Being independent means having as much control over your life as you can. For those with parental and caring responsibilities your own independence should mean your family lives independently too.

Promoting Independence is important for people at all stages of life: for children and young people to reach their potential; for people of working age to continue to maximise their work, lifelong learning and cultural opportunities, or to manage periods of illness; and for people in older age to maintain active lives.

Life events can also present major barriers to living independently. Bereavement, relationship breakdown, domestic violence and unemployment can all impact a person's ability to live independently.

Staying healthy for as long as possible helps to preserve your physical independence and a good level of education as a child or employment as an adult can help achieve financial security and resilience. These wider determinants to independence are important for the whole population, not just those in need of specific Council services.

This Independence Strategy outlines the context of Croydon in relation to independence and demonstrates activities that we will undertake with our partners and the wider community to deliver our Promises. The work programme outlined in the strategy will focus on achieving our five key outcomes for independence which are part of the Ambitious for Croydon Corporate Outcomes Framework. These are listed below:

- 1.** Families are healthy and resilient and able to maximise their life chances and independence
- 2.** People from all communities live longer, healthier lives through positive lifestyle choices
- 3.** Children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm and exploitation
- 4.** Families and individuals are more financially resilient and live affordable lives
- 5.** Domestic abuse and sexual violence is prevented where possible, victims are supported, and perpetrators held to account

Our approach to promoting independence is based on the premise that the sooner support is available the more likely it is that residents can maintain their independence for longer. This in turn means that people can avoid the need for more intensive specialist help and are able to continue to participate in their local communities. It is this principle that has informed the development this Independence Strategy.

This Independence Strategy delivers on our priorities and commitments within our Corporate Plan. See page 13 for more information.



## How we have developed the Independence Strategy

The Outcomes, Priorities and Promises of this Independence Strategy have been based on an evidence base from a wide range of sources. These include:

- **Our Performance:** We have reviewed our performance across key service areas from education, employment, health and social care services to ensure the promises we make in this strategy reflect our commitment to improve our performance where we need to.
- **Consultation and Engagement:** We regularly speak to the public through consultations, and receive feedback from service users. We ensure that this feedback shapes our planning and priority setting.
- **Demographic Data:** We have analysed the need within the local population to ensure that the work we undertake is focused on those who most need help and support.
- **Opportunities and Challenges facing Croydon:** There are many changes facing Croydon including population growth, government reforms and business investment. This Independence Strategy outlines how we will address any challenges faced by these changes, and how we will capitalise on the opportunities available.

## Our Vision

Our Vision for the Independence Strategy is to help maximise life chances and outcomes through:

- Empowering communities to support and take responsibility for each other
  - Providing access to high quality learning and empowering individuals and families to be personally and financially resilient, to maximise their quality of life and live in housing appropriate to their needs
  - Safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm
  - Through a single view of the customer, enabling individuals and families to have a single, joined-up service where possible (within the Council and with partners) and as early as possible, improving the difference the Council makes to the lives of the people of Croydon at less cost to the public purse
- Croydon Council is committed to developing a 'Whole Family Approach' to services which means considering the needs of the whole family. The activity within the Independence Strategy will work towards having a 'single view' of our residents so that people do not need to give their information more than once and ensures we respond in a joined up way to meet the needs of families. This will be achieved through better co-ordination and integration of services, which is an overarching principle that will inform our approach to promoting independence within Croydon.

Our Vision is reflected in the operating model for the Council's People Department, which has influenced the priorities we set out in this strategy.

## Our Priorities

Through analysing a robust evidence base, and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders we have developed five key priority areas for this strategy:

**Priority 1** – Empower individuals and communities to be better able to take more responsibility for themselves and each other.

**Priority 2** – Enable residents to make informed choices about how to meet their needs, and how to live healthy lives, through the provision of high quality information, advice and guidance.

**Priority 3** – Provide people with the best opportunity to maximise their life chances and have a good quality of life through the provision of high quality universal services, including an excellent learning offer.

**Priority 4** – Empower people to resolve issues early through the provision of joined up assessment and support.

**Priority 5** – Enable children and adults to maximise their independence and ensure they are safe from harm through the provision of high quality specialist services.

# CROYDON: FACTS AND FIGURES

LONDON'S LARGEST BOROUGH BY POPULATION

372,800

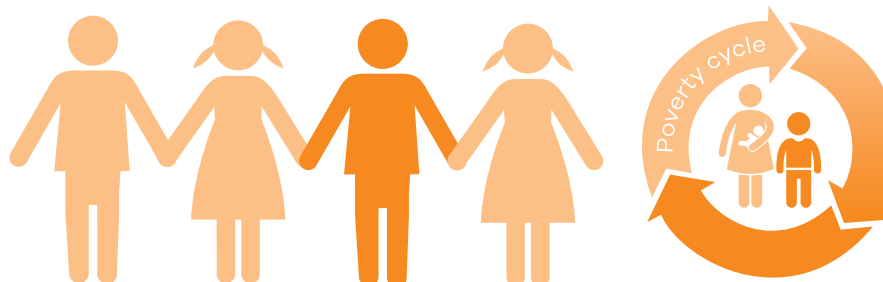


YOUNG AND DIVERSE

24.6% 0-17 years CROYDON

22.0% 0-17 years LONDON 21.4% 0-17 years ENGLAND

IN CROYDON 1 IN 4 (17,700) CHILDREN LIVE IN POVERTY



Children born into poverty are 4 times more likely to be poor as adults than children of affluent parents.

CHILD POVERTY IS EXPECTED TO RISE TO

27%

IN CROYDON IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

DUE TO BENEFIT RATES NOT KEEPING PACE WITH GROWTH IN INCOME

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?



MORE LIKELY TO



Be low birth weight



Be obese



Have mental health problems



Have health problems



Smoke drink and take drugs



Less likely to be breastfed



Less likely to achieve 5 A-C GCSEs

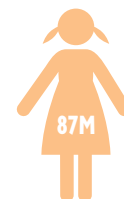
## WHO IS AT RISK OF POVERTY?



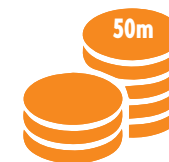
Lone parent families, families with a disabled person, ethnic minority families, children in care, those with a parent in prison, those with special needs, those born to teenage mothers

CHILD POVERTY COSTS CROYDON'S ECONOMY

£171 MILLION



Services dealing with the consequences of child poverty



Lost earnings to individuals



Benefits and lost tax revenue

In 2013  
**25,300**

Croydon residents were registered as self-employed.

Aged 16-64

**11.1%**

of the working age population

THE HIGHEST LEVEL FOR OVER

**10 YEARS**

## AN ACTIVE AND TALENTED WORKFORCE



**77%** **78%** **81%**

London England Croydon

residents in or actively seeking employment

**1.1 MILLION** economically active people



living within **30 MINS** of East Croydon

**71.3%**

Working age females in employment

CROYDON

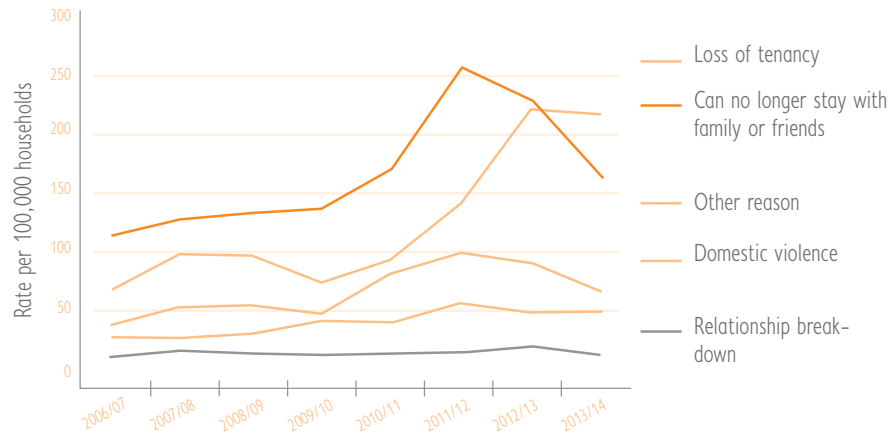
**62.9%**

Working age females in employment

LONDON

## LOSS OF TENANCY IS NOW THE MAIN REASON FOR HOMELESSNESS IN CROYDON

Trend in newly accepted homeless households by cause



IF RECENT TRENDS CONTINUE, BY 2019:

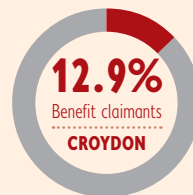
**50 PEOPLE**

will sleep rough each night and there will be

**4,500** Croydon households living in

temporary accommodation

## POCKETS OF DEPRIVATION AND WORKLESSNESS PERSIST



**12.9%**  
Benefit claimants  
CROYDON



**12.2%**  
Benefit claimants  
LONDON

31,360\* individuals claiming out-of-work benefits in Croydon

**16TH**

most deprived of the 33 London boroughs

**213TH**

most deprived of 354 authorities in England

**NINE**

of Croydon's neighbourhoods in the top

**10%**

most deprived in England

Broadly, the north of the borough is more deprived than the south

WE WANT TO HELP FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS TO BE MORE FINANCIALLY RESILIENT AND LIVE AFFORDABLE LIVES.



# PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND'S ANNUAL HEALTH PROFILE FOR CROYDON

On 8 of the 30 indicators Croydon does need to do better these include three **“BROADER DETERMINANTS”** of health child poverty, a homelessness and, like almost all London boroughs, violent crime. But it does also include indicators of ill health:



Teenage pregnancy



Obese children



Tuberculosis



Diabetes



Sexually Transmitted Infections

## ON 12 OF THE 30 INDICATORS CROYDON IS AMONGST THE HEALTHIER BOROUGHES IN ENGLAND, INCLUDING:

- Expectant mums not smoking
- People hospitalised because of alcohol (including under 18s)
- Non smokers
- Smoking related deaths
- Users of opiates and crack
- Cancer deaths before age 75
- Killed and seriously injured on the road
- Life expectancy – men
- Life expectancy – women

**“THE COST OF DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CROYDON IS ESTIMATED TO BE £37.4 MILLION WITH THE HUMAN AND EMOTIONAL COSTS AT £64.5 MILLION.”**

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2015 – 2018

## GREAT SCHOOLS

The share of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs grades A\*-C (or equivalent) in Croydon is in the **TOP QUARTILE** performance of all Local Authority areas.



The proportion of schools judged by OfSTED to be **GOOD AND OUTSTANDING** has grown significantly in recent years.

Croydon has the **BIGGEST SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT** programme in the England in proportion to the size of its population.



# CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Council undertakes regular consultation with local people and feedback from consultations have been used to inform the development of this strategy.

A survey of lone parents in Croydon was carried out by the Council in early 2014 in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and children's centres. Key findings from the survey include:

Parents reported that barriers to finding sustainable work were high costs of childcare and a lack of part-time and flexible jobs which allow parents to combine caring responsibilities with work.

Nearly two thirds of respondents reported that Children's Centres had provided valuable support in particular in relation to building self-esteem and confidence.

Around half of respondents recognised that beyond the additional income, being in work would increase their independence.

The majority of respondents were seeking work which would enable them to work term time only, school hours or flexible hours but concerns about zero hours contracts were raised and the ability to earn enough.

In addition to lack of flexible jobs and affordable childcare, lack of skills, lack of confidence with applying for jobs, worrying about interviews and inability to afford appropriate clothes for interviews and work were also reported as obstacles to working.

One in ten respondents identified that their physical and mental health had suffered as a result of not being in work.

## Key findings from our Adult Social Care Service User Survey (an annual survey of people who use adult social care services) include:

**87%** said their quality of life 'could not be better, is very good, good or alright' and **84%** said care and support services helped with quality of life.

**93%** said they had 'as much as they want, some or adequate' control over their daily life and **81%** said care & support services helped them in having control.

**66%** said they are able to spend their time as they want (or enough of their time) doing things they value or enjoy.

**77%** said they had 'as much as I want' or 'adequate' social contact with the people they like.

**73%** of those who had looked for information or advice in the past year said it was 'very' or 'fairly' easy to find.

**83%** felt 'extremely, very or quite satisfied' with care and support services.

**94%** said they felt 'as safe as they want' or 'adequately safe' both inside and outside of the house.

**71%** said that care and support services help in feeling safe.

A phone survey of **400** Croydon residents was conducted for the Opportunity and Fairness Commission in November 2014. Key findings that have been used to shape the Priorities and Promises of this Independence Strategy are:

- A majority of respondents described their quality of life as either good (**49%**) or excellent (**13%**), but a third of people struggle financially.
- **30-35%** of residents want more work – but over a third don't see the opportunities.
- Asked what they thought about fairness, **56%** of residents said that 'what matters is ensuring everyone has equality of opportunity.' Most thought that 'those in most need should get the most'.

## Listening to what residents and service users say...

*"Feels a bit like you're being passed from pillar to post and I'm not really sure who's responsible for me." ". . . .when your baby is born, you're only thinking about sleeping and looking after baby - it would have been better if someone had talked to me – maybe at 6-week check – they could have asked if I was ok, if I was meeting other parents etc."*

# OUR PERFORMANCE:

## Building on our strengths to deliver Independence

The delivery of this Independence Strategy builds on a strong track record of delivering a wide range of services to promote independence across the community. This includes social care services, but also wider health and employment services.

Some of the key achievements that this Independence Strategy will continue to improve on are:

### **A Strong Community and Voluntary Sector**

Every year Croydon Council invests between £15m and £20m in the community and voluntary sector. This investment has promoted independence for many people including older people and those with mental health conditions.

### **Health**

During 2014/15, Croydon supported over 2,200 local people to successfully quit smoking for four weeks; 790 had still quit at twelve weeks.

### **Adults Social Care**

We have low waiting times for social care services with 85% of new clients waiting less than 35 days from the time of first contact to completion of assessment.

### **Domestic Violence and Sexual Exploitation**

Croydon's Family Justice Centre is run by a multi-disciplinary team that works to provide victims and their families' access to support services. It holds the Croydon MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) which is a victim focused meeting where information on the highest risk cases is shared between statutory and voluntary agencies. One of the key successes of this partnership approach for 2014/15 has been the increase in the sanction detection rate for domestic violence rising from 28.4% to 30.0%.

### **Improving School Standards**

We have continued to improve the proportion of schools which are judged good or better by OFSTED with the proportion of primary schools judged by OFSTED to be good or outstanding rising to 91% (May 2015). Achievements in our secondary schools, when measured as the percentage of pupils gaining 5 A\*-C GCSEs including English and Mathematics is better than the national average. Also, the attainment gap between pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding and their peers is amongst the lowest in the country.

### **Partnership Working**

Croydon takes a partnership approach to achieve key outcomes across a range of services. Key partnerships include the Croydon Children and Families Partnership Boards, the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board which protects vulnerable children from harm, and the Croydon Health and Wellbeing Board which takes a partnership approach to address local health needs.

### **Better Integration between Health and Social Care**

Croydon Council and Croydon CCG have achieved closer integration between health and social care as a result of an 'Outcomes Based Commissioning' project which focuses on delivering a new model of health and social care services for the over 65 population. We will build on this achievement going forward through ensuring provision of integrated services respond to individual need, and promote independence and resilience.

# WHERE DOES THE INDEPENDENCE STRATEGY FIT IN?

Ambitious for Croydon' sets out the key outcomes that this Council is seeking to achieve for the borough and its residents, which flow from the commitments set out in the Administration's 2014 "Ambitious for Croydon" election manifesto.

A framework of key performance indicators has been developed that will enable the Council and the public to track progress and success in achieving these outcomes in a way that promotes openness, transparency and accountability. These will be reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

The Independence Strategy is one of the three themed strategies comprising the Council's Corporate Plan. Together the Growth, Liveability and Independence strategies represent the Council's contribution to delivering the aspirations and key priorities of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) set out in the Community strategy 2015-18.

The key outcomes that the Council is seeking to achieve for Croydon through working in partnership with the public, private, voluntary and community sectors are listed below. The priority outcomes that we aim to achieve through this strategy are listed in the column headed "Independence".



(Figure 5 Vision 2040 and Community Strategy 13-18 Strategy Framework)

# HOW WE WILL DELIVER OUR INDEPENDENCE STRATEGY

Our Independence Strategy is shaped around five priority areas, each with a set of Promises that we are committed to deliver. These five priorities are outlined in the following pages.

## GROWTH

To create a place where people and businesses want to be

To enable more local people to access a wider range of jobs

To grow and thriving and lively cultural offer which engages communities and supports regeneration

To enable people of all ages to reach their potential through access to quality schools and learning

To provide a decent, safe, and affordable home for every local resident who needs one

## INDEPENDENCE

To help families be healthy and resilient and able to maximise their life chances and independence

To help people from all communities live longer, healthier lives through positive lifestyle choices

To protect children and vulnerable adults from harm and exploitation

To help families and individuals be more financially resilient and live affordable lives

To prevent Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence where possible, support victims and hold perpetrators to account

## LIVEABILITY

To create a place that communities are proud of and want to look after as their neighbourhood

To make parks and open spaces a cultural resource

To create a place where people feel safe and are safe

To build a place that is easy and safe for all to get to and move around in

To improve wellbeing across all communities through sport and physical activity

## ENABLING

To be innovative and enterprising in using available resources to change lives for the better

To have the right people with the right skills in the right jobs

To drive fairness for all communities, people and places

To be digital by design in meeting the needs of local people

To be open and transparent and put communities at the heart of decision making

# PRIORITY ONE:

## Empower individuals & communities to be better able to take more responsibility for themselves and each other



### Why this is important:

Croydon Council has been working to support and develop a thriving community and voluntary sector to support people to be independent. We are now developing a common and effective approach to community empowerment to help families to be healthy, resilient and maximize their life chances.

Our approach to promoting independence is based on the premise that the sooner support is available the more likely it is that residents can maintain their independence for longer. This in turn means that people can avoid the need for more intensive specialist help and are able to continue to participate in their local communities.


An Opportunity and Fairness Commission will produce recommendations on ways in which the Council and public, private, community and voluntary sector partners can use their roles and influence to reduce inequalities and increase fairness within the local economy and local communities. The Independence Strategy will be reviewed following the publication of the Opportunity and Fairness Commission recommendations.

### How we will achieve this:

#### Empowering communities

Every year Croydon Council invests between £15m and £20m in services commissioned from voluntary sector organisations which provides many excellent and accessible services to residents in the borough. Despite this investment we know that during a time financial constraint and rising demand the Council will need to find innovative solutions that put people in control of choices that impact on their lives and prevent them from using more costly acute services.

As a Council we will need to work collaboratively to find solutions to some of the most pressing demands on our services to empower communities to take more control in the prevention of problems such as poor health and long term unemployment. A key part of this approach to promote independence requires the Council to find out what people can do for themselves, what they need a little help with and what we must do. To achieve this we will work more collaboratively with our community, faith and voluntary sector through encouraging social enterprise and volunteering.



Croydon is one of two 'Food Flagship Boroughs' and we will co-ordinate activities that have a focus on supporting communities to grow their own food and learn to cook. We will aim to work with retail outlets, community groups, charitable organisations, food banks and others to transform the borough's approach to food. Schools will be supported to change the culture of food within them, and to implement projects designed to improve academic attainment.

Residents over the age of 40 are entitled to a free NHS health check which could detect the early signs of preventable problems such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, dementia and stroke. We will work to encourage more residents to book an appointment with a borough GP, pharmacy or outreach service where the health check is available. This will support residents to make simple lifestyle changes, such as eating healthily and being more active, both of which can lower the risk of developing serious, but preventable conditions.

Recently, our positive experiences of using the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to community empowerment has led us to put it at the heart of our approach to commissioning, developing and delivering services. This collaborative approach ensures that measures to promote independence are appropriate to the communities they are meant to support and are sustainable in the long term.

## Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

Life events such as being the victim of domestic abuse and sexual violence can present major barriers to living independently. These are clear safeguarding issues, and responding to these is a significant and urgent challenge for services.

Reducing the incidence of domestic abuse means working with communities to change attitudes and send a clear message and challenge to those responsible for abuse, that it will not be tolerated. Data shows that Croydon has some of the highest levels of Domestic Violence in London, however as a result of our awareness raising, the detection levels have increased.

The activities in this Independence Strategy will prioritise every professional working with children and adults in front line services being able to identify significant risk indicators, ensuring that domestic abuse is understood as a serious safeguarding issue and is managed appropriately.

On a practical basis there is a strong partnership working across the voluntary sector, including a Family Justice Centre. There is a voluntary sector forum and a bi-annual partnership (with more than 50 members) that meet together to challenge and support the delivery of the actions to reduce abuse and sexual violence, particularly to change attitudes in the community to domestic abuse and sexual violence. This partnership approach will be key in delivering the Promises of this Independence Strategy.

## Our Promises

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- We will develop our approach to supporting communities to achieve their own aspirations by building on their own assets.
- We will work with partners to tackle and change attitudes in the community to domestic abuse and sexual violence, and child sexual exploitation.
- We will work with local communities to increase the number of people between the age of 40-74 who have a Health Check.



# PRIORITY TWO:

## Enable residents to make informed choices about how to meet their needs, and live healthy lives, through the provision of high quality information, advice and guidance

### Why this is important:

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To help people live independent and healthy lives they may require different types of information. This could include advice on how to give up smoking, information on what benefits they are entitled to or how to access online services. The activities in this Independence Strategy will help local residents support themselves and enable people to take charge of their own wellbeing.

Further welfare reform measures will be introduced which will include reducing the benefit cap from £500 to £442 a week and freezing working age benefits for two years from 2016/17. Universal Credit (UC) which replaces six in-work and out-of-work benefits with a single package will apply to new claims from single people of working age in 2015/16. Due to these entitlement changes, this Independence Strategy will support residents gain employment, and help keep them informed about what benefits they are entitled to.

### How we will achieve this:

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#### Improved information, advice and guidance

The Council provides information and advice on a range of subjects for people across the entire age-range. Currently the way this information is presented on the internet is organised around services. We want to review this with the aim of making sure the presentation of this information best responds to the needs of families and households. Recent examples of how we achieve this include helping residents identify whether they have a level of drinking that is bad for their health and signposting them to relevant support services.

#### Making best use of the Internet

We have been making significant progress in developing services through digital channels to improve customer access and satisfaction. This includes targeted improvements to our website with a focus on improving the number and quality of transactions.

We are committed to promoting 'digital inclusion' as we know not having access to the internet can mean much more than just being unable to access certain Council services. It can also provide ways of reducing the cost of living. It is estimated that households offline are missing out on savings of up to £560 per year from shopping or paying bills online, or being able to keep in touch with family members and friends.



Whilst we want to maximise digital opportunities we are also very aware of those residents who do not have access or the right skills to allow them to use online services. We will therefore ensure we are able to fully support those residents to be able to access digital and electronic services online, or by using alternative methods that suit the individual.

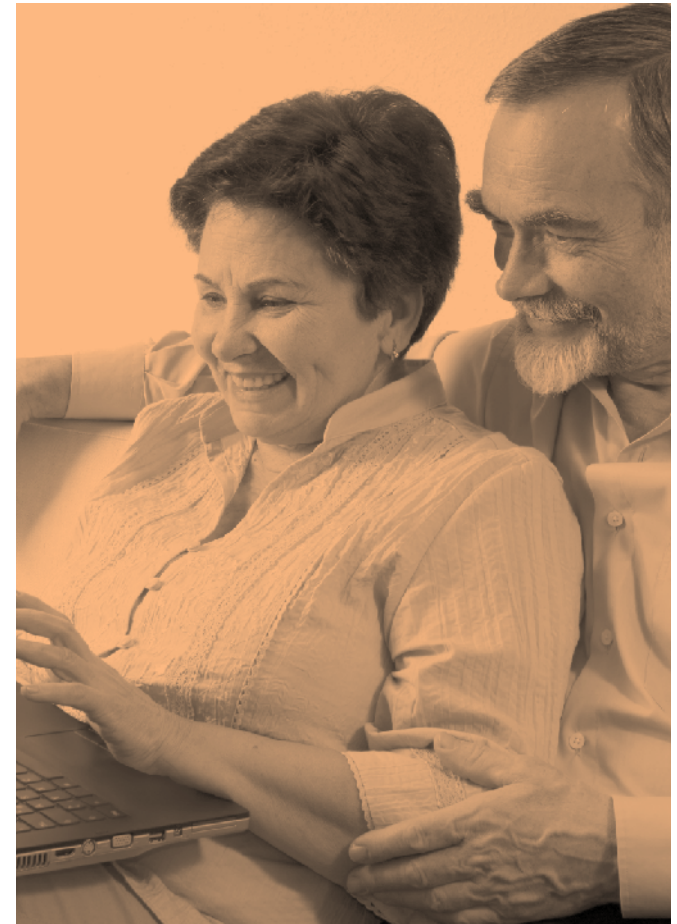
### **Making Customer Contact Count**

We provide advice to Croydon residents on a broad range of services to help them live independently. This includes information and advice to help people follow a healthy lifestyle through the Healthy Living Hub, based on the ground floor of Croydon's Central Library. This service provides a free NHS stop smoking service, access to free NHS Health Checks and advice on managing healthy weight. There are also regular visits from organisations such as Diabetes UK, Macmillan Cancer Support, Age UK and Mind in Croydon.

The People Gateway project has developed housing, social care, benefits services and Jobcentre Plus in to a multi-agency team which provides people with face to face advice to identify sustainable options for people to find a job, make more of their money or move to more affordable areas.

### **Our Promises**

- We will provide high quality information, advice and guidance to support people living independent and healthier lives and improve their overall well-being.





# PRIORITY THREE:

**Provide people with the best opportunity to maximise their life chances and have a good quality of life through the provision of high quality universal services, including an excellent learning offer.**

## **Why this is important:**

This Independence Strategy will shape the way we provide our wide range of universal services with the aim of empowering individuals and families to be personally and financially resilient, and maximise their quality of life. Through providing high quality education and adult learning opportunities residents will be in a better position to gain meaningful and long term employment, maximise their life chances and achieve their personal aspirations.

It is important to enable more local people to access a wider range of jobs. Croydon has a relatively high employment rate compared to London, but residents tend to be employed in low-wage, low-skilled jobs in the business administration, support and retail sectors, rather than in high-wage/high-skilled sectors: We want residents to be best placed to access the employment opportunities both within the borough and across London.

We recognise the importance of culture in relation to regeneration and growth and its role in making Croydon a place where people want to live work and spend their leisure time. Being active, engaging in community activities and taking interest in cultural events play a vital role in promoting wellbeing and therefore maintaining independence.

## **How we will achieve this:**

### **Improving School Standards**

Ensuring people of all ages are able to reach their potential through access to quality schools and learning is a key priority for this Independence Strategy. The proportion of Croydon schools judged by OFSTED to be Good or better has significantly risen over the past three years (from 64% in Summer 2012 to 86.4% in Summer 2015). We are working to ensure all Croydon schools are Good or better; and for our end of Key Stage 2 and 4 test and exam results to be in the top 25% across the country.

An Education and Adoption Bill will introduce a number of changes to the way local schools are run – specifically regarding the replacing head teachers of failing schools, and speeding the process of turning underperforming schools in to academies. This Independence Strategy will focus on taking an innovative and collaborative approach to drive forward improvements. This will include recently launched social enterprise model with local schools, which created a multidisciplinary mutual organisation called “Octavo”.

### Delivering school places

Croydon faces high demand for school places and has responded to that challenge successfully already, with a number of innovative solutions to meet the challenge of demand and supply. A revised programme for delivering primary school places up to 2018 has been developed. More than 420 places are being added in 2015 and by 2017 there will be 900 more primary school places in the borough.

### Adult Learning

Having a well-qualified and highly skilled adult population will be a key enabler for the Growth plans for Croydon. This service supports residents to develop their careers and maintain financial resilience through improving their career prospects. It also supports adults who are not in employment and need to learn and develop the necessary skills to find a job.

The Council provides more than 1,200 part-time courses every year in various venues across the borough of Croydon. Our adult learning service, CALAT, also works with businesses and employers to deliver training aimed at raising the skills level of employees and developing the workforce. We will strengthen CALAT's delivery of apprenticeships and enable people to be better supported to gain employment, progress in their careers and achieve their personal aspirations.

### Improving the cultural landscape

There is a huge amount of cultural activity planned and already happening in the borough. This includes the Croydon Summer Festival in 2015 which will celebrate and promote Croydon as a place, bringing different communities together and enhancing the borough's profile as a cultural destination. Our Culture Programme will provide people with the opportunity to independently participate in a broad range of community and artistic activities.

### Our Promises

- We will continue to improve the proportion of schools which are judged good or better by OFSTED and support and challenge schools to improve the standards being achieved.
- We will deliver a high quality adult learning offer which will support people to gain employment, change or progress in their careers and achieve their personal aspirations.
- We will develop a high quality and diverse cultural offer including delivering a cultural festival which reflects our cultural ambitions for Croydon.





# PRIORITY FOUR:

## Empower people to resolve issues early through the provision of joined up assessment and support

### Why this is important:

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This Independence Strategy will focus on working with partners to make sure assessments are simple, and that we work together to understand the full range of needs. This means that we will provide “joined up” assessments and services. The redesigned Early Help Assessment, the work of the Family Resilience Service with families with multiple difficulties and the development of the Council’s Gateway service in response to the national welfare reforms are all examples how we are already working to deliver this priority.

The Care Act 2014 introduced new duties for councils regarding the provision of care and support. From April 2016 more people will qualify for council funding as financial assessments are extended to residential care and councils become responsible for care costs above a lifetime cap of £72,000.

### How we will achieve this:

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#### Supporting and empowering people through a more joined up ‘gateway’ approach

We know that people make contact with us for many different reasons and via a wide range of services. By developing a more joined up approach to how we engage with families and individuals, which we are calling the ‘gateway’ approach, we can reduce duplication, and deliver more streamlined support to help people find sustainable solutions which promote independence.

The activity within the Independence Strategy will work towards having a ‘single view’ of our residents so that people do not need to give their information more than once, implementing simple assessment processes to help achieve this and taking a ‘whole household’ approach, so that we don’t engage with people in an isolated way but rather work with every person within a household.

This approach gives us the opportunity to work in a completely different way to promote independence, transforming what can sometimes be a fragmented, confusing and frustrating experience into a chance to work with people so that they are empowered to find their own solutions across a wide range of issues.

### Reducing levels of homelessness

This Independence Strategy will focus on supporting people to prevent homelessness by working with them to tackle underlying issues, and address problems at an early stage to prevent a crisis.

It has become clear that supporting people to overcome the barriers they face to maximising their household budgets, to access training or employment and by exploring their housing options, enables them to either stay in their current home or to move somewhere that provides a home that is affordable over the long-term.

The Housing Bill may increase the supply of homes for low cost home ownership, but it may also reduce the supply of Council and housing association housing for rent. Both of these changes in supply could have an impact on homelessness rates in Croydon.

The activities in this Independence Strategy will ensure we continue working in partnership with other boroughs to restrain the increasing cost of obtaining emergency accommodation for homeless households by negotiating a standard rate across the capital. We will also ensure good quality, consistent information and advice are provided through all channels in a joined up way.

### Croydon Best Start – Transforming early years services

Commissioning health visiting became a local authority responsibility in 2015, and this has given us a unique opportunity to transform health visiting services, early learning and childcare, children's centre services, Family Nurse Partnership, family support and community services into an integrated service delivery model, Croydon Best Start.

This Independence Strategy will inform the transformation of services so that more children are ready for school and families are better able to support themselves. This will include greater whole system focus so that there are more radical improvements in areas such as take up of two year old childcare places, reduction in obesity rates and improvements in early learning outcomes.





## PRIORITY FOUR CONTINUED

### Health and social care integration

Our vision for health and social care services is to ensure that the care services provided to local people are of the highest quality, delivered at the right time and in the right place and appropriate to people's needs. We believe that health and social care services should empower people to understand and take responsibility for the management of their health, and the care and support they need to lead independent lives within their home and community.

We are currently in the process of redesigning sexual health services to place a greater focus on the integration of sexual health and contraception services and on targeted prevention and outreach work for those with the greatest sexual health needs. This redesign will focus on greater collaborative working to ensure pathways between services are better 'joined up' to improve health outcomes for residents.

This Independence Strategy is focused on reducing reliance on hospital care through improved primary and community based services, such as GP services, pharmacies, dentists and opticians, and continuing to develop our work around prevention, self-care and shared decision making. This includes the Better Care Fund (BCF) - a pooled budget between the CCG

and the Council which will increase independence by providing care and support at the right time and at home to enable people to recover and regain the skills and confidence to manage their own health and be active members of their community.

Croydon will continue to work closely with the NHS on an 'Outcomes Based Commissioning' project which focuses on delivering a new and innovative model of health and social care services for the over 65 population. This is an exciting opportunity to make a tangible difference for our older residents, ensuring provision of integrated services that respond to individual need, and promote independence and resilience.

### Our promises

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- We will provide a more joined up approach to helping families become financially stable, personally resilient, access training and employment and reduce levels of homelessness and those living in temporary accommodation.
- We will continue to build on the success of the Family Resilience Service by extending the range of families who receive an integrated whole family approach.
- We will support families by giving their children a better start in life through an integrated Best Start programme for children aged 0 – 5.
- We will work with partners to provide more integrated health, care and support in local communities.
- We will Improve safety for vulnerable people living in private housing by removing hazards and improving energy efficiency
- We will support older and disabled people to live independently for as long as possible, provide shelter to vulnerable people in acute housing need and engage with rough sleepers, offering a "hand-up" off the streets.

# PRIORITY FIVE:

## Enable children and adults to maximise their independence and ensure they are safe from harm through the provision of high quality specialist services

### Why this is important:

Providing high quality social care services, fairly and on the basis of need is central to the work of the Council. Protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse, harm and exploitation is of paramount importance and the Care Act and Children and Families Act place greater responsibilities on us to ensure this is done effectively.

Personalised care is key to achieving our Priority. This means that if you receive care and support you will have choice and control over how your needs are met, and enables you to do the things you value the most.

### How we will achieve this:

#### Keeping adults and children safe from abuse and neglect

The multi-agency approach Croydon takes to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from harm brings together a wide group of organisations and agencies including the NHS, the police, schools, the voluntary sector and service users. Abuse or neglect represents a threat to their safety, health and well-being, and independence, and is a key priority for local health and social care services. This Independence Strategy provides direction to the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) and the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board (CSAB) to ensure that the Council and wider partnership are doing everything in our power to keep people safe from harm.

There continues to be an increasing national focus on the profile of safeguarding children and adults, and our local Safeguarding Boards are in place to drive forward improvements and provide solutions to local needs and national requirements. This Independence Strategy will focus on the new safeguarding duties for local authorities as part of the Care Act 2014 which includes the need to establish a statutory Adults Safeguarding Board, which Croydon has had in place for many years.



The CSCB will build on the successes achieved during 2014/15 such as the introduction of the Single Assessment Framework (SAF) which provides a multi-agency assessment of analysing, understanding and recording what is happening to children and young people within their families and the wider context of the community in which they live. This Independence Strategy will help Croydon Council embed a systematic approach across Children's Social Care and Early Help services to achieve consistently good practice.

### **Treating Substance Misuse**

We have adopted a whole systems approach to reviewing and re-commissioning substance misuse services which reflects the needs of the community, in particular residents who are disadvantaged in accessing traditional specialised services. We will ensure that services support and complement specialist services while identifying further opportunities to deliver preventative interventions and specialist in-patient services. These new services will help better support people who misuse substances and improve outcomes for service users.

### **Promoting good mental health**

The Croydon Health and Wellbeing Strategy provides a framework for action by organisations that commission and provide the services that promote people's mental health and also their general wellbeing.

This Independence Strategy will drive an integrated approach to improve services and outcomes for people with mental health needs. Activities as part of these strategies include new packages of Council-funded social care. 'Integrated Adult Mental Health Services' are now provided through 'self-directed support, which aims to put people in control of the support they need to live the life they choose, often via direct payments, which is when a personal budget for care and support is paid directly to the person.

### **Multi-disciplinary services for people aged 0-65 with disabilities**

This Independence Strategy will focus on developing more seamless services which are shaped around the needs of those who use them. This will include the development of an integrated service which enables children and adults with disabilities and their families to receive the support they need. It will focus on working with service users to support and enable them to find the best solutions, whether that is through universal options such as information and advice, community opportunities through the voluntary sector and community groups or health and social care services. Through focusing on 'life-long planning' we will enable individuals and families to work out the best way to address their existing circumstances and future possible scenarios without having to access multiple points of contact and services which are not joined up. This whole life, whole system approach will work with families to create a seamless pathway for children and adults, and aims to provide individuals and their families' greater choice and control.



## PRIORITY FIVE CONTINUED

### Increasing the number of people who can live independently through aids and adaptations

This Independence Strategy will deliver a range of services and initiatives which help to increase the number of people who can remain living safely and independently in their own home within the local community. This includes:

- Supporting home owners and private tenants to get repairs, improvements and adaptations carried out through the 'Staying Put' and 'Enhanced Staying Put' scheme.
- Enabling people with disabilities to remain in their homes by adapting 100 private sector homes per year through disabled facilities grants, and 60 Council homes through direct investment.
- Piloting and promotion of new technologies which can enable people to improve their health and well-being and monitor their own health conditions, including tableware and telehealth options, mobile apps, websites and patient portals.

### Increasing the number of people using a direct payment

This Independence Strategy will work towards increasing the use of direct payments because they offer people wider choice, control and flexibility to meet their own social care needs. This will ensure people have the support they need to live independently and actively in their communities.

We are exploring a variety of options for how we can increase the number of people using direct payments which will include making sure that there is a wide range of high quality care and support providers in the borough which can support and enable more people to use direct payments to arrange and pay for service with them.

### Our Promises

- We will work with our partners to ensure children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm, abuse and exploitation through effective and efficient safeguarding processes and procedures.
- We will work with our partners to deliver high quality joined up health and social care services for those over 65.
- We will work with partners to promote good mental health and deliver a more preventative and early intervention focused approach.
- We will establish a multi-disciplinary service for people aged 0-65 with disabilities, incorporating children's social care, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and adult's services.
- We will increase the number of aids and adaptations in homes to enable more people to remain living in their own homes.
- We will increase the number of people using direct payment to support their care.



# SUMMARY AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Independence priorities	What outcomes are we seeking? (Ambitious for Croydon outcomes)	What are we going to do? Our Promises	How will we know we have succeeded? Ambitious for Croydon performance indicators
<p><b>Priority One –</b> Empower individuals &amp; communities to be better able to take more responsibility for themselves and each other.</p>	<p>To help families be healthy and resilient and able to maximize their life chances and independence.</p> <p>To prevent domestic and sexual violence where possible support victims and hold perpetrators to accounts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will develop our approach to supporting communities to achieve their own aspirations by building on their own assets.</li> <li>• We will work with partners to tackle and change attitudes in the community to domestic abuse and sexual violence, and child sexual exploitation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of carers who reported that they have as much social contact as they would like.</li> <li>• Proportion of people who use services who have control over their daily life.</li> <li>• % of service users and carers getting as much social contact as they would like.</li> <li>• Rate of self-reported wellbeing, life satisfaction, happiness and anxiety.</li> <li>• % of domestic violence sanction detections.</li> <li>• Number of cases of domestic abuse referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).</li> </ul>



## SUMMARY AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS CONTINUED

Independence priorities	What outcomes are we seeking? (Ambitious for Croydon outcomes)	What are we going to do? Our Promises	How will we know we have succeeded? Ambitious for Croydon performance indicators
<p><b>Priority Two –</b> Enable residents to make informed choices about how to meet their needs, and live healthy lives, through the provision of high quality information, advice and guidance.</p>	<p>To help people from all communities live longer healthy lives through positive life choices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will provide high quality information, advice and guidance to support people living independent and healthier lives and improve their overall well-being.</li> <li>• We will adopt a more collaborative approach to commissioning and providing sexual health and contraception services and provide targeted prevention to those with greatest sexual health needs.</li> <li>• We will work with local communities to increase the number of people between the age of 40-74 who have a Health Check</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % People presenting with HIV at a late stage of infection</li> <li>• Conception rate, per 1,000 girls, aged 15-17 years.</li> <li>• % of service users and carers who find it easy to find information about support.</li> <li>• Estimated % of smoking prevalence in over 18's.</li> <li>• Rate of self-reported wellbeing, life satisfaction, happiness and anxiety.</li> <li>• % of children in Reception who are classified as obese.</li> <li>• % of children in Year 6 who are classified as overweight or obese.</li> <li>• Persons with late diagnosed HIV.</li> <li>• Healthy life expectancy and the gap between wards with the highest and lowest life expectancy.</li> <li>• Alcohol related hospital admissions.</li> <li>• Proportion of adults classified as overweight or obese.</li> <li>• Average number of premature years of life lost to cardio-vascular disease.</li> </ul>

Independence priorities	What outcomes are we seeking? (Ambitious for Croydon outcomes)	What are we going to do? Our Promises	How will we know we have succeeded? Ambitious for Croydon performance indicators
<p><b>Priority Three –</b> Provide people with the best opportunity to maximise their life chances and have a good quality of life through the provision of high quality universal services, including an excellent learning offer.</p>	<p>To help families be healthy and resilient and able to maximize their life chances and independence. To help families and individuals to be more financially resilient and live affordable lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will deliver a high quality adult learning offer which will support people to gain employment, change or progress in their careers and achieve their personal aspirations.</li> <li>• We will continue to improve the proportion of schools which are judged good or better by OFSTED and support and challenge schools to improve the standards being achieved.</li> <li>• We will develop a high quality and diverse cultural offer including delivering a cultural festival which reflects our cultural ambitions for Croydon.</li> <li>• We will involve local people in the planning and decision making about what library services best meet their needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of working age population (16-64) who claim job seekers allowance.</li> <li>• % of households receiving welfare benefits.</li> <li>• Number of households engaged with welfare teams who get debt/ budgetary advice.</li> <li>• Rate of child poverty (as defined by DWP).</li> <li>• Number of families supported through the discretionary supported scheme</li> <li>• % of council staff paid London Living Wage.</li> <li>• Average weekly rent as a percentage of gross average weekly earnings (approximate estimate).</li> </ul> <p><b>(The below Performance Indicators are part of the GROWTH Strategy)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of children at the end of reception year judged to be at a good level of development.</li> <li>• % of state funded schools judged good or outstanding by Ofsted (primary, secondary, special and PRU schools).</li> <li>• % of parents offered one of their top 3 school choices - Primary school.</li> <li>• % of parents offered one of their top 3 school choices - Secondary school.</li> <li>• Educational attainment by age 19 (level 2 and 3).</li> <li>• % of KS2 pupils achieving reading, writing and maths at Level 4+.</li> <li>• % of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and maths.</li> <li>• Number of cultural events and programmes supported and delivered by the Council across the borough representing our community.</li> </ul>

## SUMMARY AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS CONTINUED

Independence priorities	What outcomes are we seeking? (Ambitious for Croydon outcomes)	What are we going to do? Our Promises	How will we know we have succeeded? Ambitious for Croydon performance indicators
<p><b>Priority Four –</b> Empower people to resolve issues early through the provision of joined up assessment and support.</p>	<p>To help families and individuals to be more financially resilient and live affordable lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will provide a more joined up approach to helping families become financially stable, personally resilient, access training and employment and reduce levels of homelessness and those living in temporary accommodation.</li> <li>• We will continue to build on the success of the Family Resilience Service by extending the range of families who receive an integrated whole family approach.</li> <li>• We will support families by giving their children a better start in life through an integrated Best Start programme for children aged 0 – 5.</li> <li>• We will work with partners to provide more integrated health, care and support in local communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of Job seekers allowance claimants (as a proportion of the resident population aged 16-64 - working age population).</li> <li>• The % of households receiving welfare benefits.</li> <li>• Number of households engaged with welfare teams who are being provided with debt / budgetary advice.</li> <li>• Number of families supported through the discretionary scheme.</li> <li>• Rate of child poverty (as defined by DWP).</li> <li>• Average weekly rent as a % of average earnings (estimate).</li> <li>• % of council staff paid London Living Wage.</li> <li>• The number of families for whom a Troubled Families Outcome payment is achieved.</li> <li>• Percentage of eligible three and four year olds accessing funded early education.</li> <li>• Percentage of eligible two year olds accessing funded early education.</li> <li>• Vaccination rate (MMR2) for children at 5 years old.</li> </ul>

Independence priorities	What outcomes are we seeking? (Ambitious for Croydon outcomes)	What are we going to do? Our Promises	How will we know we have succeeded? Ambitious for Croydon performance indicators
<p><b>Priority Five –</b> Enable children and adults to maximise their independence and ensure they are safe from harm through the provision of high quality specialist services.</p>	<p>To protect children and vulnerable adults from harm and exploitation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work with our partners to deliver high quality joined up health and social care services for those over 65.</li> <li>• We will work with partners to promote good mental health and deliver a more preventative and early intervention focused approach.</li> <li>• We will work with our partners to ensure children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm, abuse and exploitation through effective and efficient safeguarding processes and procedures.</li> <li>• We will establish a multi-disciplinary service for people aged 0-65 with disabilities, incorporating children’s social care, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and adult’s services.</li> <li>• We will increase the number of aids and adaptations in homes to enable more people to remain living in their own homes.</li> <li>• We will increase the number of people using direct payment to support their care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of older people discharged from hospital to their own home achieving independence.</li> <li>• For new clients the % of adult social care assessments from first contact to completion is carried out within 35 days.</li> <li>• % of concluded adult safeguarding investigations where action resulted in risk reduction or removal.</li> <li>• % of children in need single assessments carried out within 45 days.</li> <li>• Average time between a child entering care and moving in with adoptive family.</li> <li>• Number of looked after and child protection cases per 10,000 children.</li> <li>• % of audits of children social care case file audits where the case is rated good or better.</li> <li>• % of domestic violence sanction detections.</li> <li>• % of people who complete psychological therapies who are moving to recovery.</li> <li>• For new clients the % of adult social care assessments from first contact to completion is carried out within 35 days.</li> </ul>

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