

Adult Social Care Strategy 2025-29

Consultation Activity and Response

Introduction

1. This paper provides a concise overview of the consultation activities undertaken regarding the new draft Adult Social Care Strategy.
2. An online public consultation survey was conducted between September 2024 and March 2025. Promotion included internal communications to all staff, targeted outreach to over 50 key stakeholders (including commissioned providers, NHS partners, and City Advice).
3. In collaboration with Healthwatch City of London, a 'Patient Panel' session was held. This event was open to all residents and attracted eight attendees. The session involved a presentation of the draft strategy, followed by a discussion focused on adult social care within the City of London and specific feedback on the proposed strategy.

Feedback from consultation survey

4. There were only two responses to the online survey. The following summarises the feedback received from the online consultation survey. Both respondents:
 - agreed with our vision statement included in the consultation version
 - believed that there was nothing missing from our vision statement
 - stated that 'providing a wide range of high-quality, accessible care options' was the most important priority in the strategy, and 100% of respondents stated that 'help people meet their own needs and aspirations in a safe and supportive way' was their least important priority.
 - said that there was nothing missing from the priorities
5. To boost responses, all our social care clients (or their nominated carers where appropriate) were informed via letter about the strategy and consultation and how to participate, with offers of support from their social worker or via telephone to support participation.
6. The strategy and consultation were disseminated at an Adult Social Care partners event where all attendees received a paper copy of the draft strategy. This led to some additional feedback being portrayed verbally or written on to copies of the strategy from partners for us to consider.
7. Feedback during the consultation was also received from the Adult Social Care Management Team, the Adult Social Care Assurance Board and from the City & Hackney Place Based Partnership.

Feedback from the Patient Panel event

8. To gather feedback on the strategy from residents with experience of our adult social care services, we held a Patient Panel in collaboration with Healthwatch City of London on the 28th of November 2024, to present the Adult Social Care Strategy to attendees and take part in a discussion about Adult Social Care and their thoughts on the strategy.
9. A total of 8 resident attendees attended the event, and key feedback themes emerged from the Patient Panel discussion.
 - Regarding Service Delivery and Resources, comments included concerns about long-term financial sustainability despite current resourcing levels, the need for greater clarity on how outsourced services are monitored, ensuring adequate support mechanisms for individuals with no recourse to public funds, the requirement to include advocacy within the strategy, evaluating the current shopping service provision, and addressing digital inclusion training needs.
 - Under Prevention and Support, attendees strongly advocated for prevention to be a core strategic element, building upon existing successful services like City Connections. There was also a request to reinstate the voluntary befriending service active during the pandemic period.
 - Integration and Partnership discussions highlighted the importance of aligning the Adult Social Care Strategy with other key City Corporation initiatives, including the Barbican transformation programme, the transport strategy (particularly concerning blue badge spaces), and the policing strategy (referencing Operation Pegasus). The inclusion of grants and funding streams within the strategy, alongside clarification on hospital discharge pathways and care navigator service accessibility, were also raised.
 - Finally, Environmental and Access Concerns were noted, emphasising consideration for the environmental realm and physical spaces within the City of London. Addressing barriers to service access, which can include residents' fear of engaging with statutory services, was deemed important, whilst acknowledging the value of current commissioning arrangements that include outreach and wellbeing support.

Feedback from Adult Social Care staff

10. Internal staff engagement was facilitated through dedicated discussions during monthly team meetings. Staff were invited to provide feedback on the draft strategy, specifically concerning its overall vision and priorities.

11. Staff feedback on the adult social care strategy highlighted key areas of consideration. There were concerns regarding the frequent use of the word 'care' and the tone of the vision statement, with suggestions for alternative language.
12. Whilst safety is a priority, our staff emphasised client empowerment and independence as being a strong theme. Effective information sharing and strategic alignment with other Corporation strategies were noted, alongside a recommendation to strengthen diversity and inclusion throughout the document.

How we have responded to consultation feedback

13. We have used the consultation feedback received to further refine the draft Adult Social Care Strategy. As a result of feedback, the following changes have been made:
 - A refined vision statement, setting the overall ambition for the service
 - Amendments to the wording of the four 'commitments' to reflect comments made regarding the use of the word 'care'
 - A new, distinct introduction section to the strategy. This section defines the purpose of adult social care services and clearly identified an overarching ambition for the strategy.
 - A more clearly structured 'strategic context' section, explicitly divided into National, Regional, and Local sub-sections
 - Greater detail on national policy, mentioning the Better Care Fund and acknowledging the ongoing challenges and reviews concerning future policy and funding.
 - Stronger links to other key City Corporation strategies, including the Carers Strategy, Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy.
 - Improved statistical information about our resident population, such as age breakdowns, household composition, service user ethnicity, life expectancy figures and other key data points to strengthen the overall picture of the City of London from a social care perspective.
 - Improved statistical information relating to service specific information, relating to reviews and assessments, safeguarding concerns and carer support.