

Cabinet

Tuesday 9 February 2016
4.00 pm
Ground Floor Meeting Room GO2A, 160 Tooley Street, London
SE1 2QH

Appendices

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Date: 1 February 2016

Children in care and care leavers strategy 2016-2019

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Foreword



In Southwark we want to do our absolute best for all our children and young people. This goes beyond providing them with a safe home and financial support, it means being honest, open and trustworthy and providing them with love and guidance. It means making the most of the knowledge and resources we have to help them to be the best they can be and be prepared for the everyday challenges of life. It means keeping our door open, picking them up when they are down and treating them with the respect they deserve, as they find their way in the world. It means championing them and celebrating them and not defining them by the care system that they are part of, through no fault of their own, but as the brilliant and unique children and young people they are.

The Corporate Parenting Committee regularly meets with Speakerbox, our Children in Care Council. They told us that communication with social workers, the quality of placements, family contact (particularly siblings) and respecting their right to privacy are some of the things that matter most to them. These key areas, and other feedback from our children and young people, have shaped our vision and strategy.

Through the delivery of this strategy we will keep our children and young people at the heart of what we do, regardless of the challenges we face in local government, and give them the love and support they need to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Councillor Victoria Mills, Cabinet Member for Children and Schools and Chair of Southwark Council's Corporate Parenting Committee

Our vision

“We want all our children and young people to be safe, happy and healthy and to enjoy life. We will give them the care and support they need to be resilient and well prepared for adulthood and independence.

We will provide them with high quality care, support and guidance to ensure they get the opportunities they deserve.”

Our values and principles

The following values underpin the planning, commissioning and delivery of services to support children and young people.

- Be the champions our young people deserve
- Deliver high quality care, support and accommodation services
- Do our best to enable families to stay together
- Keep children and young people safe at all times
- Keep children and young people’s needs and wishes central to our work
- Keep all children and young people in care and care leavers well informed about their rights and where to go for help
- Empower children and young people to take control of their own lives and realise their full potential
- Deliver proactive support that secures the best long term outcomes for all children and young people
- Ensure the views of children, young people and their families inform service improvement
- Deliver, through action, our commitment to the **Care Leavers Charter**:
 - To respect and honour your identity
 - To believe in you
 - To listen to you
 - To inform you
 - To support you
 - To find you a home
 - To be your lifelong champion

Outcomes for children in care and care leavers

The national picture

National statistics show that 62 per cent per cent of children are in care as a result of abuse or neglect, children in care are four times more likely than their peers to have a mental health difficulty and they are less likely than their peers to do well at school. Furthermore, two-thirds have a special educational need or disability (SEND) and of those a significant proportion will have a statement or a learning difficulties assessment.¹

Children in care are nearly twice as likely to be cautioned for, or convicted of, an offence as their peers and although estimates vary, it is thought that nearly a third of children in custody have been looked after.²

National Audit Office research shows that young people who have had a background in care are more likely than their peers to have poor social outcomes in later life. The most recent estimates are that:

- In 2010, 25 per cent those who were homeless had been in care at some point in their lives
- In 2008, 49 per cent of young men aged under 21 who had come into contact with the criminal justice system had a care experience
- In 2014, 22 per cent of female care leavers become teenage parents; and
- In 2012, it was reported that those in care and care leavers were between four and five times more likely to self-harm in adulthood.

In 2014 41 per cent of 19 year old care leavers were not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to 15 per cent of the general population.

Despite these challenges many children in care and care leavers achieve positive outcomes and succeed into adulthood. The nature of the range of challenges they can face highlights the need for effective joint working across health, education, employment, housing, criminal justice and social care. It is our role, as effective corporate parents, to ensure that all children and young people in our care are not disadvantaged by their circumstances. It is our aim to ensure that the support we provide enables all children and young people in our care and care leavers to achieve the best possible outcomes at all times.

The Southwark picture

Southwark is a diverse borough with a resident population of 293 500. We are the 21st most deprived borough in England with 30 per cent of children living in income deprived households³. We are one of the largest social landlords in the country.

At the end of March 2015 there were around 500 children and young people in our care. This figure has been reducing steadily since March 2012, through more effective work with young people and their families to keep them safely at home.

¹ [National Audit Office, July 2015, Care leavers transition to adulthood](#)

² [DfE, March 2015, Promoting the health and well-being of looked after children](#)

³ [DCLG, September 2015, English indices of deprivation](#)

- Half of the children and young people who entered care between April 2014 and March 2015 did so as a result of abuse or neglect. 17 per cent entered because of family dysfunction and 11 per cent entered as a result of absent parenting
- A high number of children and young people in care in Southwark are placed in foster care; the majority of those are in foster placements managed directly by the council
- There has been an increase in the proportion of children in care who were subject to Full Care Orders. The proportion has increased from 48 per cent at the end of March 2014 to 51 per cent at the end of March 2015
- There has been an increase in the proportion of children and young people accommodated under Section 204 - from 27 per cent at the end of March 2014 to 34 per cent at the end of March 2015
- The highest percentage of children entering care across each of the past five years has been within the 10-15 age group, with the lowest percentage being within the 5-9 age group (with the exception of 2010/2011)
- 10-17 year olds accounted for 50 per cent of those entering care as at the end of March 2015, with the percentage of children within this age group accounting for at least 45 per cent of new care entrants across each of the preceding 4 years
- At the end of March 2015, 23 per cent of children entering care were aged 16-17, one per cent lower than the previous year, which saw the highest percentage for the past 5 years
- At the end of March 2015 44 per cent of those in care were black or black British, 34 per cent were white and 15 per cent were of mixed ethnicity
- At the end of March 2015 around 3/4 of those in care lived outside the borough boundary. Around a fifth were placed more than 20 miles from their home
- The proportion of children and young people who had 3 or more placement moves was 18 per cent at the end of March 2014, this has decreased to 12 per cent at the end of March 2015
- The proportion of young people living in the same placement for 2.5 years, or placed for adoption, was 61 per cent at the end of March 2014, this has increased to 65 per cent at the end of March 2015
- At the end of March 2015 39 per cent of young people left care because they turned 18, 32 per cent left because they returned home to live with parents or relatives as part of the care planning process and 14 per cent left because they were adopted

⁴ This is the part of the law (Section 20 of the Children act 1989) that gives Children's Services the power to look after a child when there is no-one with parental responsibility for the child or when the person caring for the child is prevented from caring for them, for whatever reason. This is also called voluntary Accommodation. <http://www.frg.org.uk/need-help-or-advice/an-a-z-of-terms>

- 13 per cent of children in care achieved 5 A*-C grades or equivalent at GCSE at the end of March 2014. Unverified figures for March 2015 show that 15.4% of children in care achieved their GCSEs.
- At the end of March 2015 24 per cent of all school age children in care had a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- At the end of March 2015 37% of children in care aged over 4 and under 17 recorded concerns with their emotional and behavioural health
- At the end of March 2014 43 per cent of our care leavers were in education, employment or training
- At the end of March 2014 78 per cent of care leavers were in suitable accommodation
- At the end of March 2014 approximately 5 per cent of care leavers were in higher education
- At the end of March 2015 there were 30 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in care

The key challenges locally are:

- High number of children and young people in care, and the increasing number of older children coming into care
- A high rate of children in care for under 3 months
- Continuing to improve the stability of placements
- Ability to deliver flexible services that respond to the range of needs of children and young people
- Providing a range of locally based, high quality accommodation and support provision – foster placements, adoptive parents
- Engaging with care leavers
- Increasing the number of care leavers in education, employment and training
- Identifying and meeting demand for mental health/emotional well-being support
- Mitigating the impact and implications of housing benefit reforms for young people
- Increased demand for services from those with No Recourse to Public Funds
- Narrowing the gap in the outcomes achieved for those in care and care leavers and other children
- Supporting children and young people to be resilient

What do our children and young people say is important to them?

Research conducted by the Children's Rights Team and Speakerbox, our Children in Care Council, provide clear messages about the issues that affect our children and young people and how they can feel empowered to take control of their lives.

| How they want to feel | The support they need | What empowers them |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Cared for • 'Normal' • Respected | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being near their family/siblings • Being listened to and understood • Regular contact with their social workers • Independent living skills (including budgeting) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing their rights • Being ready and able to live independently • Being actively involved in Care and Pathway Planning • Understanding changes and the reasons for placements moves in advance • Being supported through changes |

The quotes that are included in this strategy are from members of Speakerbox and from consultations gathered by our Children's Rights Team.

Strategic aims

1. Safely reduce the number of children in care

We are working with an overarching drive to reduce the need to bring children and young people into care because they remain safe, in loving family homes. This means providing the right support to families before issues escalate and supporting children and young people to return to their families if a temporary move into care is needed, working across the local authority and its partners to provide effective housing, education, health, criminal justice and employment support at all times.

We have set out how we will deliver effective early help and preventative services to families in our Families Matter Strategy. Both the Children in care and care leavers Strategy and the Families Matter Strategy recognise that many families in Southwark have complex needs, which vary over time. They need high quality services that respond to underlying and changing needs through integrated working, supporting families to build their resilience and achieve positive outcomes together, reducing the need for intervention by social care through the delivery of responsive community based provision.

Where it is not possible for children and young people to stay with their birth families we will continue to ensure as many children as possible achieve permanence outside the care system through adoption and special guardianship.

2. Improve the health and wellbeing of children in care and care leavers

The health risks and problems children in care and care leavers have are often exacerbated due to their experiences of poverty, abuse and neglect. Children in care show significantly higher rates of mental health disorders than others. They can have multiple traumatic experiences that lead to emotional and mental health needs. They are more likely to have physical health problems than their peers. Prior to coming into care there is often no one who has an overview of their health needs or history. Delays in identification and positive action on physical, development and mental health needs, as well as meeting their emotional needs relating to well-being will affect all aspects of their lives, including their chances of reaching their potential and leading happy and healthy lives as resilient adults.

We want the best for our children and young people and we aim to provide services that promote self-esteem, positive learning experiences and nurturing relationships, and help children and young people to better cope with adversity. We aim to improve the resilience of our children and young people and prepare them for a successful adult life where they can live independently.

We will work with our key partners to ensure physical, mental and emotional health needs are assessed and met so that children in care, regardless of where they are placed; receive the high quality health care support they are entitled to. We will continue to champion the emotional and mental health needs of children in care and care leavers by supporting dedicated services like Carelink.

We will work in partnership with the Children Looked After (CLA) Health Team and Designated health professional to ensure that the strategy and individual focus on health is maintained throughout the care journey of children and young people.

We will work in partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver the Joint Strategic Framework for Children and Young People ensuring that mental and physical health needs are reflected in health commissioning priorities and that strategic planning reflects the high need for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) amongst the care population and those leaving care.

We will continue to make the best use of available intelligence, such as our joint strategic needs assessments and feedback from consultations with children and young people, foster carers and adoptive parents to design and commission services that are accessible and better meet the health needs of children and young people.

3. Improve the quality of care and effectiveness of our workforce, leadership, management and governance

We need to have the mechanisms in place to effectively monitor performance, identify and address gaps in support and use intelligence effectively to inform commissioning, service improvement, and work to evaluate the impact of what we do to improve the lives of children and young people.

As well as meeting our statutory duties we aim to develop standards which make it clear what children and young people should expect from the services they are provided.

We will continue to invest in the development of our workforce through programmes like Social Work Matters, our child centred, systemic practice approach to social work, which focus on providing a team around the child, and promote continued oversight and support from practitioners and managers. We will enhance interagency working across the Care Service, health teams, Carelink and the Virtual School to ensure good quality and informed care and support packages are provided to children and young people. We will improve clinical governance, in line with care and education governance, to ensure that key agencies have shared responsibility for meeting the needs of our children and young people. We will invest in training and support for our workforce and carers so they can create a secure base for children and young people, build their resilience and provide the right support at the right time.

Strategic priorities

The following presents our strategic priorities in responding to the above challenges, within the context of our overarching aims.

1. Children and young people have a say and their voice is heard

2. Develop our support and interventions with families to keep children and young people safe, enabling them to remain with or return to their families

3. Children and young people achieve timely, permanent care arrangements in safe, secure and loving homes

4. More children and young people feel safe and secure in their placements and live closer to home, in provision that meets their needs

5. Increase the focus on physical and mental health and social and emotional wellbeing through the development and delivery of our services

6. Foster carers, adoptive parents and special guardians feel well supported to deliver the best care

7. More children and young people make good educational progress and achieve the best possible outcomes at Key Stage 2 and 4

8. Continue to safeguard children and young people who are at risk of CSE, missing, criminal activity and radicalisation

9. Young people leave care well prepared for independent living

10. More care leavers are in education, employment and/or training

1. Children and young people have a say and their voice is heard

***Yeah I have got a lot out of this process, I feel like I am saying what it would be like for a young person to live somewhere and then you guys think about it. It's nice, I feel like I am helping make sure kids in care live in safer and more caring places.
(Young Inspector)***

The trip (to New York) taught me that we are the future, and we can be leaders for our community. We can make a difference; we just have to believe it.

Like any child or young person, those in care need to be able to engage in activities that enable them to make a positive contribution to society, get involved in decision making processes, learn new skills, meet new people and develop their sense of value and belonging.

We want all Care and Pathway Plans to be child centred and outcome focused and to reflect children and young people's needs and wishes. This means making sure young people have access to opportunities to learn and have fun and to get their point of view across. Our Children in Care Council, Speakerbox, provides creative ways for children and young people to get involved in issues that affect them and help them to understand, and stand up for, their rights and entitlements.

As well as providing engagement and support services through our Children's Rights Team, we deliver child- centred social work practice and aim to ensure the voice of the child is present in Care and Pathway Planning.

We know we still have improvements to make to ensure children and young people are actively involved and can influence decision making. We will continue to explore different ways for us to involve children and young people in planning and designing services and make better use of existing research and consultation results.

Programmes like the Young Inspectors, which was set up so young people could assess the quality of semi-independent accommodation, provide a strong platform for this. The feedback young people provided had a direct influence on commissioning decisions and promoted the review of 16+ accommodation. This and, further feedback from children in care and care leavers has led to accommodation being identified as a key priority in our New Belongings programme action plan.

New Belongings is a national programme aimed at improving outcomes for care leavers and is supported by The Care Leavers Foundation. We are part of the South London New Belongings programme with Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham councils. To help shape our action plan and be our critical friends we have established a New Belongings Care Leavers Forum led by young people to challenge us on the deliver of our plan. Our forum representatives tell us the most important thing for them is to see the improvements to the service.

In order to achieve this we will:

- Ensure children and young people are engaged with their Care and Pathway Plans and are informed about any changes to their plans
- Keep in regular contact with children and young people, and visit them in their placements. We will make sure young people have the opportunity to visit placements before they are move in
- Reintroduce Group Work to provide reflective learning and a safe space for discussions
- We will continue to involve children and young people in our strategy and planning; building on successful programmes like the Young Inspectors
- We will continue to ensure children and young people know their rights and entitlements and know how to access the council complaints team and advocacy services if they feel unsafe or unhappy
- Conduct regular surveys and seek feedback from children in care and care leavers via Speakerbox and the New Belongings Care Leavers Forum
- Ensure regular contact between the Children in Care Council (Speakerbox) and the Corporate Parenting Committee

Good practice: Speakerbox

We are proud of our Children in Care Council (Speakerbox), which provides a range of opportunities for children in care and care leavers to get involved in projects and activities. A group recently visited New York for example, and met with their peers in Harlem. Speakerbox developed the Young Inspectors programme where young people are trained to become inspectors of their placements. Their findings help inform commissioning decisions and the future standards for what young people expect from their accommodation.

2. Develop our support and interventions with families to keep children and young people safe, enabling them to remain with or return to their families

In recent years we have seen an increase in the number of older children and young people coming into care and those entering care with parental agreement (under section 20 of the Children Act 1989). Most teenage entries to care are on an unplanned basis when a crisis occurs and young people typically return home to unchanged circumstances. This creates a pattern where the teenager moves erratically in and out of the family home without the opportunity for effective planning.

Adolescents often enter care in a crisis; with their family, with the police or with their mental and emotional health. Finding them a safe place tends to drive the care system's immediate response but this initial safe containment can often drift into a longer term approach. When we consider the impact on young people's lives the current care system needs to serve them better.⁵

Research shows that the primary reasons for 10-15 year olds being in care are family problems or the child's behaviour, rather than the need to protect the child from significant harm or abuse and recommends early and therapeutic interventions to limit the use of the care system as a respite service, providing support to help families stay together.

We have secured DfE Innovation Fund to create more family focused support. This funding has helped us provide our Resources Panel, which reshapes structures to facilitate the open and expert discussion required to improve outcomes for families and our Keeping Families Together Practice Group, providing targeted therapeutic intervention to support those on the edge of care.

The Panel focuses on children aged 11-18 whose movement into care has a particularly negative impact on their development, and who, with the right interventions and support services, would be entitled to remain with their families.

We will:

- Continue to provide support to children and their families via the Keeping Families Together Practice Group
- Focus on providing the right support, at the right time, to prevent unnecessary moves into care
- Provide suitable temporary accommodation for young people when a crisis at home occurs
- Provide dedicated services to late entrants to care, including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)
- Act quickly to ensure that those who can return home do so safely and promptly

⁵ [DfE, April 2014, Rethinking support for adolescents in or on the edge of care](#)

Good practice: Keeping Families Together

Southwark secured £317,000 from the DfE Innovation Fund to pump prime its approach to improving outcomes for children and young people on the edge of care.

This funding has helped to:

- Develop a **Keeping Families Together Practice Group** which responds immediately to families whose young people are at risk of being accommodated.
- Shape services to provide interventions to families at an earlier stage
- Reduce bureaucracy for front line workers to free them up to concentrate on direct work with children and families.

The Children's Social Care department has developed a weekly **Resources Panel** which is scrutinising requests for care and offering alternative solutions including support packages where possible.

Specialist Functional Family Therapy (SFFT)

The SFFT team works with the whole family to support and challenge the family and to prevent family breakdown. Practitioners from a range of disciplines are co-located which provides flexibility and swift access to other specialist and mainstream services within the Families Matter programme. SFFT includes a range of outreach workers, a Mental Health and Substance Misuse nurse, a Primary Care nurse, parenting workers and co-located voluntary sector workers. The approach builds on the strengths of the family to achieve positive outcomes and sustained changes. The Keeping Families Together team is co-located with SFFT to provide intensive support if this is deemed necessary.

Both teams have access to a **Family Functional Therapy (FFT)** unit which offers family therapy in the home. FFT is an evidence based family therapy approach to working with young people and their families where the adolescent in the family presents with challenging behaviours. It shifts the focus away from negative and blaming interactions on individuals, to a helpful and supportive way of building and strengthening relationships in families.

This approach ensures that families receiving support are held within one service and thus reduces bureaucracy and duplication of activity. A researcher has been commissioned using the Innovation Fund to assess the efficacy of this approach to preventing family breakdown.

3. Children and young people secure timely, permanent care arrangements in loving homes



Children and young people may come into care for a temporary period or for the longer term and some will be permanently removed from their homes. Whether a child or young person is adopted, in friends and family care, cared for through a special guardianship order, in long-term foster care or returning to their family, our aim is always to provide high quality and stable care with effective and timely permanence planning that enables children and young people to develop a sense of identity and belonging.

Research⁶ shows that children and young people who experience stable placements that provide good quality care are more likely to succeed educationally, be in work, settle in and manage their accommodation after leaving care. They are also more likely to feel better about themselves and achieve social integration in adulthood than those who have experienced further movement and disruption during their time in care.

Children in care have often suffered abuse and neglect and can find it difficult to develop attachments and build trust with adults. It is important that our carers are able to provide sensitive and responsive parenting to help improve mental health and emotional wellbeing, being reflective about children and young people rather than reactive to their behaviour.

We know that feeling safe and secure in placements is about the suitability of the physical placement, the relationships with the carers, the support available and the emotional wellbeing of the child or young person in the placement.

Through effective assessment and placement planning we aim to ensure the best possible match to the needs of the child or young person. We deliver therapeutic care through the Secure Base Model across our Fostering and Adoption Services. Our CAMHS Carelink service provides dedicated mental health support for children in care, foster and adoptive parents. All foster parents who have children in treatment with Carelink are able to access support via Carelink. These services have contributed to better placement stability, though we know we still have work to do to improve the safety, and felt security, of the accommodation we provide, particularly to older young people and care leavers.

⁶ Morris (2005) Children on the edge of care, JRF

Routes to permanence include⁷:

- Permanent return to birth parents;
- Shared care arrangements, including regular short-break care;
- Permanence within the looked after system, whether in residential placement, unrelated foster care or family and friends care; and
- Legal permanence, through adoption, special guardianship orders and residence orders.

Our Adoption Service extensively uses all means possible to find adopters for children. The Adoption Taskforce, chaired by the Director of Children's Social Care, meets monthly and reviews all children waiting for adoption where there may be concerns about possible delay.

Creative support packages that have been designed around the needs of the child in the adoptive family have enabled children with a higher level of needs to be adopted. Just over a quarter of adoptions in 2014/15 were transracial showing a strong commitment to matching children based on a range of their needs, embracing the change in law in this area.

We know from feedback from children and young people that being able to stay with, and have close contact with, their siblings is very important to them. We will continue to do our best to keep siblings together, recruiting and supporting adopters who are able to provide care for sibling groups, as well as those with complex needs.

We will:

- Continue to improve the timeliness of adoption and adoption approvals through oversight of the Adoption Taskforce
- Continue to implement our Adoption Recruitment Strategy with a focus on harder to place children
- Further develop our system tracking and Permanence Consultations, as well as offer of early permanence options through Southwark's Fostering for Adoption scheme
- Expand our Family Group Conference activity to increase the investment in enabling families to identify what they need to give the best care for children and young people
- Strengthen the approach of our Fostering Service to ensure that more support is given to friends and family foster carers by developing the support for temporarily approved carers
- Continue to develop our support for Special Guardians, which will open up more learning and support opportunities

⁷ <https://www.fostering.net/sites/www.fostering.net/files/resources/england/understanding-permanence-for-lac-janet-boddy.pdf>

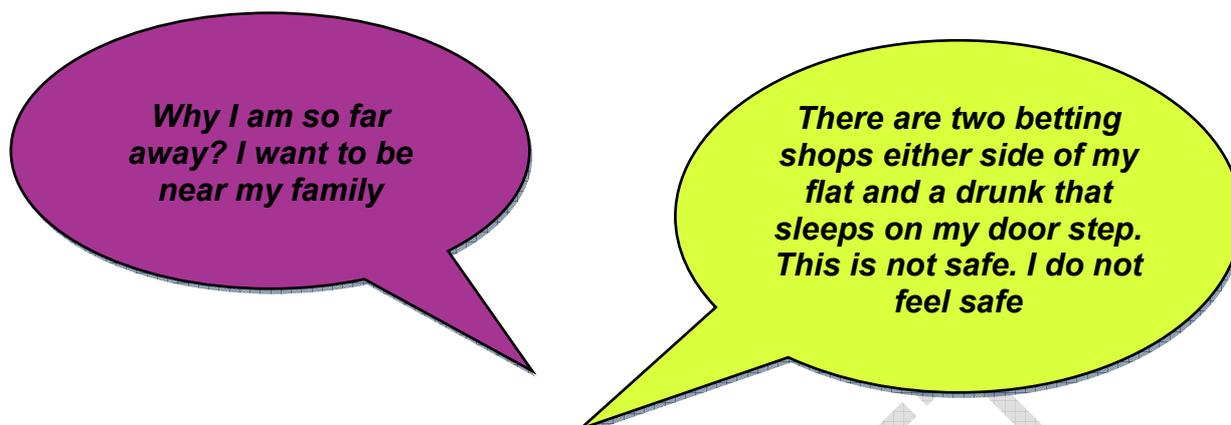
- Embed the regulations and guidance around long term foster care and develop a clearer scheme for children who achieve permanence through that route
- Continue to support the CAMHS Carelink service for children in care

Good practice: Early Permanence

Southwark has successfully implemented a Fostering for Adoption scheme since October 2014. In December 2015 8 adopters/foster carers had been approved and 5 children had been placed in this way. This represents a unique life chance for those children to be with their forever families at the earliest opportunity. This approach was rarely undertaken before and the scheme has been hugely valued by carers and social care staff who share the understanding of the difference this can make for children.

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4. More children and young people feel safe and secure in their placements and live closer to home, in provision that meets their needs



We have a statutory duty to ensure that there is sufficient accommodation to meet the needs of children in care in our community. The statutory guidance⁸ states that children should live in the local authority area with access to local services and close to their friends and family, when it is safe to do so. Having 'the right placement in the right place, at the right time' is crucial in improving placement stability, which leads to better outcomes for children in care.

We know that one of the most common reasons for children and young people to abscond from their placement is their desire to stay closer to their family. Most children in care who go missing from their placement are often those placed in other boroughs returning to their family in Southwark. This can affect the relationship with the carer, raise concerns about the child or young person's whereabouts and safety and have a negative affect on placement stability.

Whether children and young people feel safe and secure in their placement also impacts on placement stability and their emotional wellbeing.

Research conducted by our Young Inspectors in 2014 found a number of reasons young people felt unsafe in their (semi-independent) accommodation:

- Anti-social behaviour in the area of the property
- Unsecure access doors/fear of break in
- Other tenants in the property
- Lack of security allowing access to other people not living in the property
- Health concerns
- Poor lighting
- Unclean property

The results of this research promoted a strategic review of all accommodation offered to young people aged 16 and over in the borough and lead to the development of a 16+ commissioning strategy which will improve the accommodation pathway, enable independent living and provide more in-borough provision.

⁸ [DfE, March 2010, Securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children](#)

Those placed further away are less able to benefit from local services in place in Southwark, particularly health and education services, and receive regular contact from their social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) and support networks. Contracting teams also find it more challenging monitoring placement providers that are a considerable distance from Southwark. There are no residential homes in Southwark so all those who require these services are placed out of borough, some at a considerable distance from home.

We know that over 90 per cent of care leavers want to return to the borough so care placements in and closer to the borough can ease the transition from care.

We know that some children and young people will need to live away from the borough to help keep them safe from harm or from dangerous influences closer to home, such as gang involvement, and that others will need specialist care that is not available locally. Our aim is to make sure we have the right supply of placements to meet the needs of children and young people and that they are well supported by health, care and education services and their local community and networks regardless of where they are placed.

We will:

- Deliver our Placement and Sufficiency Strategy and 16+ Commissioning Strategy to ensure children and young people in and leaving care have accommodation that meets their needs and that there is a broad choice of placement options available locally
- Continue to improve placement stability through developing a Placements Service with focused expertise on placement, matching and support
- Ensure those placed out of borough have access to the same quality health and education services and that outcomes in these areas are closely monitored
- Enhance support for those transitioning from placements and care
- Continue to enable young people leaving care to visit properties before they move in
- Ensure Independent Reviewing Officers retain oversight of Care Plans and Pathway Plans up to 18 years old and follow up on delays
- Improve contracting arrangements with accommodation providers and better hold providers to account on the delivery of Pathway Plan outcomes and keeping young people safe
- Provide dedicated accommodation for young people who need to be placed out of borough via the Youth Offending Service

Good practice: 16+ Commissioning Group

The 16+ Commissioning Group, whose members include representatives from the Care Service, Commissioning, Housing, Regeneration, Youth Offending Service, was established to develop proposals for commissioning a range of high quality, value for money, Southwark-based accommodation and support services, in place of existing provision, for young people who are aged 16+ and require a statutory service.

New accommodation and support services will include a clear pathway, focusing on enabling young people to live independently.

The Commissioning Group includes two sub-groups for:

- Young People who currently use or who have used services
- Providers

The aim of these sub-groups is to undertake service user and market engagement initiatives to inform commissioning proposals.

Commissioning plans will be presented in March 2016.

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5. Increase the focus on physical and mental health and social and emotional wellbeing through the development and delivery of our services



Mental health

We know that the social adversity and trauma children experience that result in them moving into care poses critical developmental risks for their mental health and wellbeing. 45 per cent of children in care are estimated to have a diagnosable mental health condition; around 248 children in care in Southwark need to access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Southwark has a well developed and dedicated CAMHS team for children in care called Carelink. Carelink is jointly funded Southwark CAMHS and Southwark Council and provides mental health support services to children and young people in care and adoption from 0-18 years.

Carelink assess children to identify mental health intervention needs. If a mental health need is identified, Carelink, as an assessment and treatment team, can offer this. Carelink provide ongoing reviews of the child/young person in care regardless of whether treatment was offered after the initial assessment, to ensure any changes in need are supported. Carelink works hard to ensure that children are not stigmatised and find the best form of treatment for each child/young person and their foster parent.

Carelink provide services to children in care placed both in and out of borough (approximately 50 per cent of Carelink open cases are out of borough). Carelink work to ensure that those who are placed in distance placements have access to local CAMHS services and provide additional support to carers where their child/young person is receiving treatment from the service.

Although programmes of mental health support are available for care leavers, predominately through the voluntary and community sector, there is not a dedicated service in place to support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of young people who have been in our care post 18, although Carelink do continue to work with young people aged 18 and support transitions from care. Children leaving care are also at high risk of mental health issues and services need to be planned to ensure continuity of support as they move to independence.

Speakerbox has identified emotional wellbeing as one of their key priorities and it has been identified as such in our New Belongings Action plan. This has led to a

partnership with Young Minds who have delivered workshops for young people, focusing on helping them to build their resilience.

Physical health

The Children Looked After Health Team provides health support to children in care up to the age of 18, conducting annual health assessments and reviews to ensure they are in their best health and have access to the right health provision.

We have a specialist Children with Disabilities Team within social care who work with families where there is a disabled child with a severe and permanent disability or a child with a lifelong condition. Those with disabilities who are moving from Children's to Adults Social Care support are supported by the Transitions Team in Adult Social Care.

The general health issues of children in care range from the important, but relatively minor, treatments or catch up immunisations, to the identification of life threatening diseases or inherited disorders. Children and young people in care share many of the same health risks and problems of their peers, but often to a greater degree. For children with long term medical issues the Health Team often has a co-ordinating role, making sure that a child has relevant specialist follow up, and that health information is appropriately shared, passed on, and understood.

For all children in care, but most acutely for babies, there are the potential consequences of drug and alcohol abuse in pregnancy, blood borne infections, and prematurity. Developmental delays and disorders are frequent; often resulting from past abuse and neglect and difficulties with attachment, and present throughout childhood. Children in care often have an increased genetic risk of developing learning difficulties and severe mental illness such as schizophrenia, because of their family histories.

Sexual health is an important issue for children in care, with increased risks of sexual exploitation, early sexual activity, and early parenthood. The teenage conception rate has fallen in Southwark as nationally. However, higher proportions of care leavers become pregnant or are young parents and a number of them have had their children removed. We have invested in resources to support this group through our Young Women's Worker and through innovative projects like the Pause Project. We will continue to work with young people to promote sexual health through services that are accessible and free from stigma.

Substance misuse rates for children in care are reportedly fairly low in England (4% in 2013-2014) and in Southwark (6%, 21 young people in care in 2014-2015). Southwark's rate has increased from 3% from 2013-2014. Having a history of having been in care is strongly associated with problematic adult substance misuse, which usually starts in childhood so addressing this early is important.

For young people leaving care having information about their own health history, which includes a record of their immunisations, is important. Often there are sensitive issues about family history that need to be explored and discussed. The Health Team provide young people with both information leaflets and care leavers summaries for individual care leavers.

Improving the health and wellbeing of children in care and care leavers is a key strategic aim across the council and health partners. Southwark Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have developed the Children and Young

People's Mental Health and Well-being Transformation Plan 2015-2020 to give a strong local focus on improving mental health and well-being outcomes for children and young people in Southwark.

We will work with our health team, Carelink and Virtual school partners to ensure physical, mental and emotional health needs are assessed and met so that children in care and care leavers, regardless where they are placed; receive the high quality health care support they are entitled to.

We will:

- Support the delivery of the Southwark Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-being Transformation Plan
- Ensure the health needs of children in care and care leavers are reflected in strategic health commissioning priorities to ensure that they continue to receive high quality services that result in demonstrable improvement in the physical health outcomes
- Continue to support the CAMHS Carelink service
- Continue to develop joint health commissioning arrangements with Public Health and the Clinical Commissioning Group and make the best use of available intelligence to inform commissioning
- Enhance the mental and emotional health support offer to those transitioning from care, particularly during times of transition
- Ensure mental health needs are assessed and understood at an early stage and that support is available to children and young people as long as they need it
- Continue to provide additional training to social workers, Personal Advisors and carers to help them provide emotional support and recognise mental health issues
- Ensure that children and young people in care feel healthy and are able to access a social environment that promotes their health and wellbeing
- Ensure children in care and care leavers with disabilities are represented in the development and implementation of the SEND Preparing for Adulthood agenda

Good practice: Sensory Garden

In 2015 a group of children in care presented the concept of developing the garden at the Care Service offices in Peckham to Service Directors, in a 'Dragons den' style event. Working with the Children's Rights Team a committee of young people developed a therapeutic, sensory garden for children in care and care leavers.

The garden was established by a group of 65 young people and 15 volunteers from across the council during 'gardening week'. Barnardos and Young Minds were on hand to provide support and take referrals to their services. Young Minds also delivered an emotional health session for children and young people.

The garden has become an invaluable resource for children that visit the building, and a place that they identify as their own.

Good practice: Social-emotional under 4's Screening and Intervention Study (S.U.S.I)

A pilot project run in Carelink in collaboration with Social Care and Child Health (funded by Guys and St Thomas' Charity) between September 2010 and November 2011 was the first combined mental health screening and intervention project for under 5 children in care in the UK. This study completed a screening assessment with 94% of the children who became looked after in a 12 month recruitment period and revealed significant unmet emotional/mental health needs in the LAC group of children. 67% of these children were identified as having social-emotional needs/difficulties in comparison to 10% being identified by Paediatricians in the 12 month period prior to the pilot.

As a result of this the SUSI study has offered birth parents of children in care the opportunity for their child to take part in the initial screening assessment and where indicated a follow up intervention of 10-15 sessions that are delivered over a 6 month period. The intervention targets the child's social-emotional development and supports the parent/carer-child relationship.

The overall aim of the model is to improve the child's emotional well-being and mental health along with their attachments to their primary caregivers and to understand the evolution of emotional/mental health needs of children in care by providing regular 6 month review screenings.

Dissemination events and written information on the findings and SUSI model will be available in 2016.

6. Our foster carers, adoptive parents and special guardians feel well supported to deliver the best care

We are proud of our foster carers, adopters and special guardians. They provide the love and support children and young people need. They care for children and young people who have often suffered prolonged abuse and neglect and present some very challenging behaviour. We will continue to provide foster carers, adopters and special guardians with the initial and on-going support they need to provide loving homes.

By doing this we will improve placement stability, limiting the number of unplanned moves, and have a positive impact on developing resilience and healthy emotional wellbeing in children and young people.

We have begun the implementation of the Secure Base Model across our Fostering and Adoption Services. This is the foundation of a therapeutic approach to caregiving that is fundamental to developing the capacity of carers.

To ensure our carers and adoptive parents feel well supported to deliver the best care we will:

- Continue to embed Secure Base as our foundational approach to care giving
- Promote therapeutic care within our Fostering Service for all children through the embedding of the Empathic Behavioural Management approach focusing on “connection not correction”
- Introduce Theraplay as a key approach to enhance attachment and strengthen placements at the earliest stages in our Adoption Service that includes use with special guardians.
- Increase use of the Adoption Support Fund through a dedicated therapeutic service provided by Carelink (CAMHS)
- Develop more expertise and capacity in teenage fostering, parent and child foster placements and in caring for unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- Continue to work with We Are Family, an adopter led support and advocacy group for adoptive families, to develop and improve our services
- Embrace the challenge of the regionalisation of Adoption Services to ensure that any changes have a positive impact on children and adoptive families
- Develop our approach to supporting placements and matching with the needs of children through a dedicated Placement, Contact and Support Service alongside the Fostering Service

Good practice: Support group for special guardians

In September 2015 Southwark's Post Permanence Support Team launched its first support group for special guardians. Since then the group has been well attended, averaging between 9-14 carers. Those that attend the group have said that they really valued the chance to meet with others caring for children and young people in a similar position. Expert speakers are invited to the groups including those from education or legal services. Post Permanence Social Workers help to facilitate the groups and are also able to offer some follow up work to individuals if this is needed. Plans are in place to develop workshops on subjects like life story work, contact and therapeutic play as the group continues to build and develop. Support has been offered from We Are Family, who run a peer support group for adopters in Southwark to strengthen the peer support approach this group is developing.

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7. More children and young people make good educational progress and achieve the best possible outcomes at Key Stage 2 and 4



Recent research⁹ has found that the care system provides an environment that is more conducive to education, compared to children who are 'in need' and thereby challenges the suggestion sometimes made that it is the care itself which contributes to poor education outcomes. It found that the longer the stay in care the more likely children and young people are to achieve good educational outcomes. Positive outcomes are strongly linked to placement stability; where children and young people are more likely to be settled in their learning.

This is consistent with local research which found that that young people who are taken into care around the time of their GCSE are unlikely to achieve the threshold of good attainment, whereas those taken into care after they have completed their GCSEs are more likely to have already achieved a good outcome. We also know that locally care leavers who have been in care for a longer time before their 19th birthday are more likely to be in education, employment and training when they are older.

Special educational needs (SEN) are far more common among children in care and associated with large differences in outcome. The 'gap' in attainment between those in care and others is considerably reduced if allowance is made for special educational need. Those SEN most strongly associated with poorer outcomes in children in care are severe/profound learning difficulties, autism spectrum disorders and moderate learning difficulties. In addition, having a disability was also associated with poorer outcomes.

As at March 2015 23.9 per cent of children in care learners in Southwark have a Statement of Special Education Needs or are on an Education, Health and Care Plan; a relatively small number of looked after children progress to higher education and too many are recognised as not in education training or employment.

We know that education is key to increasing life opportunities and we want all our children in care to have access to as many opportunities to learn and gain a good education as possible. We want them to enjoy their learning experiences; those in school and their hobbies and interests outside of school. We want them to be able to achieve their potential and feel well informed about the options available to them when thinking about their learning pathways and future careers.

⁹ [Rees Centre, Nov. 2015, Educational Progress Looked After Children Overview Report](#)

Our Virtual School team focus on delivering educational outcomes for children in care; they hold schools to account on their attainment, provide support to carers to help children in their care achieve a good education and track pupil progress. They help social workers to prepare Personal Education Plans (PEPs), which establish clear targets and actions to respond effectively to each child's needs and aspirations and provide a continuous record of their achievements.

The Virtual School expanded their remit to include year 13 pupils from September 2015. As a result of direct support those recognised as NEET at Key Stage 5 reduced from 51 per cent (July 2015) to 14 per cent (November 2015). All support is offered from a principle of high expectations, to encourage and support each learner to achieve their potential.

We will:

- Continue to champion the educational achievements of children and care and care leavers and ensure we provide additional learning where this is required
- Ensure continuous access to adequate and appropriate diagnostic and therapeutic services for children and young people with suspected special needs or additional learning needs
- Increase school attendance, closely monitor and address unauthorised and missing from school incidents
- Continue to prioritise tracking of pupils who are new into care or moving to new care provision until the Virtual School is assured that pupils are receiving appropriate education
- Increase training offer to Foster Carers and Social Workers regarding education provision, children's needs and education choices
- Maximise the use of the Pupil Premium to improve PEPs and support outcomes for children in care and care leavers
- Ensure effective tracking of educational outcomes of young people post 16
- Ensure 'good' or 'outstanding' education placements are provided and that educational attainment is promoted and closely monitored
- Develop a 'Virtual College' for children in care and care leavers
- Ensure integrated (education, health and social care) transition of care leavers with EHCPs to appropriate post-18 (adult) services

Good practice: The Virtual School case study

B is 17 and lives in semi-independent provision. B is withdrawn in his behaviour and reluctant to engage with adults. B has a highly supportive key worker/manager with whom B has a constructive relationship. B experienced chronic neglect and physical and emotional abuse during the first 6 years of life. B has SEN, ADHD, low self-esteem and low levels of literacy and numeracy. There are anger management issues and the EHCP indicates mental health remains a concern. B is making steady progress at college doing Maths and English and 'work ready' skills. B has expressed an interest in a plumbing course.

The Virtual School explored B's career preference in detail during a PEP meeting. The interest in plumbing stemmed from a family member having this role. Widening the discussion it appeared that B enjoyed working with animals. B has a Saturday job in a local stables and B stated that he felt calm in the company of horses. Discussions with an Education Psychologist confirmed that there is a therapeutic process around working with animals which can yield excellent results for those with post traumatic stress.

It was apparent that B related to the process of healing lame/abused horses and nursing them back to health. The VS education adviser informed B that the Berkshire college of Agriculture (BAC) offer accredited courses in animal welfare, which might appeal. The response to this suggestion was dramatic; B showed real enthusiasm. We arranged for Reading College to arrange a visit to BAC and the VS Ed advisor contacted BAC to ensure B was welcomed and given a full tour.

B is making steady progress on the course and is expected to achieve entry level 3 in Maths, English and work ready skills. B has visited BAC and is weighing up options. B is focussed and excited about the future. B continues to receive therapeutic input from CAMHS and the Virtual School have arranged for the student support officer at college to check progress once a week. B is still working on Saturdays and has been encouraged to join the college Mindfulness course once a week. The college work placement team have agreed to source a position that compliments SC's interest in this area.

The Virtual School's intervention with B has highlighted the importance of ensuring that young people's voices are heard and that our students fully understand why they are making decisions about their future. We are here to support the decision making process and help put into effect a chain of events that lead to successful results. To this end it is our duty to mobilise educational institutions into providing targeted support for our students against measurable outcomes.

8. Continue to safeguard children and young people who are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, missing, criminal activity and radicalisation

You should learn what to do when you feel the worst, and (they should) teach you how to build a social network. Socially anxious YP are more at risk

A young person's resilience to risk factors in their lives will also help minimise their own risk-taking at levels that pose safeguarding concerns; child sexual exploitation, engagement in criminal activity, for example. Children and young people become more or less resilient depending on the opportunities they are given. They will take risks as part of their development; this is natural. It is our role to make sure they are protected from harm, are equipped to make sound judgements and are not unnecessarily criminalised when they do take risks.

We recognise that adolescent and teenagers are most likely to display challenging and risky behaviour. Those who go missing from care in Southwark for example, are predominately aged between 15-17 years. Not all those who go missing (from home, care or education) are at risk from harm, but there are those who are at more risk of sexual exploitation, radicalisation, involvement with gangs and criminal behaviour, for example. We will continue to provide a dedicated service to those who go missing, preventing further incidences occurring by addressing underlying concerns, and refer cases where there are concerns about exploitation, radicalisation or extremism through our Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or to our Prevent Lead Officer where appropriate. We will continue to providing training and support to staff and carers to help recognise risks and manage these effectively.

We will work to develop a better understanding of the link between coercion and exploitation affecting children and young people involved with gangs as noted in Catch 22's recent Running the Risks¹⁰ report. We will robustly monitor the data we have available and take all risks seriously whilst we continuing to develop strong links between safeguarding, social care, youth offending and the police and our Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

We recognise that young people in care may have particular mental health and emotional wellbeing needs that affect their behaviour and which may cause them to react negatively. We will continue to provide dedicated mental health support to children and young people and their carers via Carelink and improve interagency working to ensure that concerns are addressed through well informed responses from a range of expertise.

In all cases it is essential that staff and practitioners, teachers, carers and parents are able to recognise risks and intervene effectively and that Care and Pathway Plans identify and address vulnerabilities.

¹⁰ [Catch22, July 2015, Running the Risks](#)

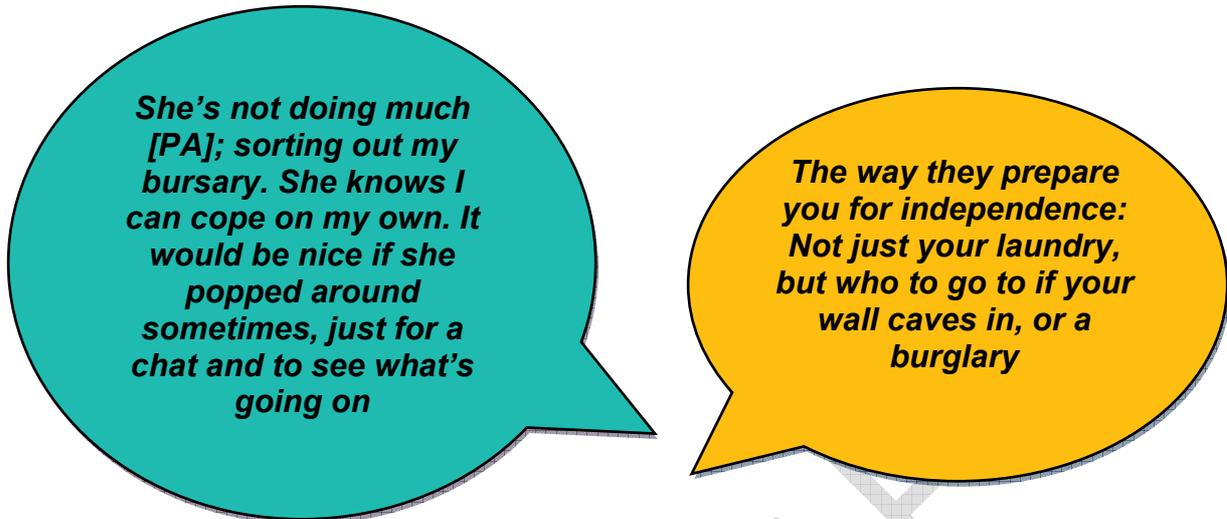
We will:

- Continue to provide training for carers to help them deal with more challenging and risky behaviour through Empathic Behaviour Management, focusing on “connection not correction”, as well as ensure they are well trained to understand risk in all areas including online and CSE
- Effectively monitor and respond pro-actively and assertively to incidents of missing/absent from home, care and school
- Work to ensure that children and young people have consistent relationships with adults they trust, whether with their carer or social worker, mentor or advisor, and take time to understand the significance of their support networks, friends and families
- Reduce the number of missing episodes in placements by ensuring suitable contact with families is in place, and that young people’s risks, such as child sexual exploitation or relating to gang involvement, are reduced
- Ensure Care and Pathway Planning plays a key part in managing risks and that those placed out of the borough have access to the same level of support as those placed in the borough
- Work through underlying issues with our young people, helping them to understand the consequences of their behaviour and be there for them
- Provide, through our Youth Offending Service, support that focuses on restorative justice interventions, raises awareness of risks to carers through direct support and training that ensures that carers have the skills to deal with challenging behaviour and recognise risks
- Support those young people who do spend time in prison to effectively integrate into the community and support their resettlement, as part of our new accommodation pathway for young people

Good practice: Southwark Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The MASH analyses all CSE referrals, ensuring risk assessment is carried out as per Police Protocol. We have also commissioned CSE casework capacity, overseen by the MASH, to provide therapeutic and support services and consider the needs of CSE victims and their families. We have a dedicated service located in the MASH, provided by St Christopher’s Fellowship, who undertake independent return interviews with all children in care when they return from missing episodes. Our approach to managing cases involving trafficked children who may be at on going risk of CSE has been strengthened by embedding the London Safeguarding Children Board’s Trafficked Children Toolkit in these cases. We have embedded Social Care CSE Screening Tool and integrated a missing workflow with on going risk assessment for missing children in our new Mosaic Children’s Social Care Record that allows for effective monitoring.

9. Young people leave care well prepared for independent living



The average age for leaving home is 24 yet young people are considered 'care leavers' from their 18th birthday and most move into semi-independent or some form of independent living before that. The council has recognised that for some this is too soon and have introduced the Staying Put arrangement so young people can remain with their foster carers up to the age of 21, where this is suitable for both the young person and the carer.

We know that, generally, those who have been in stable foster care placements for longer are more likely to make a successful transition to independent living and that later entrants (which make up a large proportion of our care population) may come into care as a result of homelessness or with parental consent, as a result of problems and disagreements at home, rather than serious concerns about safety.

Local authorities and local housing authorities have respective duties under Part 3 of the Children Act 1989 and Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 to secure or provide accommodation for homeless 16 and 17 year old children. Young people aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless can be accommodated under the Housing Act Children Act 1989 and moved into care under section 20 of the act; we have seen an increase in the numbers accommodated through this route over recent years and an increase in the number of young people accommodated with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

Young people are assessed via a Housing Protocol between Housing and Children's and Adult's Services to ensure young people receive the correct assessment of their needs and are accommodated with the right support in place. Where the team agrees there is a need to provide care, a decision on either a section 17 (child in need status) or a section 20 (looked after child status) is made. All section 17 is passed to Housing Homeless Support Unit and section 20 to Children's Brokerage to source accommodation for the young person.

Southwark care leavers receive a priority nomination for council tenancies under the council's allocation policy. They are supported to maintain their tenancies via a referral to our Sustain Team in Housing and are supported by their personal advisor.

This is a welcome offer which helps ensure care leavers can secure a tenancy locally. We aim to support young people to enter the private sector where this is a viable options and support them to secure employment.

Regardless of when they entered care, young people need to be effectively supported to live independently and to manage their own homes. The 16+ commissioning review and the New Belongings programme for care leavers have highlighted areas young people are most concerned with as they make this important transition:

| Themes | Key areas |
|---|--|
| Finance and budgeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgeting • Accessing benefits |
| Accommodation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process of how to apply for a council house |
| Managing at home/life skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and electricity bills, managing money, saving, credit cards and what to do if you are evicted. • How to do electrics, such as change light bulbs and use a boiler safely • Hygiene • Cooking • 'Realities of life' class |
| Education, employment and training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to apply for work • Help applying for college |
| Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning what it means to be healthy • Learning how to deal with stress • How to cope on your own • Self esteem • Where to go if you are pregnant • How to manage health • Access to health records and understanding health histories |
| Support and advice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning how to be part of the community you live so you are not isolated • Communication skills • Where to go for help • Healthy relationships, such as what you are entitled too and how to keep safe |

The above information is helping to shape our 16+ commissioning strategy, which will enable us to hold providers to account on the delivery of their support and help ensure we offer support that caters for the differing needs of young people, depending on where they are in their transition from care. We will ensure that preparation for independence starts when the young person is in their 15th year and is fully integrated into Pathway Plans.

We will:

- Reshape our Care Service to provide more focus and dedicated expertise around Care Leavers, giving greater support during transitions to independence
- Provide low, medium and high support to those making the transition to independence, depending on their level of needs
- Ensure providers are held accountable for the delivery of outcomes linked to Pathway Plans and that the support they offer is delivered flexibly, to meet young people's schedules
- Take stock of the success of our approach to Staying Put to build on this to ensure those who want to are able to 'Stay Put' with their foster carers and that this is a simple, comprehensive process
- Provide a range of supported accommodation options that allow young people to learn to live independently in a safe environment where they can make mistakes and not lose their homes or benefits
- Provide coordinated and effective support for those with disabilities transitioning between children's and adult's services
- Expand the health support offer to care leavers- taking into account their wishes and specific vulnerabilities
- Ensure access to appropriate adult health services for care leavers with learning disabilities or moderate physical impairment
- Develop 'best practice' models of preparation for independence training

Good practice: New Belongings

New Belongings is a national programme run by the Care Leavers Foundation. Southwark is part of the South London Cluster for this year long programme with Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham.

The programme aims to improve outcomes for care leavers and through the development and delivery of the our New Belongings action plan and the Care Leavers Forum for care leavers we have been able to focus on the delivery of 3 key outcomes for care leavers; emotional health, accommodation and education, employment and training.

10. More care leavers are in education, employment and/or training



Too many young people who have been in our care are unemployed or not engaged in education or training. This can affect their longer term prospects and can mean they are often struggling with debt. It also means it is harder for them to socialise and enjoy life like young people should be able to do. They are can get caught up in a cycle of welfare dependency, as they jobs they can access are often low paid and temporary, which makes it harder for them to be independent and make plans for their future.

Engaging in education, employment and training is not only important it terms of self-sufficiency and self worth, it is also vital to enable young people to develop skills, learn what they want to do in life, build their networks and enhance their social capital.

We have a Southwark wide apprenticeship scheme which has successfully supported a number of our children in care and care leavers to gain an apprenticeship and secure employment. We have a dedicated employment and skills advisor providing support to young people in the Care Service, who works closely with the council's Southwark Works employment support programme.

Southwark Works provides access to local employment opportunities and training to support those who need help to access the job market, including children in care and care leavers, to access employment. The council also has the Southwark Employment Enterprise Development Scheme which supports young people who are recognised as NEET into 12 month employment contracts in the borough, providing experience, training and mentoring support to young people at the London Living Wage.

Through the New Belongings programme we will continue to promote the use of these services and enhance of offer to care leavers by creating a borough wide support directory for care leavers; a key action in the New Belongings action plan.

We will:

- Reshape our Care Service to provide more focus and dedicated expertise around care leavers, especially to greater support those not in education, employment or training
- Create a dedicated and tailored service for care leavers accommodation, through the delivery of the 16+ Commissioning Strategy and further

improvements to the Care Service to greater support stability and prospect for education, employment and training

- Create a directory of services for child leavers, including employment, education and training support services
- Improve contracting arrangements to hold providers to account on the delivery of outcomes for care leavers in their accommodation
- Improve interdepartmental and interagency working between housing, employment provision, welfare benefits (Jobcentre Plus) and social care to ensure young people can achieve independence and secure employment
- Work with the Virtual School to develop a 'Virtual College' for children in care and care leavers and develop our tracking of this group across all council services involving education, employment and training

Good practice: Employment and Skills Advisor

We have a dedicated Employment and Skills Advisor based in the Care Service This role provides 1-2-1 support and advice to young people to help them access relevant training and employment opportunities, helping to build their CVs and apply for jobs. This post links to the wider Southwark Works employment support network, providing the latest local job and training opportunities.



Equality Analysis: Children in care and care leavers strategy 2016-2019

DRAFT

January 2016

Section 1: Equality analysis details

| | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|---|
| Proposed policy/decision/business plan to which this equality analysis relates | Children in care and care leavers strategy- providing a framework for service improvement across 10 strategic priority areas over the next 3 years to 2019. | | |
| Equality analysis author | Elaine Gunn, Principal Strategy Officer and Tasneem Mueen-Iqbal, Policy Officer | | |
| Strategic Director: | David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children's & Adults' Services | | |
| Department | Children's & Adults' Services | Division | Strategy, Planning and Performance Team |
| Period analysis undertaken | January 2016 | | |
| Date of review | January 2017 | | |
| Sign-off | Position | Date | |

Section 2: Brief description of policy/decision/business plan

1.1 Brief description of policy/decision/business plan

Southwark have developed a children in care and care leavers strategy 2016-2019, to improve outcomes for this vulnerable group of children and young people in Southwark. This Strategy includes 10 strategic priorities, set out below, which the council, in partnership with commissioners and providers, will follow to improve the quality and delivery of services for children and young people who require support to keep them safe and stable in an alternative loving home for a period of time or on a permanent basis.

1. Children and young people have a say and their voice is heard
2. Develop our support and interventions with families to keep children and young people safe, enabling them to remain with or return to their families
3. Children and young people achieve timely, permanent care arrangements in safe, secure and loving homes
4. More children and young people feel safe and secure in their placements and live closer to home, in provision that meets their needs
5. Increase the focus on physical and mental health and social and emotional wellbeing through the development and delivery of our services
6. Foster carers, adoptive parents and special guardians feel well supported to deliver the best care
7. More children and young people make good educational progress and achieve the best possible outcomes at Key Stage 2 and 4
8. Continue to safeguard children and young people who are risk of CSE, missing, criminal activity and radicalisation
9. Young people leave care well prepared for independent living
10. More care leavers are in education, employment and/or training

This Strategy provides an opportunity for the council to increase focus on the care population through its role as a Corporate Parent, extending the support available beyond social care. The delivery of the Strategy will be monitored through the Corporate Parenting Committee:

<http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=129>

Section 3: Overview of service users and key stakeholders consulted

| 2. Service users and stakeholders | |
|---|--|
| Key users of the department or service | Children and young people in care and on the edge of care in Southwark Southwark care leavers Parents, carers and adopters Health and education staff Children's & Adults' Services staff |
| Key stakeholders were/are involved in this policy/decision/business plan | Children and young people in care and on the edge of care in Southwark Southwark care leavers Parents, carers and adopters Health and education staff Children's & Adults' Services staff Council Members |

The data on children in care presented below is from the DfE Children looked after Statistical Return.

Section 4: Pre-implementation equality analysis

This section considers the potential impacts (positive and negative) on groups with 'protected characteristics', the equality information on which this analysis is based and any mitigating actions to be taken.

Age - Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

The strategy is focused on improving outcomes for children in care and care leavers, up to the age of 25, ensuring they have access to care and support which enables them to achieve positive outcomes in care and helps them to make the transition from care prepared for independent living.

Older younger children aged 10 and above, are disproportionately represented in the care population. Through the implementation of the Strategy, improved interagency working and a greater focus on supporting young people in families on the edge of care, we aim to reduce the overall numbers of children in care, reducing the numbers of young people who come into care as a result of 'family dysfunction'.

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Age of children in care at 31st March 2015

| | England (%) | | London (%) | | Stat Nbs (%) | | Southwark (%) | | Southwark (no.) | |
|-------------|-------------|-------|------------|-------|--------------|-------|---------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 |
| Under 1 | 6% | | 5% | | 5% | | 5% | 4% | 30 | 21 |
| 1 to 4 | 17% | | 12% | | 12% | | 14% | 10% | 80 | 52 |
| 5 to 9 | 20% | | 16% | | 17% | | 18% | 20% | 100 | 101 |
| 10 to 15 | 37% | | 37% | | 39% | | 34% | 36% | 185 | 181 |
| 16 and over | 21% | | 30% | | 27% | | 28% | 29% | 155 | 148 |

Mitigating actions to be taken

No negative impacts of the new arrangements have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required.

Disability - A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

The Strategy aims to *increase the focus on physical and mental health and social and emotional wellbeing through the development and delivery of our service*. It recognises that more improved interagency working and health focused commissioning for children in care and care leavers will help improve outcomes for this vulnerable group.

Specialist teams focussing on children with disabilities, transition and special educational needs will continue to be supported to ensure children and young people with disabilities are not disadvantaged.

Strength and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQ) are used to support the emotional and behavioural health of looked after children. Over half those eligible for an SDQ in 2014/2015 had a score that was borderline or a concern, indicating concerns with mental health. The Strategy aims to improve the focus on mental and physical health at a strategic and commissioning level but also through improved interagency working with education and social care providers.

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Category of need of those children whose episode was open at the 31 March 2015

| Category of need | Number |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Absent parenting | 40 |
| Abuse or neglect | 308 |
| Child's disability | 7 |
| Family dysfunction | 68 |
| Family in acute stress | 32 |
| Low income | 6 |
| Parental illness or disability | 32 |
| Socially unacceptable behaviour | 10 |
| Grand Total | 503 |

At the 31st March 2015 there were 7 children and young people in care were identified in the child's disability. This equates to 1% of the care population at the time. This does not mean that this is the total number of children in care with a disability. The Children with Disabilities and Transitions Team currently (January 2016) have approximately 20 on their case load.

Emotional and behavioural health of children looked after continuously for 12 months at 31 March for whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was completed (CiC aged over 4 and under 17)

| | England (% & ave.) | | London (% & ave.) | | Stat Nbs (% & ave.) | | Southwark (% & ave.) | | Southwark (no.) | |
|---|-----------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|-------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 |
| CiC for whom an SDQ score was submitted | 68% | | 78% | | 78% | | 32% | 67% | 85 | 179 |
| Average score per child | 14 | | 13 | | 14 | | 14 | 15 | | |
| SDQ Score NORMAL | 50% | | 53% | | 51% | | 51% | 49% | 45 | 87 |
| SDQ Score BORDERLINE | 13% | | 13% | | 14% | | 14% | 15% | 10 | 26 |
| SDQ Score CONCERN | 37% | | 34% | | 35% | | 36% | 37% | 30 | 66 |

Mitigating actions to be taken

No negative impacts of the Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required

| |
|--|
| Gender reassignment - The process of transitioning from one gender to another. |
| Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan |
| No impacts have been identified as regards gender reassignment as a consequence of the delivery of the Strategy. No data available for children in care and care leavers. |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based. |
| When the Gender Recognition Act (GRA) was passed by Parliament, related government literature at the time estimated 6,000 "visible" transsexual people in the UK. These were people living fully in "opposite gender" role, pre and post-ops, who had come to statistical attention through applying for Passports in their changed status, or being referred to or having passed through gender clinics and the NHS. This was therefore estimated to be 0.01% of the population or around one in 10,000 people. This was not broken down by sub national geography, but, applying this proportion to Southwark, this would equate to around 30 "transgender" people in Southwark, across a range of ages. |
| Mitigating actions to be taken |
| No negative impacts of the Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required |

| |
|--|
| Marriage and civil partnership - Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a man or a woman'. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners are be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters. (Only to be considered in respect to the need to eliminate discrimination.) |
| Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan |
| No impacts have been identified as regards marriage or civil partnership as a consequence of the delivery of the Strategy. |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based |
| No data available. |
| Mitigating actions to be taken |
| No negative impacts of the Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required |

| |
|--|
| Pregnancy and maternity - Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding. |
| Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan |
| Sexual health is an important issue for children in care, with increased risks of sexual exploitation, early sexual activity, and early parenthood. The teenage conception rate has fallen in Southwark as nationally. However, higher proportions of care leavers become pregnant or are young parents and a number of them have had their children removed. Through the delivery of the Strategy, and innovative projects like Pause, we will continue to work with young people to promote sexual health and wellbeing through services that are accessible and free from stigma. |

| |
|---|
| <p>Equality information on which above analysis is based</p> |
|---|

Southwark's under 18 conception rate, at 31.8 for 2012 (under 18 rates are per 1000 female population aged 15-17) is still higher than the average rate of its statistical neighbours, inner London, and England and Wales. The Under 16 Conception rate has seen a sharp decline to 2012. The under 16 conception rate (under 16 rates are per 1000 female population aged 15-17) in Southwark (4.7) is lower than the under 16 conception rate in England & Wales (5.6). The rate is still slightly higher than that for Inner London (4.3) and the average of its statistical neighbours (4.6).

In Southwark, the percentage of both under 18 (63.4%) and under 16 conceptions (73.7%) resulting in abortion is relatively high compared with figures for England and Wales, 48.7% and 59.8% respectively. The figures suggest that both under 16 and under 18 conception rates could be further reduced.

Southwark had 8 looked after children who were mothers in the 2013/2014 reporting period. There are 4 looked after young people who were mothers aged 15-17 on the 31 March 2014 (there were 4 other young mothers looked after during the year but not on the 31 March). In total, there were 86 young women aged 15-17 looked after on the 31 March 2014.

The rate per 1,000 for our looked after children is 47 per 1,000; about one and a third times the Southwark rate. Because of the different nature of the LAC population (children can move in and out of it independent of age [by ceasing to be looked after] – unlike the Southwark population who will only cease to be in the cohort if they move out of Southwark, turn 18 or pass away) this should only be used as indicative guide in comparison with the all Southwark figures.

| |
|--|
| <p>Mitigating actions to be taken</p> |
|--|

No negative impacts of the Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required

Race - Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

Using the available data Black or Black British ethnic groups appear overrepresented in the care population, and Asian and Asian British appear underrepresented when comparing 2011 Census data to the latest ethnicity data on children in care. Southwark has a higher proportion of Black or Black British and a lower proportion of Asian and Asian British children in care than London and statistical neighbours. The Strategy will have a positive impact by advancing equality of opportunity and improving outcomes for all children in care and care leavers.

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Ethnic origin of children looked after at 31 March

| | England (%) | | London (%) | | Stat Nbs (%) | | Southwark (%) | | Southwark (no.) | |
|---|-------------|-------|------------|-------|--------------|-------|---------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 |
| White | 78% | | 41% | | 38% | | 35% | 34% | 190 | 169 |
| Mixed | 9% | | 17% | | 19% | | 17% | 15% | 90 | 76 |
| Asian or Asian British | 4% | | 8% | | 5% | | x | 2% | x | 12 |
| Black or Black British | 7% | | 28% | | 35% | | 43% | 44% | 235 | 222 |
| Other ethnic groups | 2% | | 5% | | 7% | | 3% | 4% | 20 | 21 |
| Other (including not yet obtained/ refused) | 1% | | 1% | | 0% | | x | 1% | x | 3 |

2011 Census ethnic group 0-24

The younger age population in Southwark is more diverse still, with under half the percentage of white young people from the UK than the national average, and over 8 times the Black African/Caribbean population than the national average

| Ethnic Group - 0 to 24 | Southwark | Inner London | London | England |
|--|-----------|--------------|--------|---------|
| All categories: Ethnic group | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| White: Total | 40.8% | 43.8% | 48.8% | 79.2% |
| White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | 32.1% | 30.7% | 38.0% | 74.6% |
| White: Irish | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.4% |
| White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.2% |
| White: Other White | 7.7% | 12.2% | 9.8% | 4.1% |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Total | 11.0% | 10.4% | 9.2% | 4.6% |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean | 3.9% | 3.4% | 2.9% | 1.7% |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African | 2.4% | 1.8% | 1.5% | 0.6% |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian | 1.7% | 2.2% | 2.3% | 1.3% |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed | 3.0% | 2.9% | 2.5% | 1.0% |
| Asian/Asian British: Total | 10.6% | 19.6% | 20.7% | 10.2% |
| Asian/Asian British: Indian | 2.0% | 3.2% | 5.9% | 2.8% |
| Asian/Asian British: Pakistani | 0.7% | 2.5% | 3.7% | 3.3% |
| Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi | 2.0% | 8.2% | 4.2% | 1.4% |
| Asian/Asian British: Chinese | 3.2% | 2.3% | 1.5% | 0.9% |
| Asian/Asian British: Other Asian | 2.7% | 3.5% | 5.4% | 1.8% |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Total | 34.3% | 21.6% | 17.3% | 4.6% |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African | 20.7% | 11.6% | 9.7% | 2.7% |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean | 6.0% | 5.3% | 4.2% | 1.1% |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black | 7.6% | 4.6% | 3.5% | 0.9% |
| Other ethnic group: Total | 3.3% | 4.7% | 4.0% | 1.3% |
| Other ethnic group: Arab | 0.9% | 2.0% | 1.7% | 0.6% |
| Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group | 2.3% | 2.7% | 2.3% | 0.7% |

Mitigating actions to be taken

No negative impacts of the Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required

Religion and belief - Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

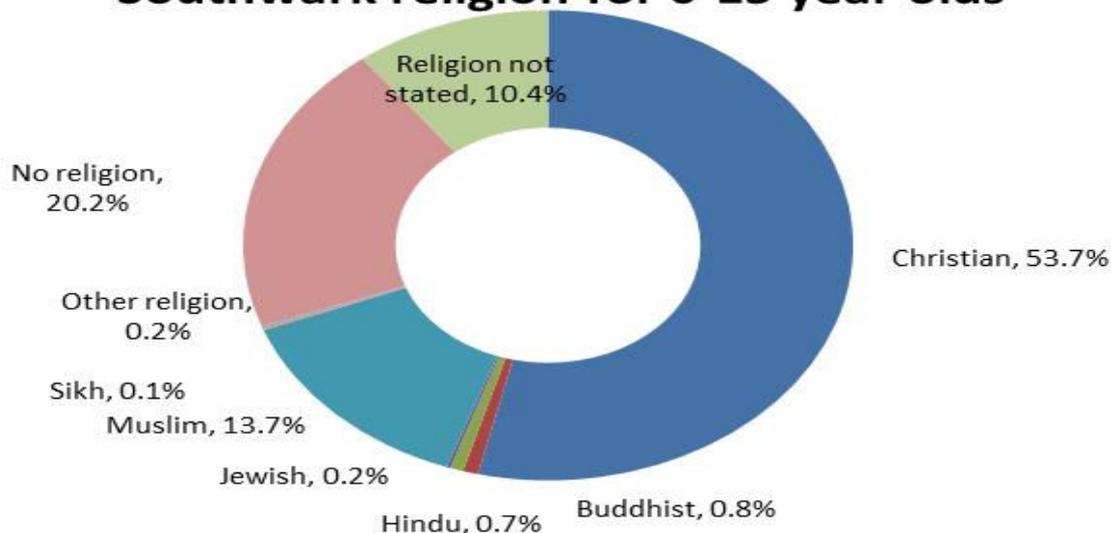
The Strategy aims to deliver its strategic priorities for all children in care and careleavers regardless of their religion or belief.

Equality information on which above analysis is based – Census 2011

No data available on children in care and care leavers.

Census 2011- general population data

| Religion 0 to 15 | Southwark | Inner London | London | England |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------|--------|---------|
| All categories | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Christian | 53.7% | 42.0% | 43.6% | 50.5% |
| Buddhist | 0.8% | 0.6% | 0.6% | 0.3% |
| Hindu | 0.7% | 1.6% | 4.6% | 1.5% |
| Jewish | 0.2% | 2.2% | 2.0% | 0.5% |
| Muslim | 13.7% | 24.6% | 19.8% | 8.8% |
| Sikh | 0.1% | 0.4% | 1.5% | 0.9% |
| Other religion | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.3% | 0.2% |
| No religion | 20.2% | 16.7% | 18.2% | 29.5% |
| Religion not stated | 10.4% | 11.7% | 9.5% | 7.9% |

Southwark religion for 0-15 year olds


| Religion 16 to 24 | Southwark | Inner London | London | England |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------|--------|---------|
| All categories | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Christian | 45.5% | 38.3% | 41.2% | 47.7% |
| Buddhist | 1.6% | 1.2% | 1.1% | 0.5% |
| Hindu | 2.2% | 2.6% | 5.1% | 1.7% |
| Jewish | 0.3% | 1.2% | 1.3% | 0.4% |
| Muslim | 8.9% | 17.3% | 15.3% | 6.5% |
| Sikh | 0.5% | 0.6% | 1.8% | 0.9% |
| Other religion | 0.4% | 0.4% | 0.5% | 0.4% |
| No religion | 32.7% | 27.9% | 25.5% | 34.9% |
| Religion not stated | 7.9% | 10.4% | 8.4% | 7.0% |

Mitigating actions to be taken

No negative impacts of the Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|
| Sex - A man or a woman. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | | | | | | | | | | |
| The Strategy aims to deliver its strategic priorities for all children in care and careleavers regardless of their gender. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based | | | | | | | | | | |
| Census data (2011) shows a fairly equal split between the male and female population in Southwark, with 49% male and 51% female. There are marginally more male children who looked after than female. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gender of children looked after at 31 March | | | | | | | | | | |
| | England (%) | | London (%) | | Stat Nbs (%) | | Southwark (%) | | Southwark (no.) | |
| | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 13-14 | 14-15 |
| Male | 55% | | 57% | | 55% | | 56% | 57% | 310 | 287 |
| Female | 45% | | 43% | | 45% | | 44% | 43% | 240 | 216 |
| The majority of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children who come into care are young males aged 16, which contributes to the age disruption in the care population. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating actions to be taken | | | | | | | | | | |
| No negative impacts of the Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required. | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Sexual orientation - Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes | | | | | | | | | |
| Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | | | | | | | | | |
| No impacts have been identified as regards sexual orientation as a consequence of delivering the Strategy. | | | | | | | | | |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based | | | | | | | | | |
| No data available for children in care and care leavers. | | | | | | | | | |
| The Integrated Household Survey undertaken in 2010 revealed that almost three-quarters of a million UK adults say they are gay, lesbian or bisexual - equivalent to 1.5% of the population. This was not broken down by sub national geography, but applying this proportion to the number of residents in Southwark, this would equate to around 4,000 LGBTQ inhabitants in the borough. | | | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating actions to be taken | | | | | | | | | |
| No negative impacts of the Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required. | | | | | | | | | |

Human Rights

There are 16 rights in the Human Rights Act. Each one is called an Article. They are all taken from the European Convention on Human Rights. The Articles are The right to life, Freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, Freedom from forced labour, Right to Liberty, Fair trial, Retrospective penalties, Privacy, Freedom of conscience, Freedom of expression, Freedom of assembly, Marriage and family, Freedom from discrimination and the First Protocol

Possible impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

The Strategy recognises that all children have the right to survive, develop and thrive. It also recognises the importance of ensuring *children and young people have a say and their voice is heard*. Safeguarding of children and young people is fundamental to the delivery of the Strategy. That includes young people who need to support to live independently, temporarily or on a permanent basis, including Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers who can

In 2009 the UK ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The main articles in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) that are endorsed through the delivery of the Strategy are:

Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child): When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account.

Article 13 (Freedom of expression): Children have the right to get and share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or others. In exercising the right to freedom of expression, children have the responsibility to also respect the rights, freedoms and reputations of others. The freedom of expression includes the right to share information in any way they choose, including by talking, drawing or writing.

Information on which above analysis is based

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) as a percentage of CiC at 31 March

| | England (%) | London (%) | Stat Nbs (%) | Southwark (%) | Southwark (no.) |
|-------------|-------------|------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 2011 | 4% | 10% | 5% | 5% | 25 |
| 2012 | 3% | 9% | 5% | 5% | 25 |
| 2013 | 3% | 9% | 5% | 4% | 20 |
| 2014 | 3% | 9% | 5% | 4% | 20 |
| 2015 | | | | 6% | 30 |

Mitigating actions to be taken

No negative impacts of the Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required.

Section 5: Further actions and objectives

5. Further actions

Based on the initial analysis above, please detail the key mitigating actions or the areas identified as requiring more detailed analysis.

No negative impacts of the Children in care and care leavers Strategy have been identified, so no mitigating actions are required.

| Number | Description of issue | Action | Timeframe |
|--------|----------------------|--------|-----------|
| N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

5. Equality objectives (for business plans)

Based on the initial analysis above, please detail any equality objectives that you will set for your division/department/service. Under the objective and measure column please state whether this objective is an existing objective or a suggested addition to the Council Plan.

| Objective and measure | Lead officer | Current performance (baseline) | Targets | |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|---------|---------|
| | | | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

APPENDIX 1

PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SYSTEM

Proposed Southwark Scheme for the Co-ordination of Admissions
to Reception for September 2017

PRIMARY

PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SYSTEM

**Template LA Schemes for Co-ordination of Admissions to Reception
in 2017/18**

Definitions used in the template schemes

| | |
|--|--|
| “the Application Year” | the academic year in which the parent makes an application (i.e. in relation to the academic year of entry, the academic year preceding it). |
| “the Board” | the Pan-London Admissions Executive Board, which is responsible for the Scheme |
| “the Business User Guide (BUG)” | the document issued annually to participating LAs setting out the operational procedures of the Scheme |
| “the Common Application Form” | this is the form that each authority must have under the Regulations for parents to use to express their preferences, set out in rank order |
| “the Equal Preference System” | the model whereby all preferences listed by parents on the Common Application Form are considered under the over-subscription criteria for each school without reference to parental rankings. Where a pupil is eligible to be offered a place at more than one school within an LA, or across more than one participating LA, the rankings are used to determine the single offer by selecting the school ranked highest of those which can offer a place |
| “the Highly Recommended Elements” | the elements of the Template Scheme that are not mandatory but to which subscription is strongly recommended in order to maximise co-ordination and thereby simplify the application process as far as possible |
| “the Home LA” | the LA in which the applicant/parent/carer is resident |
| “the LIAAG Address Verification Register | the document containing the address verification policy of each participating LA |
| “the Local Admission System (LAS)” | the IT module for administering admissions in each LA and for determining the highest offer both within and between participating LAs |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| “the London E-Admissions Portal” | the common online application system used by the 33 London LAs and Surrey County Council |
| “the Maintaining LA” | the LA which maintains a school, or within whose area an academy is situated, for which a preference has been expressed |
| “the Mandatory Elements” | those elements of the Template Scheme to which authorities must subscribe in order to be considered as ‘Participating Authorities’ and to benefit from use of the Pan-London Register |
| “the Notification Letter” | the agreed form of letter sent to applicants on the Prescribed Day which communicates any determination granting or refusing admission to a primary or secondary school, which is attached as Schedule 2 |
| “the Prescribed Day” | the day on which outcome letters are posted to parents/carers. 1 March (secondary) and 16 April (primary) in the year following the relevant determination year except that, in any year in which that day is not a working day, the prescribed day shall be the next working day. |
| “the Pan-London Register (PLR)” | the database which will sort and transmit application and outcome data between the LAS of each participating LA |
| “the Pan-London Timetable” | the framework for processing of application and outcome data, which is attached as Schedule 3 |
| “the Participating LA” | any LA that has indicated in the Memorandum of Agreement that they are willing to incorporate, at a minimum, the mandatory elements of the Template LA Scheme presented here. |
| “the Qualifying Scheme” | the scheme which each LA is required to formulate in accordance with The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2012, for co-ordinating arrangements for the admission of children to maintained primary and secondary schools and academies. |

PAN- LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SYSTEM

**Template LA Scheme for Co-ordination of Admissions to Reception
in 2017/18**

All the numbered sections contained in this scheme are mandatory, except those marked with an which are highly desirable.*

Applications

1. Applications from residents of this LA will be made on this LA's Common Application Form, which will be available and able to be submitted on-line. This will include all the fields and information specified in Schedule 1 to this Template LA Scheme. These will be supplemented by any additional fields and information which are deemed necessary by this LA to enable the admission authorities in the LA area to apply their published oversubscription criteria.
2. This LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent/carer who is resident in this LA and has a child in a nursery class within a maintained school, either in this LA or any other maintaining LA, receives a copy of this LA's admissions booklet and Common Application Form, including details of how to apply online. The admissions booklet will also be available to parents/carers who do not live in this LA, and will include information on how they can access their home LA's Common Application Form if unable to apply online.
3. The admission authorities within this LA will not use supplementary information forms except where the information available through the Common Application Form is insufficient for consideration of the application against the published oversubscription criteria. Where supplementary information forms are used by the admissions authorities within this LA, the LA will seek to ensure that these only collect information which is required by the published oversubscription criteria, in accordance with paragraph 2.4 of the School Admissions Code 2014.
4. Where supplementary information forms are used by admission authorities in this LA, they will be available on this LA's website. Such forms will advise parents that they must also complete their home LA's Common Application Form. This LA's admission booklet and website will indicate which schools in this LA require supplementary forms to be completed and where they can be obtained.
5. Where a school in this LA receives a supplementary information form, this LA will not consider it to be a valid application unless the parent/carer has also listed the school on their home LA's Common Application Form, in accordance with paragraph 2.3 of the School Admissions Code 2014.

6. *Applicants will be able to express a preference for up to six maintained primary schools or academies within and/or outside the Home LA. [If the above recommendation of six preferences is inappropriate for this authority, an alternative number will be substituted].
7. The order of preference given on the Common Application Form will not be revealed to a school within the area of this LA to comply with with paragraph 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2014. However, where a parent resident in this LA expresses a preference for schools in the area of another LA, the order of preference for that LA's schools will be revealed to that LA in order that it can determine the highest ranked preference in cases where an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school in that LA's area.
8. This LA undertakes to carry out the address verification process set out in its entry in the LIAAG Address Verification Register. This will in all cases include validation of resident applicants against this LA's maintained nursery and primary school data and the further investigation of any discrepancy. Where this LA is not satisfied as to the validity of an address of an applicant whose preference has been sent to a maintaining LA, it will advise the maintaining LA no later than **17 February 2017**.
9. This LA will confirm the status of any resident child for whom it receives a Common Application Form stating s/he is a 'Child Looked After' and will provide evidence to the maintaining LA in respect of a preference for a school in its area by **3 February 2017**.
10. This LA will advise a maintaining LA of the reason for any preference expressed for a school in its area, in respect of a resident child born outside of the correct age cohort, and will forward any supporting documentation to the maintaining LA by **3 February 2017**.

Processing

11. Applicants resident within this LA must return the Common Application Form, which will be available and able to be submitted on-line, to this LA by **15 January 2017**.
12. Application data relating to all preferences for schools in the area of a participating LA, which have been expressed within the terms of this LA's scheme, will be up-loaded to the PLR by **6 February 2017**. Supplementary information provided with the Common Application Form will be sent to maintaining LAs by the same date.
13. [This LA shall, in consultation with the admission authorities within this LA's area and within the framework of the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3B, determine and state here its own timetable for the processing of preference data and the application of published oversubscription criteria.]

14. *This LA will accept late applications only if they are late for a good reason, deciding each case on its own merits. [If this recommendation is deemed inappropriate for this authority an alternative approach should be substituted]
15. Where such applications contain preferences for schools in other LAs, this LA will forward the details to maintaining LAs via the PLR as they are received. This LA will accept late applications which are considered to be on time within the terms of the home LA's scheme.
16. The latest date for the upload to the PLR of late applications which are considered to be on-time within the terms of the home LA's scheme is **10 February 2017**.
17. *Where an applicant moves from one participating home LA to another after submitting an on-time application under the terms of the former home LA's scheme, the new home LA will accept the application as on-time up to **10 February 2017**, on the basis that an on-time application already exists within the Pan-London system.
18. This LA will participate in the application data checking exercise scheduled between **17 and 23 February 2017** in the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3B.
19. All preferences for schools within this LA will be considered by the relevant admission authorities without reference to rank order to comply with paragraphs 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2014. When the admission authorities within this LA have provided a list of applicants in criteria order to this LA, this LA shall, for each applicant to its schools for whom more than one potential offer is available, use the highest ranked preference to decide which single potential offer to make. [This is the 'Equal Preference System'.]
20. This LA will carry out all reasonable checks to ensure that pupil rankings are correctly held in its LAS before uploading data to the PLR.
21. This LA will upload the highest potential offer available to an applicant for a maintained school or academy in this LA to the PLR by **16 March 2017**. The PLR will transmit the highest potential offer specified by the Maintaining LA to the Home LA.
22. The LAS of this LA will eliminate, as a Home LA, all but the highest ranked offer where an applicant has more than one potential offer across Maintaining LAs submitting information within deadline to the PLR. This will involve exchanges of preference outcomes between the LAS and the PLR (in accordance with the iterative timetable published in the Business User Guide) which will continue until notification that a steady state has been achieved, or until **24 March 2017** if this is sooner.
23. This LA will not make an additional offers between the end of the iterative process and the **18 April 2017** which may impact on an offer being made by another participating LA.

24. Notwithstanding paragraph 23, if an error is identified within the allocation of places at one of this LA's schools, this LA will attempt to manually resolve the allocation to correct the error. Where this impacts on another LA (either as a home or maintaining LA) this LA will liaise with that LA to attempt to resolve the correct offer and any multiple offers which might occur. However, if another LA is unable to resolve a multiple offer, or if the impact is too far reaching, this LA will accept that the applicant(s) affected might receive a multiple offer.
25. This LA will participate in the offer data checking exercise scheduled between **27 March and 10 April 2017** in the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3B.
26. This LA will send a file to the E-Admissions portal with outcomes for all resident applicants who have applied online no later than **12 April 2017**. (33 London LAs & Surrey LA only).

Offers

27. This LA will ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, that each resident applicant who cannot be offered a preference expressed on the Common Application Form, receives the offer of an alternative school place.[The LA should state here how it will determine the school to be offered].
28. This LA will inform all resident applicants of their highest offer of a school place and, where relevant, the reasons why higher preferences were not offered, whether they were for schools in the Home LA or in other participating LAs.
29. This LA's outcome letter will include the information set out in Schedule 2.
30. This LA will, on **18 April 2017**, send by first class post notification of the outcome to resident applicants.
31. *This LA will provide nursery and primary schools with destination data of its resident applicants by the end of the Summer term 2017.

Post Offer

32. This LA will request that resident applicants accept or decline the offer of a place by **2 May 2017**, or within two weeks of the date of any subsequent offer.
33. Where an applicant resident in this LA accepts or declines a place in a school maintained by another LA by **2 May 2017**, this LA will forward the information to the maintaining LA by **9 May 2017**. Where such information is received from applicants after **2 May**, this LA will pass it to the maintaining LA as it is received.
34. Where a place becomes available in an oversubscribed maintained school or academy in this LA's area, it will be offered from a waiting list ordered in accordance with paragraph 2.14 of the School Admissions Code 2014.

35. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will inform the home LA, where different, of an offer for a maintained school or Academy in this LA's area which can be made to an applicant resident in the home LA's area, in order that the home LA can offer the place.
36. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA and the admission authorities within it, will not inform an applicant resident in another LA that a place can be offered.
37. When acting as a home LA, this LA will offer a place at a maintained school or Academy in the area of another LA to an applicant resident in its area, provided that the school is ranked higher on the Common Application Form than any school already offered.
38. When acting as a home LA, when this LA is informed by a maintaining LA of an offer which can be made to an applicant resident in this LA's area which is ranked lower on the Common Application Form than any school already offered, it will inform the maintaining LA that the offer will not be made.
39. When acting as a home LA, when this LA has agreed to a change of preference order for good reason, it will inform any maintaining LA affected by the change. In such cases, paragraphs 36 and 37 shall apply to the revised order of preferences.
40. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will inform the home LA, where different, of any change to an applicant's offer status as soon as it occurs.
41. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will accept new applications (including additional preferences) from home LAs for maintained schools and academies in its area.

**PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME
SCHEDULE 1**

**Minimum Content of Common Application Form for Admissions to
Reception in 2017/18**

Child's details:

Surname
Forename(s)
Middle name(s)
Date of Birth
Gender
Home address
Name of current school
Address of current school (if outside home LA)

Parent's details:

Title
Surname
Forename
Address (if different to child's address)
Telephone Number (Home, Daytime, Mobile)
Email address
Relationship to child

Preference details (x 6 recommended):

Name of school
Address of school
Preference ranking
Local authority in which the school is based

Additional information:

Reasons for Preferences (including any medical or social reasons)
Does the child have an Education, Health and Care Plan Y/N*
Is the child a 'Child Looked After (CLA)'? Y/N
Is the child formerly CLA but now adopted or subject of a 'Child Arrangements Order or 'Special Guardianship Order'? Y/N
If yes, name of responsible local authority
Surname of sibling
Forename of sibling
DOB of sibling
Gender of sibling
Name of school sibling attends

Other:

Signature of parent or guardian
Date of signature

* Where an LA decides not to request this information on the CAF, it must guarantee that no details of a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be sent via the PLR.

PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME

SCHEDULE 2**Template Outcome Letter for Admissions to Reception in 2017/18**

From: Home LA

Date: **18 April 2017**

Dear Parent,

Application for a Primary School

I am writing to let you know the outcome of your application for a primary school. Your child has been offered a place at X School. The school will write to you with further details.

I am sorry that it was not possible for your child to be offered a place at any of the schools which you listed as a higher preference on your application form. For each of these schools there were more applications than places, and other applicants has a higher priority than your child under the school's published admission criteria.

Offers which could have been made for any schools which you placed lower in your preference list, were automatically withdrawn under the co-ordinated admission arrangements, as a higher preference has been offered.

If you would like more information about the reason that your child was not offered a place at any higher preference school, you should contact the admission authority that is responsible for admissions to the school within the next few days. Details of the different admission authorities for schools in the borough of X are attached to this letter. If the school is outside the borough of X, the admission authority will either be the borough in which the school is situated, or the school itself.

You have the right of appeal under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 against the refusal of a place at any of the schools for which you have applied. If you wish to appeal, you must contact the admission authority for the school within the next few days to obtain the procedure and the date by which an appeal must be received by them.

Please would you confirm that you wish to accept the place at X School by completing the reply slip below. If you do not wish to accept the place, you will need to let me know what alternative arrangements you are making for your child's education.

You must contact this office if you wish to apply for any other school, either in this borough or elsewhere.

[You can also request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list for a school which was a higher preference on your application form than the school you have been offered. Please use the enclosed reply slip and return it to this office]. OR

{Your child's name has been placed on the waiting list for any school which was a higher preference on your application form than the school you have been offered. If you need to find out your child's position on the waiting list please contact the admission authority or the borough in which the school is situated}.

(One of the above bracketed paragraphs should be used depending on whether the LA automatically places children on a waiting list for higher preference schools).

*Please return the reply slip to me by **2 May 2017**. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me on _____.*

Yours sincerely

(First preference offer letters should include the paragraphs in italics only)

**PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME
SCHEDULE 3B**

Timetable for Admissions to Reception in 2017/18

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Sun 15 Jan 2017 | Statutory deadline for receipt of applications |
| Mon 6 Feb 2017 | Deadline for the transfer of application information by the Home LA to the PLR (ADT file) |
| Fri 10 Feb 2017 | Deadline for the upload of late applications to the PLR. |
| Mon 17 – Tues 23 Feb 2017 | Checking of application data |
| Thu 16 Mar 2017 | Deadline for the transfer of potential offer information from the Maintaining LAs to the PLR (ALT file). |
| Fri 24 Mar 2017 | Final ALT file to PLR |
| Mon 27 Mar- Mon 10 Apr 2017 | Checking of offer data |
| Weds 12 Apr 2017 | Deadline for on-line ALT file to portal |
| Tues 18 April 2017 | Offer letters posted. |
| Tue 2 May 2017 | Deadline for receipt of acceptances |
| Tue 9 May 2017 | Deadline for transfer of acceptances to maintaining LAs |

APPENDIX 2

PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SYSTEM

Proposed Southwark Scheme for the Co-ordination of Admissions
to Junior for September 2017

PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SYSTEM

**Template LA Schemes for Co-ordination of Admissions to Junior in
2017/18**

Definitions used in the template schemes

| | |
|--|--|
| “the Application Year” | the academic year in which the parent makes an application (i.e. in relation to the academic year of entry, the academic year preceding it). |
| “the Board” | the Pan-London Admissions Executive Board, which is responsible for the Scheme |
| “the Business User Guide (BUG)” | the document issued annually to participating LAs setting out the operational procedures of the Scheme |
| “the Common Application Form” | this is the form that each authority must have under the Regulations for parents to use to express their preferences, set out in rank order |
| “the Equal Preference System” | the model whereby all preferences listed by parents on the Common Application Form are considered under the over-subscription criteria for each school without reference to parental rankings. Where a pupil is eligible to be offered a place at more than one school within an LA, or across more than one participating LA, the rankings are used to determine the single offer by selecting the school ranked highest of those which can offer a place |
| “the Highly Recommended Elements” | the elements of the Template Scheme that are not mandatory but to which subscription is strongly recommended in order to maximise co-ordination and thereby simplify the application process as far as possible |
| “the Home LA” | the LA in which the applicant/parent/carer is resident |
| “the LIAAG Address Verification Register | the document containing the address verification policy of each participating LA |
| “the Local Admission System (LAS)” | the IT module for administering admissions in each LA and for determining the highest offer both within and between participating LAs |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| “the London E-Admissions Portal” | the common online application system used by the 33 London LAs and Surrey County Council |
| “the Maintaining LA” | the LA which maintains a school, or within whose area an academy is situated, for which a preference has been expressed |
| “the Mandatory Elements” | those elements of the Template Scheme to which authorities must subscribe in order to be considered as ‘Participating Authorities’ and to benefit from use of the Pan-London Register |
| “the Notification Letter” | the agreed form of letter sent to applicants on the Prescribed Day which communicates any determination granting or refusing admission to a primary or secondary school, which is attached as Schedule 2 |
| “the Prescribed Day” | the day on which outcome letters are posted to parents/carers. 1 March (secondary) and 16 April (primary) in the year following the relevant determination year except that, in any year in which that day is not a working day, the prescribed day shall be the next working day. |
| “the Pan-London Register (PLR)” | the database which will sort and transmit application and outcome data between the LAS of each participating LA |
| “the Pan-London Timetable” | the framework for processing of application and outcome data, which is attached as Schedule 3 |
| “the Participating LA” | any LA that has indicated in the Memorandum of Agreement that they are willing to incorporate, at a minimum, the mandatory elements of the Template LA Scheme presented here. |
| “the Qualifying Scheme” | the scheme which each LA is required to formulate in accordance with The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2012, for co-ordinating arrangements for the admission of children to maintained primary and secondary schools and academies. |

PAN- LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SYSTEM

**Template LA Scheme for Co-ordination of Admissions to Junior in
2017/18**

All the numbered sections contained in this scheme are mandatory, except those marked with an which are highly desirable.*

Applications

1. Applications from residents of this LA will be made on this LA's Common Application Form, which will be available and able to be submitted on-line. This will include all the fields and information specified in Schedule 1 to this Template LA Scheme. These will be supplemented by any additional fields and information which are deemed necessary by this LA to enable the admission authorities in the LA area to apply their published oversubscription criteria.
2. This LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent/carer who is resident in this LA and has a child in a nursery class within a maintained school, either in this LA or any other maintaining LA, receives a copy of this LA's admissions booklet and Common Application Form, including details of how to apply online. The admissions booklet will also be available to parents/carers who do not live in this LA, and will include information on how they can access their home LA's Common Application Form if unable to apply online.
3. The admission authorities within this LA will not use supplementary information forms except where the information available through the Common Application Form is insufficient for consideration of the application against the published oversubscription criteria. Where supplementary information forms are used by the admissions authorities within this LA, the LA will seek to ensure that these only collect information which is required by the published oversubscription criteria, in accordance with paragraph 2.4 of the School Admissions Code 2014.
4. Where supplementary information forms are used by admission authorities in this LA, they will be available on this LA's website. Such forms will advise parents that they must also complete their home LA's Common Application Form. This LA's admission booklet and website will indicate which schools in this LA require supplementary forms to be completed and where they can be obtained.
5. Where a school in this LA receives a supplementary information form, this LA will not consider it to be a valid application unless the parent/carer has also listed the school on their home LA's Common Application Form, in accordance with paragraph 2.3 of the School Admissions Code 2014.

6. *Applicants will be able to express a preference for up to six maintained primary schools or academies within and/or outside the Home LA. [If the above recommendation of six preferences is inappropriate for this authority, an alternative number will be substituted].
7. The order of preference given on the Common Application Form will not be revealed to a school within the area of this LA to comply with with paragraph 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2014. However, where a parent resident in this LA expresses a preference for schools in the area of another LA, the order of preference for that LA's schools will be revealed to that LA in order that it can determine the highest ranked preference in cases where an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school in that LA's area.
8. This LA undertakes to carry out the address verification process set out in its entry in the LIAAG Address Verification Register. This will in all cases include validation of resident applicants against this LA's maintained nursery and primary school data and the further investigation of any discrepancy. Where this LA is not satisfied as to the validity of an address of an applicant whose preference has been sent to a maintaining LA, it will advise the maintaining LA no later than **17 February 2017**.
9. This LA will confirm the status of any resident child for whom it receives a Common Application Form stating s/he is a 'Child Looked After' and will provide evidence to the maintaining LA in respect of a preference for a school in its area by **3 February 2017**.
10. This LA will advise a maintaining LA of the reason for any preference expressed for a school in its area, in respect of a resident child born outside of the correct age cohort, and will forward any supporting documentation to the maintaining LA by **3 February 2017**.

Processing

11. Applicants resident within this LA must return the Common Application Form, which will be available and able to be submitted on-line, to this LA by **15 January 2017**.
12. Application data relating to all preferences for schools in the area of a participating LA, which have been expressed within the terms of this LA's scheme, will be up-loaded to the PLR by **6 February 2017**. Supplementary information provided with the Common Application Form will be sent to maintaining LAs by the same date.
13. [This LA shall, in consultation with the admission authorities within this LA's area and within the framework of the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3B, determine and state here its own timetable for the processing of preference data and the application of published oversubscription criteria.]

14. *This LA will accept late applications only if they are late for a good reason, deciding each case on its own merits. [If this recommendation is deemed inappropriate for this authority an alternative approach should be substituted]
15. Where such applications contain preferences for schools in other LAs, this LA will forward the details to maintaining LAs via the PLR as they are received. This LA will accept late applications which are considered to be on time within the terms of the home LA's scheme.
16. The latest date for the upload to the PLR of late applications which are considered to be on-time within the terms of the home LA's scheme is **10 February 2017**.
17. *Where an applicant moves from one participating home LA to another after submitting an on-time application under the terms of the former home LA's scheme, the new home LA will accept the application as on-time up to **10 February 2017**, on the basis that an on-time application already exists within the Pan-London system.
18. This LA will participate in the application data checking exercise scheduled between **17 and 23 February 2017** in the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3B.
19. All preferences for schools within this LA will be considered by the relevant admission authorities without reference to rank order to comply with paragraphs 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2014. When the admission authorities within this LA have provided a list of applicants in criteria order to this LA, this LA shall, for each applicant to its schools for whom more than one potential offer is available, use the highest ranked preference to decide which single potential offer to make. [This is the 'Equal Preference System'.]
20. This LA will carry out all reasonable checks to ensure that pupil rankings are correctly held in its LAS before uploading data to the PLR.
21. This LA will upload the highest potential offer available to an applicant for a maintained school or academy in this LA to the PLR by **16 March 2017**. The PLR will transmit the highest potential offer specified by the Maintaining LA to the Home LA.
22. The LAS of this LA will eliminate, as a Home LA, all but the highest ranked offer where an applicant has more than one potential offer across Maintaining LAs submitting information within deadline to the PLR. This will involve exchanges of preference outcomes between the LAS and the PLR (in accordance with the iterative timetable published in the Business User Guide) which will continue until notification that a steady state has been achieved, or until **24 March 2017** if this is sooner.
23. This LA will not make an additional offers between the end of the iterative process and the **18 April 2017** which may impact on an offer being made by another participating LA.

24. Notwithstanding paragraph 23, if an error is identified within the allocation of places at one of this LA's schools, this LA will attempt to manually resolve the allocation to correct the error. Where this impacts on another LA (either as a home or maintaining LA) this LA will liaise with that LA to attempt to resolve the correct offer and any multiple offers which might occur. However, if another LA is unable to resolve a multiple offer, or if the impact is too far reaching, this LA will accept that the applicant(s) affected might receive a multiple offer.
25. This LA will participate in the offer data checking exercise scheduled between **27 March and 10 April 2017** in the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3B.
26. This LA will send a file to the E-Admissions portal with outcomes for all resident applicants who have applied online no later than **12 April 2017**. (33 London LAs & Surrey LA only).

Offers

27. This LA will ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, that each resident applicant who cannot be offered a preference expressed on the Common Application Form, receives the offer of an alternative school place.[The LA should state here how it will determine the school to be offered].
28. This LA will inform all resident applicants of their highest offer of a school place and, where relevant, the reasons why higher preferences were not offered, whether they were for schools in the Home LA or in other participating LAs.
29. This LA's outcome letter will include the information set out in Schedule 2.
30. This LA will, on **18 April 2017**, send by first class post notification of the outcome to resident applicants.
31. *This LA will provide nursery and primary schools with destination data of its resident applicants by the end of the Summer term 2017.

Post Offer

32. This LA will request that resident applicants accept or decline the offer of a place by **2 May 2017**, or within two weeks of the date of any subsequent offer.
33. Where an applicant resident in this LA accepts or declines a place in a school maintained by another LA by **2 May 2017**, this LA will forward the information to the maintaining LA by **9 May 2017**. Where such information is received from applicants after **2 May**, this LA will pass it to the maintaining LA as it is received.
34. Where a place becomes available in an oversubscribed maintained school or academy in this LA's area, it will be offered from a waiting list ordered in accordance with paragraph 2.14 of the School Admissions Code 2014.

35. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will inform the home LA, where different, of an offer for a maintained school or Academy in this LA's area which can be made to an applicant resident in the home LA's area, in order that the home LA can offer the place.
36. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA and the admission authorities within it, will not inform an applicant resident in another LA that a place can be offered.
37. When acting as a home LA, this LA will offer a place at a maintained school or Academy in the area of another LA to an applicant resident in its area, provided that the school is ranked higher on the Common Application Form than any school already offered.
38. When acting as a home LA, when this LA is informed by a maintaining LA of an offer which can be made to an applicant resident in this LA's area which is ranked lower on the Common Application Form than any school already offered, it will inform the maintaining LA that the offer will not be made.
39. When acting as a home LA, when this LA has agreed to a change of preference order for good reason, it will inform any maintaining LA affected by the change. In such cases, paragraphs 36 and 37 shall apply to the revised order of preferences.
40. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will inform the home LA, where different, of any change to an applicant's offer status as soon as it occurs.
41. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will accept new applications (including additional preferences) from home LAs for maintained schools and academies in its area.

**PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME
SCHEDULE 1**

**Minimum Content of Common Application Form for Admissions to
Junior in 2017/18**

Child's details:

Surname
Forename(s)
Middle name(s)
Date of Birth
Gender
Home address
Name of current school
Address of current school (if outside home LA)

Parent's details:

Title
Surname
Forename
Address (if different to child's address)
Telephone Number (Home, Daytime, Mobile)
Email address
Relationship to child

Preference details (x 6 recommended):

Name of school
Address of school
Preference ranking
Local authority in which the school is based

Additional information:

Reasons for Preferences (including any medical or social reasons)
Does the child have an Education, Health and Care Plan Y/N*
Is the child a 'Child Looked After (CLA)'? Y/N
Is the child formerly CLA but now adopted or subject of a 'Child Arrangements Order or 'Special Guardianship Order'? Y/N
If yes, name of responsible local authority
Surname of sibling
Forename of sibling
DOB of sibling
Gender of sibling
Name of school sibling attends

Other:

Signature of parent or guardian
Date of signature

* Where an LA decides not to request this information on the CAF, it must guarantee that no details of a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be sent via the PLR.

PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME

SCHEDULE 2**Template Outcome Letter for Admissions to Junior in 2017/18**

From: Home LA

Date: **18 April 2017**

Dear Parent,

Application for a Primary School

I am writing to let you know the outcome of your application for a primary school. Your child has been offered a place at X School. The school will write to you with further details.

I am sorry that it was not possible for your child to be offered a place at any of the schools which you listed as a higher preference on your application form. For each of these schools there were more applications than places, and other applicants has a higher priority than your child under the school's published admission criteria.

Offers which could have been made for any schools which you placed lower in your preference list, were automatically withdrawn under the co-ordinated admission arrangements, as a higher preference has been offered.

If you would like more information about the reason that your child was not offered a place at any higher preference school, you should contact the admission authority that is responsible for admissions to the school within the next few days. Details of the different admission authorities for schools in the borough of X are attached to this letter. If the school is outside the borough of X, the admission authority will either be the borough in which the school is situated, or the school itself.

You have the right of appeal under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 against the refusal of a place at any of the schools for which you have applied. If you wish to appeal, you must contact the admission authority for the school within the next few days to obtain the procedure and the date by which an appeal must be received by them.

Please would you confirm that you wish to accept the place at X School by completing the reply slip below. If you do not wish to accept the place, you will need to let me know what alternative arrangements you are making for your child's education.

You must contact this office if you wish to apply for any other school, either in this borough or elsewhere.

[You can also request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list for a school which was a higher preference on your application form than the school you have been offered. Please use the enclosed reply slip and return it to this office]. OR

{Your child's name has been placed on the waiting list for any school which was a higher preference on your application form than the school you have been offered. If you need to find out your child's position on the waiting list please contact the admission authority or the borough in which the school is situated}.

(One of the above bracketed paragraphs should be used depending on whether the LA automatically places children on a waiting list for higher preference schools).

*Please return the reply slip to me by **2 May 2017**. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me on _____.*

Yours sincerely

(First preference offer letters should include the paragraphs in italics only)

**PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME
SCHEDULE 3B**

Timetable for Admissions to Junior in 2017/18

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Sun 15 Jan 2017 | Statutory deadline for receipt of applications |
| Mon 6 Feb 2017 | Deadline for the transfer of application information by the Home LA to the PLR (ADT file) |
| Fri 10 Feb 2017 | Deadline for the upload of late applications to the PLR. |
| Mon 17 – Tues 23 Feb 2017 | Checking of application data |
| Thu 16 Mar 2017 | Deadline for the transfer of potential offer information from the Maintaining LAs to the PLR (ALT file). |
| Fri 24 Mar 2017 | Final ALT file to PLR |
| Mon 27 Mar- Mon 10 Apr 2017 | Checking of offer data |
| Weds 12 Apr 2017 | Deadline for on-line ALT file to portal |
| Tues 18 April 2017 | Offer letters posted. |
| Tue 2 May 2017 | Deadline for receipt of acceptances |
| Tue 9 May 2017 | Deadline for transfer of acceptances to maintaining LAs |

APPENDIX 3

PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SYSTEM

Proposed Southwark Scheme for the Co-ordination of Admissions
to Secondary for September 2017

SECONDARY

PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SYSTEM

**Template LA Schemes for Co-ordination of Admissions to Year 7 in
2017/18**

Definitions used in the template schemes

| | |
|--|--|
| “the Application Year” | the academic year in which the parent makes an application (i.e. in relation to the academic year of entry, the academic year preceding it). |
| “the Board” | the Pan-London Admissions Executive Board, which is responsible for the Scheme |
| “the Business User Guide (BUG)” | the document issued annually to participating LAs setting out the operational procedures of the Scheme |
| “the Common Application Form” | this is the form that each authority must have under the Regulations for parents to use to express their preferences, set out in rank order |
| “the Equal Preference System” | the model whereby all preferences listed by parents on the Common Application Form are considered under the over-subscription criteria for each school without reference to parental rankings. Where a pupil is eligible to be offered a place at more than one school within an LA, or across more than one participating LA, the rankings are used to determine the single offer by selecting the school ranked highest of those which can offer a place |
| “the Highly Recommended Elements” | the elements of the Template Scheme that are not mandatory but to which subscription is strongly recommended in order to maximise co-ordination and thereby simplify the application process as far as possible |
| “the Home LA” | the LA in which the applicant/parent/carer is resident |
| “the LIAAG Address Verification Register | the document containing the address verification policy of each participating LA |
| “the Local Admission System (LAS)” | the IT module for administering admissions in each LA and for determining the highest offer both within and between participating LAs |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| “the London E-Admissions Portal” | the common online application system used by the 33 London LAs and Surrey County Council |
| “the Maintaining LA” | the LA which maintains a school, or within whose area an academy is situated, for which a preference has been expressed |
| “the Mandatory Elements” | those elements of the Template Scheme to which authorities must subscribe in order to be considered as ‘Participating Authorities’ and to benefit from use of the Pan-London Register |
| “the Notification Letter” | the agreed form of letter sent to applicants on the Prescribed Day which communicates any determination granting or refusing admission to a primary or secondary school, which is attached as Schedule 2 |
| “the Prescribed Day” | the day on which outcome letters are posted to parents/carers. 1 March (secondary) and 16 April (primary) in the year following the relevant determination year except that, in any year in which that day is not a working day, the prescribed day shall be the next working day. |
| “the Pan-London Register (PLR)” | the database which will sort and transmit application and outcome data between the LAS of each participating LA |
| “the Pan-London Timetable” | the framework for processing of application and outcome data, which is attached as Schedule 3 |
| “the Participating LA” | any LA that has indicated in the Memorandum of Agreement that they are willing to incorporate, at a minimum, the mandatory elements of the Template LA Scheme presented here. |
| “the Qualifying Scheme” | the scheme which each LA is required to formulate in accordance with The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2012, for co-ordinating arrangements for the admission of children to maintained primary and secondary schools and academies. |

PAN LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SYSTEM

Template Scheme for Co-ordination of Admissions to Year 7 in 2017/18

All the numbered sections contained in this scheme are mandatory, except those marked with an which are highly desirable.*

Applications

1. This LA will advise home LAs of their resident pupils on the roll of this LA's maintained primary schools and academies who are eligible to transfer to secondary school in the forthcoming academic year.
2. Applications from residents of this LA will be made on this LA's Common Application Form, which will be available and able to be submitted on-line. This will include all the fields and information specified in Schedule 1 to this Template LA Scheme. These will be supplemented by any additional fields and information which are deemed necessary by this LA to enable the admission authorities in the LA area to apply their published oversubscription criteria.
3. This LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent/carer who is resident in this LA and has a child in their last year of primary education within a maintained school, either in this LA or any other maintaining LA, receives a copy of this LA's admissions booklet and Common Application Form, including details of how to apply online. The admissions booklet will also be available to parents/carers who do not live in this LA, and will include information on how they can access their home LA's Common Application Form if unable to apply online.
4. The admission authorities within this LA will not use supplementary information forms except where the information available through the Common Application Form is insufficient for consideration of the application against the published oversubscription criteria. Where supplementary information forms are used by the admissions authorities within this LA, the LA will seek to ensure that these only collect information which is required by the published oversubscription criteria, in accordance with paragraph 2.4 of the School Admissions Code 2014.
5. Where supplementary information forms are used by admission authorities in this LA, they will be available on this LA's website. Such forms will advise parents that they must also complete their home LA's Common Application Form. This LA's admission booklet and website will indicate which schools in this LA require supplementary forms to be completed and where they can be obtained.
6. Where an admission authority in this LA receives a supplementary information form, this LA will not consider it to be a valid application unless the parent/carer

has also listed the school on their home LA's Common Application Form, in accordance with paragraph 2.3 of the School Admissions Code 2014.

7. *Applicants will be able to express a preference for six maintained secondary schools or Academies within and/or outside the Home LA. [If the above recommendation of six preferences is inappropriate for this authority, an alternative number will be substituted].
8. The order of preference given on the Common Application Form will not be revealed to a school within the area of this LA. This is to comply with paragraph 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2014 which states that admission authorities must not give extra priority to children whose parents rank preferred schools in a particular order, including 'first preference first' arrangements . However, where a parent resident in this LA expresses a preference for schools in the area of another LA, the order of preference for that LA's schools will be revealed to that LA in order that it can determine the highest ranked preference in cases where an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school in that LA's area.
9. This LA undertakes to carry out the address verification process as set out in its entry in LIAAG Address Verification Register. This will in all cases include validation of resident applicants against this LA's primary school data and the further investigation of any discrepancy. Where this LA is not satisfied as to the validity of an address of an applicant whose preference has been sent to a maintaining LA, it will advise the maintaining LA no later than **12 December 2016**.
10. This LA will confirm the status of any resident child for whom it receives a Common Application Form stating s/he is a 'Child Looked After' and will provide evidence to the maintaining LA in respect of a preference for a school in its area by **11 November 2016**.
11. This LA will advise a maintaining LA of the reason for any preference expressed for a school in its area, in respect of a resident child born outside of the correct age cohort, and will forward any supporting documentation to the maintaining LA by **11 November 2016**.

Processing

12. Applicants resident within this LA must return the Common Application Form, which will be available and able to be submitted on-line, to this LA by **31 October 2016**. However, this LA will publish information which encourages applicants to submit their application by **21 October 2016 (i.e. the Friday before half term)**, to allow it sufficient time to process and check all applications before the mandatory date when data must be sent to the PLR.
13. Application data relating to all preferences for schools in the area of a participating LA, which have been expressed within the terms of this LA's scheme, will be uploaded to the PLR by **11 November 2016**. Supplementary information provided with the Common Application Form will be sent to maintaining LAs by the same date.

14. [This LA shall, in consultation with the admission authorities within this LA's area and within the framework of the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3A, determine and state here its own timetable for the processing of preference data and the application of published oversubscription criteria.]
15. *This LA will accept late applications only if they are late for a good reason, deciding each case on its own merits. [If this recommendation is deemed inappropriate for this authority an alternative approach should be substituted]
16. Where such applications contain preferences for schools in other LAs, this LA will forward the details to maintaining LAs via the PLR as they are received. This LA will accept late applications which are considered to be on time within the terms of the home LA's scheme.
17. The latest date for the upload to the PLR of late applications which are considered to be on-time within the terms of the home LA's scheme is **12 December 2016**.
18. Where an applicant moves from one participating home LA to another after submitting an on-time application under the terms of the former home LA's scheme, the new home LA will accept the application as on-time up to **12 December 2016**, on the basis that an on-time application already exists within the Pan-London system.
19. This LA will participate in the application data checking exercise scheduled between **13 December 2016 and 3 January 2017** in the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3A.
20. All preferences for schools within this LA will be considered by the relevant admission authorities without reference to rank order to comply with paragraphs 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2014. When the admission authorities within this LA have provided a list of applicants in criteria order to this LA, this LA shall, for each applicant to its schools for whom more than one potential offer is available, use the highest ranked preference to decide which single potential offer to make. [This is the 'Equal Preference System'.]
21. This LA will carry out all reasonable checks to ensure that pupil rankings are correctly held in its LAS before uploading data to the PLR.
22. This LA will upload the highest potential offer available to an applicant for a maintained school or academy in this LA to the PLR by **3 February 2017**. The PLR will transmit the highest potential offer specified by the Maintaining LA to the Home LA.
23. The LAS of this LA will eliminate, as a Home LA, all but the highest ranked offer where an applicant has more than one potential offer across Maintaining LAs submitting information within deadline to the PLR. This will involve exchanges of preference outcomes between the LAS and the PLR (in accordance with the iterative timetable published in the Business User Guide) which will continue until

notification that a steady state has been achieved, or until **16 February 2017** if this is sooner.

24. This LA will not make an additional offer between the end of the iterative process and **1 March 2017** which may impact on an offer being made by another participating LA.
25. Notwithstanding paragraph 24, if an error is identified within the allocation of places at one of this LA's schools, this LA will attempt to manually resolve the allocation to correct the error. Where this impacts on another LA (either as a home or maintaining LA) this LA will liaise with that LA to attempt to resolve the correct offer and any multiple offers which might occur. However, if another LA is unable to resolve a multiple offer, or if the impact is too far reaching, this LA will accept that the applicant(s) affected might receive a multiple offer.
26. This LA will participate in the offer data checking exercise scheduled between **17 and 23 February 2017** in the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3A.
27. This LA will send a file to the E-Admissions portal with outcomes for all resident applicants who have applied online no later than **24 February 2016**. (33 London LAs & Surrey LA only).

Offers

28. This LA will ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, that each resident applicant who cannot be offered a preference expressed on the Common Application Form, receives the offer of an alternative school place.[The LA should state here how it will determine the school to be offered].
29. This LA will inform all resident applicants of their highest offer of a school place and, where relevant, the reasons why higher preferences were not offered, whether they were for schools in the Home LA or in other participating LAs.
30. This LA's outcome letter will include the information set out in Schedule 2.
31. On **1 March 2017**, this LA will send by first class post notification of the outcome to resident applicants.
32. *This LA will provide primary schools with destination data of its resident applicants by the end of the Summer term 2017.

Post Offer

33. This LA will request that resident applicants accept or decline the offer of a place by **15 March 2017**, or within two weeks of the date of any subsequent offer.
34. Where an applicant resident in this LA accepts or declines a place in a school within the area of another LA by **15 March 2017**, this LA will forward the information to the maintaining LA by **22 March 2017**. Where such information is

received from applicants after **15 March**, this LA will pass it to the maintaining LA as it is received.

35. Where a place becomes available in an oversubscribed maintained school or academy in this LA's area, it will be offered from a waiting list ordered in accordance with paragraph 2.14 of the School Admissions Code 2014.
36. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will inform the home LA, where different, of an offer for a maintained school or Academy in this LA's area which can be made to an applicant resident in the home LA's area, in order that the home LA can offer the place.
37. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA and the admission authorities within it, will not inform an applicant resident in another LA that a place can be offered.
38. When acting as a home LA, this LA will offer a place at a maintained school or Academy in the area of another LA to an applicant resident in its area, provided that the school is ranked higher on the Common Application Form than any school already offered.
39. When acting as a home LA, when this LA is informed by a maintaining LA of an offer which can be made to an applicant resident in this LA's area which is ranked lower on the Common Application Form than any school already offered, it will inform the maintaining LA that the offer will not be made.
40. When acting as a home LA, when this LA has agreed to a change of preference order for good reason, it will inform any maintaining LA affected by the change. In such cases, paragraphs 37 and 38 shall apply to the revised order of preferences.
41. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will inform the home LA, where different, of any change to an applicant's offer status as soon as it occurs.
42. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will accept new applications (including additional preferences) from home LAs for maintained schools and academies in its area.

PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME

SCHEDULE 2

Template Outcome Letter for Admissions to Year 7 in 2017/18

From: Home LA

Date: **1 March 2017**

Dear Parent,

Application for a Secondary School

I am writing to let you know the outcome of your application for a secondary school. Your child has been offered a place at X School. The school will write to you with further details.

I am sorry that it was not possible for your child to be offered a place at any of the schools which you listed as a higher preference on your application form. For each of these schools there were more applications than places, and other applicants has a higher priority than your child under the school's published admission criteria.

Offers which could have been made for any schools which you placed lower in your preference list, were automatically withdrawn under the co-ordinated admission arrangements, as a higher preference has been offered.

If you would like more information about the reason that your child was not offered a place at any higher preference school, you should contact the admission authority that is responsible for admissions to the school within the next few days. Details of the different admission authorities for schools in the borough of X are attached to this letter. If the school is outside the borough of X, the admission authority will either be the borough in which the school is situated, or the school itself.

You have the right of appeal under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 against the refusal of a place at any of the schools for which you have applied. If you wish to appeal, you must contact the admission authority for the school within the next few days to obtain the procedure and the date by which an appeal must be received by them.

Please would you confirm that you wish to accept the place at X School by completing the reply slip below. If you do not wish to accept the place, you will need to let me know what alternative arrangements you are making for your child's education.

You must contact this office if you wish to apply for any other school, either in this borough or elsewhere.

[You can also request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list for a school which was a higher preference on your application form than the school you have been offered. Please use the enclosed reply slip and return it to this office]. OR

{Your child's name has been placed on the waiting list for any school which was a higher preference on your application form than the school you have been offered. If you need to find out your child's position on the waiting list please contact the admission authority or the borough in which the school is situated}.

(One of the above bracketed paragraphs should be used depending on whether the LA automatically places children on a waiting list for higher preference schools).

*Please return the reply slip to me by **15 March 2017 (sec)**. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me on _____.*

Yours sincerely

(First preference offer letters should include the paragraphs in italics only)

**PAN-LONDON CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME
SCHEDULE 3A**

Timetable for Admissions to Year 7 in 2017/18

| | |
|---|---|
| Fri 21 Oct 2016 | Published closing date (Friday before half-term) |
| Mon 31 Oct 2016 | Statutory deadline for receipt of applications |
| Fri 11 Nov 2016 | Deadline for the transfer of application information by the Home LA to the PLR (ADT file). |
| Mon 12 Dec 2016 | Deadline for the upload of late applications to the PLR. |
| Tues 13 Dec 2016 – Tues 3 Jan 2016 | Checking of application data |
| Fri 3 Feb 2017 | Deadline for the transfer of potential offer information from Maintaining LAs to the PLR (ALT file) |
| Thu 16 Feb 2017 | Final ALT file to PLR |
| Fri 17 – Thu 23 Feb 2017 | Checking of offer data |
| Fri 24 Feb 2017 | Deadline for on-line ALT file to portal |
| Wed 1 Mar 2017 | Offer letters posted. |
| Wed 15 Mar 2017 | Deadline for return of acceptances |
| Wed 22 Mar 2017 | Deadline for transfer of acceptances to maintaining LAs |

Appendix 1: Southwark community primary schools

Proposed Admission arrangements for September 2017 intake

www.southwark.gov.uk

A child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs whose Statement names a school must be admitted to the school in accordance with section 324 of the Education Act 1996. A child with an Education, Health and Care Plan whose plan names a school must be admitted to the school in accordance with section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014. This is a separate process from the coordinated admission arrangements set by Southwark Council.

1.1 Oversubscription criteria (for all years excluding nursery)

In the event of there being more applications than places available, places will be allocated in the following order of priority:

- (i) Children in public care (Looked After Children) and children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order) [see note (a)]
- (ii) Children with siblings who are already on roll at the school and will still be on roll at their date of entry [see note b]
- (iii) Children with exceptional medical, social or psychological needs, where it is agreed by the Local Authority ["LA"] and the headteacher that these can best be addressed at a particular school [see note c]
- (iv) Children living nearest to the school as measured by a straight line from the child's home to the main school gate [see note d]

Notes

- (a) A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence orders in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

- (b) Sibling includes full, half, step, foster and adopted brother or sister living in the same family unit and at the same home address as the child.

The home address is where the parent/carer lives and the child permanently resides unless otherwise directed by a Court Order. This will also apply to informal care arrangements. Where a child spends time with both parents/carers in separate homes and both have parental responsibility, the school will need to establish where the majority of school nights (Sunday to Thursday) are spent. This will then be treated as the home address.

Siblings attending the nursery or in Year 6 who will be transferring to secondary school will not be regarded as a sibling under this criterion.

- (c) Supporting evidence to substantiate that the child or their family has a medical, social or psychological need must be provided at the time of application. The evidence must be in a written format and should set out the reasons why, in their view, a particular school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school.

This evidence must be current and either from the child's registered general practitioner or any another relevant qualified professional that the child has been referred to and/or who is providing direct care/support/treatment to the child on an ongoing basis in their professional capacity e.g. a child or educational psychologist, a child psychiatrist, an orthopaedic consultant or a social worker.

- (d) The LA uses the eastings and northings linked to an applicants address to calculate a straight line distance measurement to all of our community schools in Southwark which is generated by our Capita pupil database.

Due to Ivydale School being based at two sites, the distance for this school only will be calculated using a straight line from each applicant's home address to the main gates of both school sites. The shorter of the two distances will then be used.

If a child lives in a block of flats where a communal entrance is used, the LA will use the grid references for the block, not for the individual flat. When dealing with multiple applications from a block of flats to the same community school, lower door numbers will take priority

- (e) Tie break -Where a school becomes oversubscribed once all the criteria have been applied, places will be offered to children living nearest to the school measured by a straight line as described under criterion 4. If however there is a tie break lots will be drawn to decide which child is offered a place.

- (f) A child's attendance at a co-located nursery class does not guarantee admission to the school for primary education. A separate application must be made for transfer from nursery to primary school.
- (g) Multiple births – if only one place is available at the school and the next child who qualifies for a place is one of multiple birth siblings, Southwark community schools will admit all qualifying siblings as 'excepted pupils' by going over their published admission number.

1.2 Proof of address

Any offer of a school place will be conditional until proof of address has been provided within 15 days of the date of the offer of the place. Original copies of the following documentation will be required:

- Council tax bill; and
- One other proof of address such as a bank statement, TV licence or credit/store card statement

Occasionally, if the LA has reason to suspect that a family does not live at the address stated on their application an investigation will be carried out. Should the LA discover that a parent has stated a fraudulent address the offer of a school place will be withdrawn.

1.3 Dates of entry

Southwark LA will provide for the admission of children into the Reception year group in the September following their fourth birthday. However, a child is not required to start school until they have reached compulsory school age. Compulsory school age is set out in section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and The Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998. A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his/her birthday (or on his/her birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

Families of children who are offered a school place before they are of compulsory school age can request that their child's entry to Reception is deferred until later in the same academic year or until the child reaches compulsory school age. Families can also request that their child takes up the place part time until the s/he reaches compulsory school age.

Where entry is deferred until later in the same academic year, the child's school place will be held and not offered to another child. Families will not however be able to defer their child's entry into Reception beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.

For further information on deferring a child's Reception place until later in the same academic year please read Southwark's policy on "Deferring entry to primary school". Families with summer born children should read Southwark's policy on the "Admission of children outside their normal age group" for further information on how they can delay their child's entry to Reception until the following academic year. Both policies can be viewed at www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200289/primary_school_admissions.

However, we do anticipate changes to this section following the Government's consultation in respect of the admission of summer born children. For further updates please view our website at www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200172/school_admissions/3890/admission_of_children_outside_their_normal_age_group.

1.4 Waiting lists

Southwark LA will continue to co-ordinate admissions beyond offer date. The LA will hold waiting lists for all oversubscribed community schools until the end of 31 August 2016, after this date any remaining waiting lists will be returned to the schools.

Children will only automatically be placed on the waiting lists of those schools which have been stated as higher preferences on their application unless there are exceptional circumstances which will be considered by the LA. Each child on the waiting list will be ranked in line with the oversubscription criteria stated at paragraph 1.1 above. Looked after children, previously looked after children and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol, must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Any parent/carer wishing to know of their child's ranking on the waiting list and the criteria that applies to them has the right to be informed should they request this information.

1.5 Capacity of primary school places

The London Borough of Southwark has experienced an increase in demand for places. This growth is forecast to continue and will require an increase to the number of forms of entry provided in Southwark's primary schools. We aim to have finalised the locations of additional forms of entry for September 2017 later in 2016. We will publicise these on our website (www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions) and in our libraries.

Appendix 2: Southwark primary schools

Published admission number for September 2017 intake

www.southwark.gov.uk

The tables below show the proposed published admission numbers for all mainstream primary schools in Southwark for the September 2017 intake.

1.1 Community primary schools

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Albion (JI) | 60 |
| Alfred Salter (JI) | 60 |
| Bellenden (JI) | 60 |
| Bessemer Grange (JI) | 90 |
| Brunswick Park (JI) ¹ | 75 |
| Camelot (JI) | 75 |
| Cobourg (JI) | 60 |
| Comber Grove (JI) | 45 |
| Crampton (JI) | 30 |
| Crawford (JI) | 90 |
| Dog Kennel Hill (JI) | 60 |
| Dulwich Wood (JI) | 60 |
| Goodrich (JI) | 90 |
| Grange (JI) | 60 |
| Heber (JI) | 60 |
| Hollydale (JI) | 45 |
| Ilderton (JI) | 60 |
| Ivydale (JI) | 120 |
| John Ruskin (JI) ² | 58 |
| Keyworth (JI) | 90 |
| Lyndhurst (JI) | 60 |
| Michael Faraday (JI) | 60 |
| Oliver Goldsmith (JI) | 60 |
| Phoenix (JI) | 120 |
| Pilgrims Way (JI) | 30 |
| Riverside (JI) | 45 |
| Robert Browning (JI) | 60 |
| Rye Oak (JI) ¹ | 60 |
| Rotherhithe (JI) | 60 |
| Snowsfields (JI) ¹ | 30 |

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Southwark Park (JI) | 60 |
| Tower Bridge (JI) | 30 |
| Townsend (JI) | 30 |
| Victory (JI) | 30 |

1.2 Academies

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| ARK Globe (JI) | 60 |
| Dulwich Hamlet (J) ³ | 90 |
| Goose Green (JI) | 60 |
| Harris Academy Peckham Park (JI) | 60 |
| John Donne (JI) | 60 |
| Redriff (JI) ¹ | 90 |
| Angel Oak Academy (JI) | 60 |

1.2 Voluntary aided schools

| | |
|---|----|
| Boutcher C of E | 30 |
| Dulwich Village C of E | 90 |
| English Martyrs RC | 60 |
| Peter Hills with St Mary's & St Paul's C of E | 30 |
| Saint Joseph's Catholic, Borough | 30 |
| St Anthony's RC | 60 |
| St Francesca Cabrini RC | 60 |
| St Francis RC | 60 |
| St George's C of E | 30 |
| St George's Cathedral RC | 60 |
| St James' C of E | 60 |
| St James the Great RC | 30 |
| St John's C of E | 30 |
| St John's RC | 30 |
| St John's & St Clement's C of E | 60 |
| St Joseph's RC, George Row | 45 |
| St Joseph's RC, Gomm Road | 30 |
| St Joseph's RC Infants | 60 |
| St Joseph's RC Juniors ³ | 60 |
| St Jude's C of E | 30 |
| St Mary Magdalene C of E | 30 |
| St Paul's C of E | 45 |
| St Peter's C of E | 30 |
| The Cathedral School of St Saviour & St Mary Overie | 30 |

1.3 Free schools

| | |
|--|----|
| Harris Primary Academy, East Dulwich | 60 |
| Harris Primary Free School, Peckham | 60 |
| Judith Kerr Free School | 50 |
| Southwark Free School | 60 |
| The Belham Primary School | 60 |
| Galleywall Primary School – A City of London Academy | 60 |

1.4 Foundation schools

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Charlotte Sharman | 60 |
| Friars | 30 |
| Surrey Square Primary | 60 |
| Charles Dickens | 60 |

¹ These schools have a designated ASD Base. Places at the Base are reserved for children with autism who have a statement of special educational needs, but who may benefit from inclusion in a mainstream school.

² In addition to the 58 places, 2 places are allocated to children accessing the specialist support provided.

³ Admission limit for Year 3.

Please note:

- The published admission number for Ivydale Primary School set out above is subject to the completion of building work at the school.
- Academies, voluntary aided, foundation and free schools may consult separately on their admission number for 2017/18 which will supersede the information above.

Appendix 3: Southwark secondary schools

Published admission number for September 2017 intake

www.southwark.gov.uk

The tables below show the proposed published admission numbers for all mainstream secondary schools in Southwark for the September 2017 intake.

1.1 Academies

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| ARK All Saints | 120 |
| ARK Globe | 180 |
| Bacon's College | 180 |
| Harris Academy Bermondsey | 180 |
| Harris Academy Peckham | 180 |
| Harris Boys' Academy East Dulwich | 150 |
| Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich | 150 |
| Kingsdale Foundation School | 240 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Sacred Heart | 120 |
| St Michael's Catholic College | 150 |
| The Charter School | 180 |
| The City of London Academy | 240 |
| University Academy of Engineering South Bank | 150 |
| Walworth Academy | 180 |

1.2 Voluntary aided schools

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| St Saviour's and St Olave's School | 125 |
| Notre Dame RC Girls' School | 124 |
| St Thomas the Apostle College | 152 |

1.3 Free School

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Compass | 100 |
| Charter School East Dulwich | 120 |

Please note that academies, voluntary aided and free schools may consult separately on their published admission numbers for 2017/18 which will supersede the information above.



Southwark's Digital Strategy

Your Digital Council

February 2016

Foreword

“We are delighted to present Southwark’s digital strategy. This document details our ambitions as a digital council and as a digital borough, it explores the value digital can bring and the challenges we will inevitably encounter.

The arguments for going digital are persuasive, especially in the current economic climate. Funding from central government to local government is being drastically reduced. Southwark Council will have to save more than £60million over the next three years. This is a key factor in our realisation that no amount of “salami-slicing” of costs can deliver the services we need. Instead, it requires a radical re-imagining of how we deliver services and manage operations.

If we embrace digital, the potential is enormous: reduced costs, increased efficiencies, better interactions with residents, better use of data and - the great prize - improved outcomes and better lives for the people we serve.

It will take hard work, creativity and cooperation to achieve. The political will is there, the realisation that re-imagining services from a customer perspective will vastly improve what we do is there. We must seize both and make Southwark a truly digital council and borough.”



Councillor Fiona Colley,
Cabinet Member for Finance,
Change and Performance



Councillor Radha Burgess,
Deputy Cabinet Member for Digital
Strategy

The case for digital in Southwark

Our Vision Statement: “As a digital council we use technology in our operations and service delivery to improve outcomes and the lives of the people we serve.”

Our Goals

In writing this strategy we had three objectives in mind:

- to create a practical guide that would set out the case for digital and empower our service managers to lead digital service design and transformation
- to inspire and initiate conversations across the council and the borough about our digital ambitions, learning from residents, managers and staff
- to clearly document how we will ensure the digital strategy is delivered and sustained over the coming years. In order for the strategy to succeed, it must be ‘live’ - updated and reviewed at regular intervals.

Southwark’s digital strategy is the first step towards embracing change and re-imagining our attitudes to digital infrastructure and service delivery.

There are major challenges in achieving this vision. Two of the biggest are legacy systems and the scale of change required. We have a sprawling, large portfolio of business applications and data, built in a pre-digital era and not fit to support modern online services; we also need to ensure sufficient focus and prioritisation of the change management effort required to make this a success. Rationalising our business applications, updating technologies and investing in digital training internally and externally are both critical to success.

With this document, we set out how we as a council and borough will address those challenges, and how we will keep up with the changing habits of our residents, their expectations and needs, and help achieve the incredible opportunities digital technology offers to improve our services and the lives of residents.

What Does Digital Mean?

With a new emphasis on digital, we will use technology to improve our customers’ experience so we get services right first time. By streamlining our services and incorporating digital tools, our customers will move away from traditional methods of contact to digital interactions by preference - known as “digital by default.”

Going digital is less about IT technologies and hardware and more about developing a culture internally and externally that embraces digital as the norm. This includes our approach to using digital tools as part of service design and choosing to use digital as a legitimate way of communicating with our customers. The technologies we use and our ability to access them as an organisation whilst intrinsically linked will be separately addressed by the Technology Strategy, led by IT.

We have identified the two key initiatives in Southwark going digital as becoming a **digital council** and developing a **digital borough**.

In 2014/15 across our three My Southwark Service Points we had 146,743 customer contacts such as helping people with enquiries, payments and documentation and 25,163 self serve interactions with people independently using the digital facilities provided to carry out transactions online. We have seen a steady increase in the use of self serve facilities.

Becoming a digital council...



Customer led service improvements



Digital culture



Digital inclusion



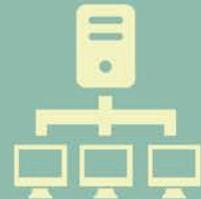
Continuous improvement

...and a digital borough



Digital inclusion

Access to infrastructure



The cost of customer interactions



Face to face
£10.53



Managing a phone query
£6.45



Online self serve
£0.08

A Digital Council Is a Better Council

A digital council will mean putting our customers at the centre of all digital change, and developing and maintaining an internal digital culture. We must be supremely aware of the digitally excluded and ensure that there are non-digital channels for those who really need them. We must also continuously improve the digital services we provide.

As a big, complex organisation that provides hundreds of different services to our customers, over time we have developed separate processes and have become used to asking our customers to interact with each service in a different way. The way we have set up our services online makes it very difficult for our customers to get the information they need or to carry out an activity or transaction easily and independently. This inconsistent approach has become increasingly frustrating, confusing and time-consuming for our customers and indeed for us when processing requests and collating customer data. This is something we are actively changing.

We want to inspire confidence in our digital services for all of our customers. We want going online to be the first preference when customers choose to interact with us; for it to be digital by default. For customers to trust our services online and actively choose them first, we need to create truly accessible, good quality digital services – and

to do that, we need to transform how we work, starting with continually listening to our customers and incorporating their feedback when making improvements and changes. We also want to have a consistent look and feel to our digital processes for our internal and external customers. By being bold, re-imagining and redesigning our services, and embracing digital tools and processes, we can improve the customer experience and make financial and resource savings across the organisation. With these savings we can increase our capacity and focus our time and expertise on understanding and helping those who need support to get and stay online. The better our online services are, the faster our customers will move away from choosing traditional methods of contact, like the phone, to digital interactions.

The Government Digital Strategy of 2012¹ set the scene for digital change and has since been the catalyst for digital transformation across central and local government. The Government Digital Service estimate savings between £1.7 and £1.8 billion per year from moving services from offline, face-to-face or phone, to digital channels. A key part of this saving is attributed to transactional services such as online payments, saving both customers time and the government money.

Government cuts to Southwark's budget expected over the next three years

40%



£90m

2011/12 to 2014/15



£31m

2015/16

Reductions in government funding over the last 5 years

A further impetus for change in Southwark is decreasing budgets from central government and the impending additional 40% cut to our spend over the next three financial years. Since 2011/12 the government has cut Southwark's council budget by £90 million and in 2015/16 we lost a further £31 million. As per the Council Plan we have faced and will continue to face financial cuts, but will not let them limit the scope of our ambition.

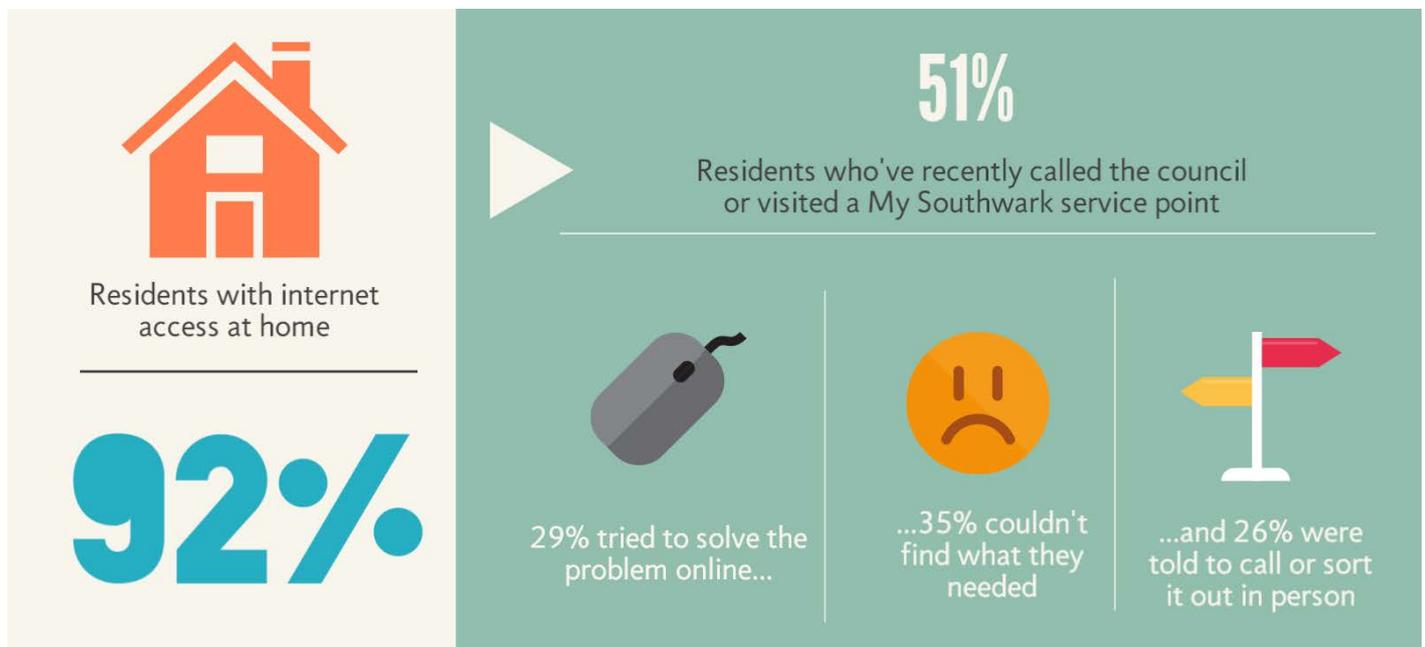
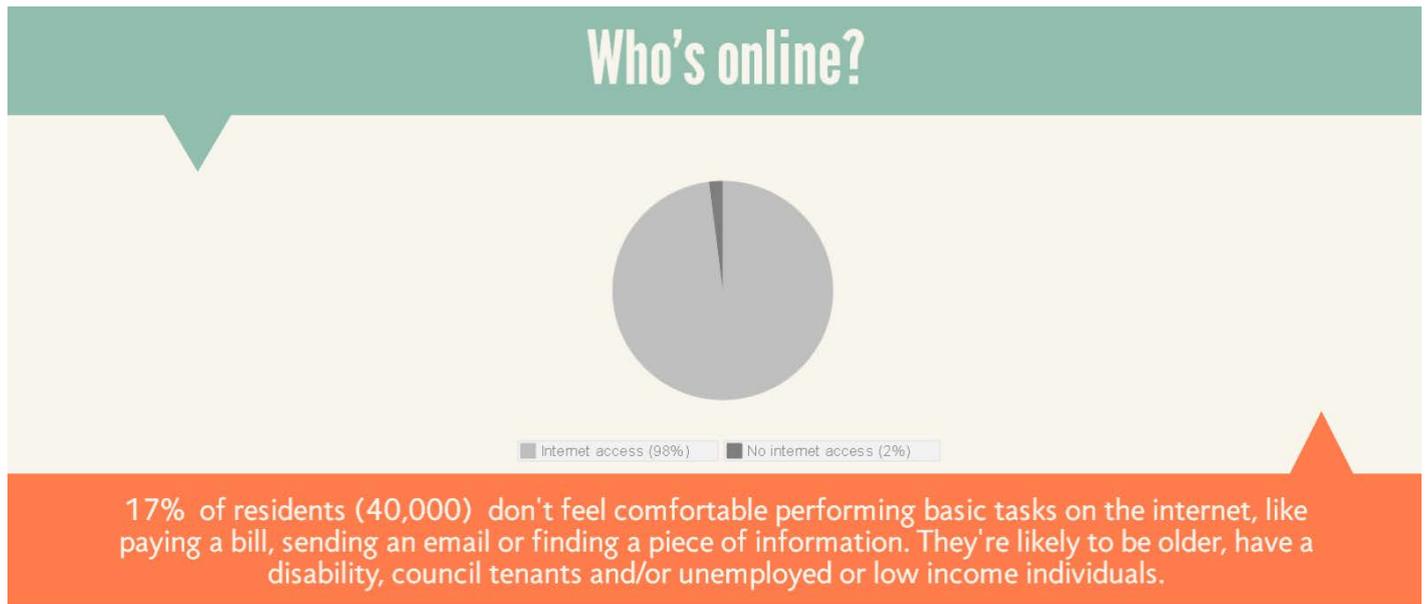
In order to do more for less we need to radically rethink how we deliver services, to look for innovative and improved ways of working and reach out to our customers to understand and deliver what they want. We must rethink and diversify how we deliver those services. Our digital capability is central to us creating sustainable and legitimate solutions to the issues we face. We must act now or risk compromising valued and vital front line services to be able to meet budgetary commitments.

A Digital Borough Is a Better Borough

A digital borough will mean we will extend our support to the wider community, improve access to infrastructure and actively support people to use it.

At Southwark Council we are committed to delivering a fairer future for all of our residents. Excellent digital services are a central way we can make this a reality. By actively improving our digital offering we will:

- Minimise waste and duplication of internal processes
- Create and maintain a web presence that customers choose to consistently use
- Make greatly needed financial and resource savings across the organisation
- Be able to reinvest savings and resource into supporting the vulnerable in our communities.



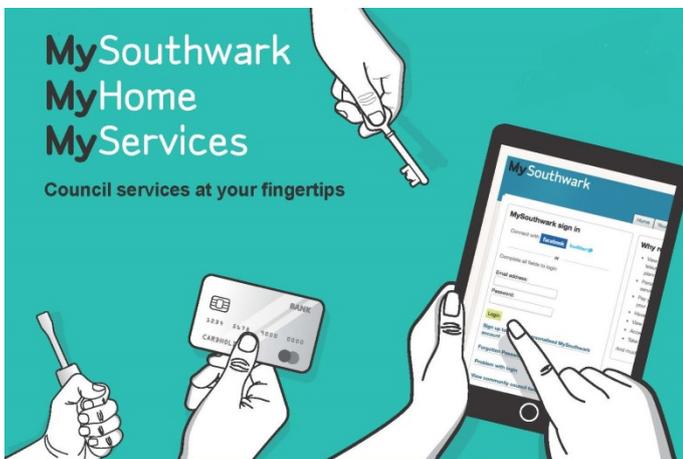
In Southwark we regularly ask our residents about their access to and use of the internet and their preferred method of contact when engaging with the council. These insights help us build a picture of what our customers think of our services. They also help us to identify areas for improvement and changes we can introduce that will knowingly benefit our residents, businesses and communities.

With 17% of Southwark residents not having basic online skills, it is clear that having access to the internet does not necessarily equate with the ability to use it². Four specific groups of people have been identified as being less likely to have access to the internet or have basic online skills:

- residents over 60 years of age
- disabled people
- council tenants
- unemployed or low income households.

These demographic groups are particularly at risk of being digitally excluded, meaning unlikely to access a service provided or requested via the internet. The barrier to inclusion, identified nationally, is largely motivation, as 53% of households without internet access think that they don't need it, and lack of digital skills a secondary reason for not being online.

Housing Self-Serve: A Case Study



The housing self-serve portal, which launched on 13 October 2014, enables customers to independently raise repairs via self-serve, check individual repair history and review account balances for rent or service charges. Previously these services were only accessible via phone or email which put a huge strain on resources to manage demand.

Whilst portal development has introduced significant improvements for our customers, the project experienced challenges that have taught us valuable lessons in digitising complex services.

Lessons Learnt

Five key lessons have been learnt from the Housing Self-Serve project that can apply to any future digital change project.

- Determine clear governance, roles and responsibilities from the outset. A Project Manager must be appointed from within the service area to lead change, manage stakeholders and ensure their buy in.
- If working with a back office system, liaise with key stakeholders with detailed understanding who can document current capabilities, data requirements, current processes and any requirements relating to new products.
- Establish quality control measures for existing and future processes. This can minimise the poor quality and inconsistent interactions customers have with a self serve product.
- Fully understand the requirements for the project and research what other suppliers have to offer before committing to purchasing a product. Many of our back office systems are complex and it may be that there is not an off the shelf product that will link in easily. Understand what the new requirements are before purchasing something as amendments could be made to an existing system at a lower cost.
- Understand security requirements for any systems. Engage with IT as early on as possible into a project to understand what security checks will need to be carried out for the system, by whom, at what point in the project and how long they take to avoid potential delays.

Response

Customer response to the portal has been very positive, with users saying that they are 'very impressed with the new system', and customer satisfaction is higher for the online self-serve portal than via email or phone. The challenge now is to encourage widespread take up of the online portal, particularly with council tenants. Despite continuous active promotion we are not seeing take-up by those in social housing.

Benefits to customers

- Customer satisfaction has improved and fewer formal customer complaints have been made
- Convenience for the customer: the service is accessible online 24/7.

Benefits to Southwark

- Introducing the self-service portal enabled us to phase out non-emergency repairs calls during out of hours and all rent-related calls to the Contact Centre

- Set a precedent for potential customer self-serve interactions across Southwark
- Substantial contribution to expanding council's digital offering and shifting customers away from traditional methods of contact
- Streamlined back end processes as self serve requests require less time/skill to process.

Between April 2014 and March 2015, 497,658 calls were answered at the Contact Centre



How we will become a digital council

As we move services online, we need to completely redesign how services are delivered from the customer's perspective, to become truly digital rather than an online simulation of existing paper and manual processes. We are examining our current ways of working, the back office systems and how information is handled.

Many of the services we provide are physical products such as recycling collections or care for vulnerable adults. These may not be digital products but the processes that enable someone to receive these services can become digital to the fullest possible extent. These can include online booking of appointments, digital payments, online application forms and access to customer profile information in My Southwark.

We will enable the digital by default approach by:

- Making services accessible online 24 hours a day on any device including smartphones and tablets, so that applications and payments can be made at any time, anywhere, in a way that suits our customers. This is keeping pace with other modern businesses and therefore with our customers' expectations of accessing services and products.
- Providing pertinent advice and information that is succinct. We will review website content and use customer insight tools to constantly improve the information, empowering customers to easily find what they need on the website to carry out a transaction. This will reduce the need to phone or email the council.
- Diverting calls away from the contact centre and face-to-face interactions at the Service Points with easy to use digital services, saving money, time and officer expertise.

To make this happen, we need to act as a Digital Council, and in embracing this challenge we will:

- Establish a standardised approach to digital service redesign
- Utilise corporately endorsed digital tools: online application forms (eforms), digital payments, CRM and My Southwark
- Streamline internal, manual processes and scrutinise back office systems
- Make best use of IT infrastructure to enable sharing of non sensitive data across departments
- Share our experiences and lessons learnt from engaging with customers and from enabling change.



Who is managing the transformation?

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance, the Deputy Cabinet Member for Digital Strategy and the Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation are leading digital transformation for the organisation. The Transformation team (in Housing and Modernisation), will coordinate organisation wide digital change as a Digital Transformation Programme whilst providing support and expertise to design and implement digital service improvements, realise efficiency savings and improve customer experiences.

The Digital Strategy for Southwark is closely linked to the 2012 Customer Access Strategy where we first articulated the need to improve the way customers access services, change how we engage with customers and invest and interact with technologies to the benefit of the organisation and our customers. The principles outlined in the Customer Access Strategy as below are still applicable.

- **Taking responsibility for customer service** because an efficient, effective local authority relies on customer focus being embedded at all levels of the organisation
- **Getting it right first time** because customers rightly expect that basic enquiries can be resolved correctly at the first point of contact
- **Digital by default** because digital council services are designed to take advantage of digital data to optimise, transform and create new and better ways of providing services in ways that customers now demand and expect
- **Treating everyone with respect** because we have committed to treating our residents as we would want members of our own family to be treated.

The challenges we face

It is clear what we need to do and exactly why we need to do it but we must recognise that this will not be easy and that there are certain challenges we will encounter.

Councillors and officers alike are familiar with the difficulties and frustrations accessing and utilising IT infrastructure. These issues will need to be addressed so we can build trust in our technologies and a greater confidence that will enable us to create reliable digital services for all of our customers and staff. A Technology Strategy will be published, outlining our plan for addressing existing issues and future-proofing our infrastructure whilst considering the ambition of the Digital Strategy.

For many Local Authorities, it is commonplace to find a large number of business systems holding key customer datasets, each designed many years before the technologies and concepts of digital were known. This digital way of working will be different, but by creating an organisation-wide set of standards and key principles to help introduce change, we can ensure that services are supported and that our customers experience consistency and high standards from every council interaction.

Reflecting on the significant challenges there have been with IT system reliability, it is natural that there will be some reluctance to further trust technology systems to handle key business processes. In addition, digitally designed processes will be significantly different from the way services are currently delivered, so there will be significant hurdles to overcome to make this change successful. To achieve this change, we will need to recreate our organisational culture, gain buy-in and a sense of urgency in order to introduce change that will have positively impact our customers. Just as we want our customers to choose digital, we want staff to embrace digital as a new way of thinking to be able to provide better services more efficiently. It is crucial we get our staff excited by digital opportunities. We have the expertise and knowledge within the organisation to support this culture change with training, sharing of experiences and best practice and by establishing a robust governance to ensure that these principles work for us.

Research suggests that a face to face interaction with a customer can cost a local authority £10.53, managing a basic phone query can cost £3.00 and a customer interacting online or carrying out a transaction £0.08.³

Southwark's four digital principles

Our digital strategy will be underpinned by four principles.

These principles will guide the way we work and help us deliver the changes we make as an organisation.

Principle 1 - "Putting the customer at the centre of digital change"

Many of the ways we work as an organisation have been designed to reflect our internal structures and reflect processes that have built up over time. We will change this by putting our customers at the centre of the way we work. We will put ourselves in the customer's shoes and re-imagine services around them, using digital tools to make their experience of interacting with us smoother and quicker. We will develop relationships with our customers where they feel confident that the feedback they provide will be acted upon.

Principle 2 - "Putting digital ways of working at the heart of our organisational culture"

We will change the way we think of ourselves as an organisation by embedding digital ways of working at all levels of our organisation. We will build our digital capability, encouraged by our senior managers, by investing in our infrastructure and the skills of our workforce. Wherever possible, we will make digital ways of working part of everyone's day jobs and cultivate an environment of digital self-confidence and capability. We will provide a digital infrastructure that staff can rely on to make their jobs easier.

Principle 3 - "Ensuring that everyone can share in the benefits of digital change"

As we change the way we work, we will ensure that our customers are not left behind and unable to access the services and support they need. We recognise that the most vulnerable in our community may need extra help. By doing things more efficiently through digital, we can make best use of our time and expertise, reinvesting it into supporting the vulnerable of our community in accessing our services.

Principle 4 - "Committing to continuously improve our services"

We will take an iterative approach to maintaining and improving our services by making small and incremental improvements. Instead of completely rethinking our approach every few years, we will regularly check in with our customers and obtain feedback so we can continuously improve our services. In doing so we can save money by minimising the need to overhaul and redesign our services from scratch every few years.

Our priority areas

At Southwark we have identified five priority areas to focus on that will enable digital change - a transformed website, best use of our infrastructure, business intelligence and analytics, digital inclusion and digital communication.

Priority 1 - A transformed website

We will completely redesign and modernise Southwark's website following the principles and standards set by the Government Digital Service. Thanks to feedback from customers, we recognise that the design and structure of our current website can be counterintuitive and confusing, often reflecting our internal organisational structures and service names. It's not very user-friendly. Currently we have a significant number of web pages that display expired information, irrelevant or duplicated content or broken links to web pages that no longer exist. We will create a website that is both well designed and well used, rooted in the digital principles of this strategy.

The website redesign is all-encompassing; from rewriting web content on every web page through to renaming service areas based on what our external customers call them.

Transaction-led – Our new website will be a transactional led website with the emphasis on easy access and use of self-service facilities such as online application forms and online payments.

Up-to-date and relevant information - We will continue to provide key information but really analyse its purpose ensuring that we are not duplicating what other websites publish (such as the NHS) and that key words and phrases are at the top of each page, in clear view, where possible. Services will receive training and guidelines on how to write engaging information for the web and where key facts should be placed on a web page to help customers access it quickly. All web page content will be regularly reviewed, maintained and owned by the service and the use of data analytics tools will confirm to us what customers want to read and what is no longer applicable.

Mobile and tablet-enabled - The design principles for the redesign are mobile and tablet led as many of our customers use them to access the Southwark website, so information and transactions will look and work as easily as they would on a desktop.



Three clicks - Our aim is for customers to access what they want from our website in just three clicks. To support this, we'll create a search function that will be a prominent part of all our web pages to help customers access what they want quickly.

Rethinking the way we view success – We will adopt new success criteria for our website. Previously we valued how long customers stayed on a webpage or how much time they spent viewing the website altogether. This will become obsolete. Instead we will use analytical tools to see how quickly transactions were carried out and how little time customers spent on web pages. This will demonstrate to us that the information we are providing is succinct and relevant, enabling the customer to transact with us efficiently and confidently. Any web pages that do not meet the criteria can then be amended to meet customer need or removed.

In 2015 we had 1,127,494 views of the website from mobile phones.

In 2015 we had 2,793,327 views of the website from desktops.

Secure and personalised customer accounts – We will increase the functionality of My Southwark, our secure personalised customer account. My Southwark currently enables customers to report repairs online, make enquiries, view housing rent or library account details, view localised services such as nearby libraries and leisure centres and have personalised home pages presenting information expressly wanted. It can also pre populate application forms, remembering key pieces of information that do not need to be re-keyed on multiple occasions.

My Southwark is a popular and well used digital tool but our aspirations for its development are greater. We will increase our ability to personalise content and actively push pertinent information to My Southwark users. Through tailoring our email communications in particular we want to enhance and improve the experience of interacting with us.

“I found applying for my Blue Badge much easier than it was a few years ago. I just had to go online to apply, which was really easy and the badge came much quicker than in the past. I also like that I can now check my rent account and council tax bill online too.”

Philippe, Borough and Bankside

As of the end of 2015 we had over 120,000 My Southwark customer accounts.

Putting customers in charge - We want our customers to become more like partners and not passive recipients of our services. Our website and My Southwark improvements particularly will support customers to initiate service requests, manage communications and receive regular electronic updates and notifications from us at regular intervals until a service has been delivered. We will also encourage and enable customers to find the information they need on our website without having to call the contact centre or get in touch with us by other means. This way of thinking will enable us to consider how data is open and best used across the organisation internally and how pertinent information is open and available to our customers at their convenience with minimal officer involvement.

For example, instead of someone sending in a Freedom of Information request which an officer collates data on and responds, instead we can make this information accessible and readily available to view on the website.

Priority 2 – Making best use of digital infrastructure

Redesigning our services around the customer is a key part of our digital strategy. To enable this we will challenge and review our business applications, the systems that hold information about our customers, record details of transactions and account balance information. We currently have a high number of systems with many services having systems tailored to their specific service area only.

Auditing our existing business applications - When considering how an existing service can include digital processes and tools we will not be bound by existing technologies and applications. We will audit our existing systems to gain a clear understanding of the capabilities of the system and if it is being used to its fullest potential. With this we will also review our processes that incorporate use of systems to see where there is waste or duplication. We expect that significant financial savings can be realised through the phasing out and decommissioning of some of our back office systems and processes, and the introduction of alternative systems could bring about resource efficiencies. A beta approach to introducing digital services will be supported. This is a phased roll out of a change so customers can try the new product and give feedback so the project can be amended iteratively. This is particularly useful if the changes are very different to the previous way of working or if the scale of the project is quite large, benefitting from a break down into sizeable changes.

Creating successful digital channels our customers want to use – Channel Shift relates to customers moving from one method of contact, largely traditional, to another digital method and preferring to use it, not reverting back to previous behaviours. For the digital services we have already set up and those that we will imminently we will review on a case by case basis whether to switch off those old channels. To ensure that our digital channels are successful we need to ensure they are well-designed, as simple as possible and intuitive. A Channel Shift toolkit will be published to assist in getting customers to use digital processes that are either readily available or soon to be introduced.



An agile approach to procurement – Part of providing excellent and innovative digital services for our customers will involve us adopting an agile approach to procurement that will encourage flexible relationships with technology providers. This could mean entering into contracts with shorter time frames, working more easily with multiple suppliers at the same time, each with their own specialism. Importantly for our customers this could put us in a better position to keep pace with technological innovation and able to meet demand by commissioning new platforms quickly and at competitive costs. We have already started to introduce this new approach by engaging with smaller suppliers across the architectural supply chain and widening our pool of contacts in the sector, so we can find the right company at the right price not just automatically reverting to the big companies we are so used to working with.

The best tools for the job – A key component to modernising processes will be to make sure our staff have the best business and productivity tools for the job. We need to streamline the applications used and re-engineer our processes to ensure the most efficient handling of tasks.

Priority 3 – Smarter ways of working through business intelligence and analytics

Each service collates customer data in some format and by making better use of data analytics tools we can gain a greater insight into customer need. We can see what information people access through our website, what people are looking for when using a search engine, if a desktop or smart device is used, if they are a new user or what the demand is for our online application forms or digital payments. For any digital service improvement introduced the collation and analysis of data is crucial for successful customer take up. Using intelligence collated from the website, social media, application forms, surveys or complaints can enable us to better commission services our customers want and support continuous improvement in service delivery. Where we do not collate comprehensive data it is important to determine exactly what information on the customer base would help manage future service demand and put measures in place to collect, manage and share these data insights.

There are many data silos in Southwark. We want to be a high performing organisation, getting the best value and making the best use of our data so we are looking into mechanisms that will enable us to extract, analyse, share and store data securely.

Reducing manual processes- The back office predominantly refers to formalised systems that store customer profile data such as payments, contact information and details on what service was requested. The middle office on the other hand refers to any manual processing of information, requests and payments by an officer in one or multiple teams in order to be able to provide the service requested. We often have to manually enter data into one or more back office systems to store the customer's information as well as respond to customer queries either by phone or email. By joining together technical capabilities and systems we can minimise the need for manual intervention when providing a service.

We will critically analyse our middle office functions to determine if digital tools can carry out such functions, increase automation and transfer customer data directly to a back office system. For example, by introducing a customer appointment booking interface online that is directly linked with the back office system of the service, we can negate the need for customers to call and book an appointment.

The results of increased automation in the middle office are streamlined processes that are easier for customers to access and officers to process, reduction of waste and duplication, and the delivery of significant financial savings.

A single view of the customer- We will use software to enable us to take a single view of the customer and

collect pertinent data to enable us to respond to customer queries and requests in a joined up manner.

We currently use CRM (Customer Relationship Management) in our customer service centre to log customer service requests that come in via phone, email or online application forms. It acts as the workflow management system linking service tickets to the correct back office system or to a contractor to process.



CRM plays a crucial role in how we engage and interact with our customers to provide services. A CRM IT system enables us to store data on an individual customer basis, to have one view of all their interactions with us and use the analytical functions. It is one of the key digital tools we will look to expand use of in order to realise efficiency savings and support the provision of great customer interactions with us such as direct appointment booking. As more services become set up to utilise our CRM IT system and collect data this will provide an invaluable customer insight which will enable services to respond to demand and make more focussed decisions. The benefits of a CRM IT system are the opportunities for increased automation and best use of officer time as oversight of service requests are provided entirely in one system, minimising rekeying, duplicated or incorrect information.

Enhancing our digital skills – We are committed to cultivating a digital culture and creating a buzz in Southwark around digital transformation. This is an exciting period of change and we want everyone at all levels of the organisation to feel empowered and motivated by what we are looking to achieve. In creating this stimulated and supportive environment we will look to each service area to identify a Digital Champion, or more than one if there is interest. These Champions will be a key contact for colleagues to discuss digital projects and approaches with who may have an interest in technology, gadgets or data. By having an informal network of Digital Champions we will be able to gauge appetite for change across the organisation and potentially any opportunities for collaborating on projects.

Our more formal approaches will be to create useful and interesting training sessions, toolkits and opportunities to share learning and knowledge across Southwark and with our counterparts externally. Our first activity is to assess what digital skills and readiness we have as an organisation and target training and support to address any skills gaps. As digital confidence in individuals and teams across the organisation grow we will look to support areas that are more hesitant, ensuring that no service gets left behind.

It will be important for us to promote our digital ambitions and culture particularly when recruiting new people to Southwark. We want people who will embrace our approach to digital and have the skills and behaviours we need to make things happen. Our recruitment competencies and behaviours will be updated to reflect our ambition and principles and ensure we attract high calibre candidates who can see themselves taking an active role.

It costs £6.45 to manage a query in the contact centre.

To manage a stage one complaint costs between £200-£250. From April to September 2015 we had 4672 stage one complaints.

Priority 4 - Ensuring digital inclusion

Work to minimise digital exclusion in Southwark started in 2013 with focus groups set up to gather resident views on what problems to solve, and how best to solve them. With further workshops and discussions in 2014 we concluded that the problems to focus on were:

- how to stop people being left behind by the fast moving shift to online communications and transactions
- support the empowerment of individuals and communities to develop digital skills
- enabling the council to modernise approaches without making life difficult for people with minimal or no digital skills.

To help solve these problems we decided to set up volunteer Digital Champions based in and from local communities who are able to train other residents to learn basic digital skills and to develop confidence in using the internet to access council services. We are setting up 15 local Digital Inclusion Hubs, with 67 trained and supported volunteer digital champions who will work to support 500 new learners to develop digital skills and we intend to expand the opportunity to even more of our residents.

The digital inclusion project will keep pace with and coordinate with all new digital initiatives in Southwark, starting with:

- Proposals to create a single digital platform for health services, potentially linked to My Southwark, lead by the Clinical Commissioning Group membership and Southwark's Engagement and Equalities team.
- An EU funded project to create new community engagement web tools, led by Southwark's community engagement team.
- The move towards universal credit online services.

As an organisation we must focus on making digital services for the majority of our customers to access independently but also devise inclusive manual approaches and processes for the vulnerable and less digitally able in our communities. Services must promote and support appropriate digital transitions in order to realise much needed financial and resource efficiencies. If a digital service is being developed then it needs to be well researched in terms of the customer base and take up otherwise costs will be incurred elsewhere to enable customers having access to the service.



"I have learnt computer skills from scratch when I started my job in a local community project which is also a digital inclusion hub. I started with learning how to turn on a computer. I can now send emails, pay my council tax online and report repairs to the council online. I have cut down on having to use the phone to do all those things I can now do online. My family are so surprised, and now they say I am a wizard for learning all of this."

Kathleen, Bermondsey

Priority 5 - Increasing pride and engagement in the borough and with the council via digital communication channels

We want Southwark to be a place where everyone can access services, find the information they need, take part in conversations and share their views. We must ensure that people across the borough and of all backgrounds can be a part of this. We want to use our channels to not just deliver services but also emphasise our community; to provide our residents with the means to be active citizens who take responsibility for future of their communities and borough.

Success means an improved reputation and specific goals being achieved, such as residents knowing to send in school admissions forms on time or getting more people using our free swim and gym offer. Our challenge is to continue develop our existing channels, along with new ones, to maximise the reach and impact of our messages, encourage behaviour change and increase involvement from residents.

Digital marketing - Digital channels are, along with print and face-to-face marketing, a low-cost, high-impact way for us to share relevant, timely information and issues with our residents, issues and information they potentially would not otherwise be aware of, for a low cost. Digital is a major element of our marketing, including both owned and paid for, and is a key channel for us to inform residents about events, services and campaigns. We have 14,000 followers on Twitter, one of the highest levels of resident engagement in London.

Targeted, paid digital advertising allows us to reach those residents who do not follow the council, either through social advertising or digital display and increasingly a significant part of campaign budgets are going towards digital. We are developing in in-depth digital communications strategy to maximise opportunities and future proof our communications.



Conversation – The evolution of social channels means that residents are increasingly expecting a conversation, rather than just to be informed. We should maximise the opportunity for user involvement to generate content on issues that resonate with them. We can be targeting posts towards topics that invite discussion and which show us to be taking the lead; we can steer the conversation but we need to be brave about the topics we bring to the table and how open we are to differing views.

Evaluation – Southwark will investigate tools social media analysis, prioritisation and routing. For example, analysing the sentiment and content of posts and then reporting this activity to the relevant service areas, along with adjusting social media posts to reflect resident interests.

Digital Services in a Traditional Environment: Children's and Adults'

Southwark's Local Offer website provides online information about the services and opportunities available locally to children, young people and families. The service is primarily for those with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) from ages 0 to 25 and is a statutory requirement of the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Southwark Information and Advice team provides a range of services to support parents and young people and actively develops, coordinates and updates content on the Local Offer website.

There are more than 100 statutory items that must be included in the offer. Southwark's offer includes ideas and feedback taken from consultation with several hundred of parents and young people during the design phase.

- In the first year (2014/15) the total number of pages viewed was 39,886
- Both Twitter (179 followers) and Facebook (67 likes) accounts have been created to promote the local offer and provide easy access to information, advice and support



Benefits to Customers

- Access to services and information is now fairer. Prior to having all services online and in one place, customer access was reliant upon meeting the right person to suggest what is available locally.
- The online resource is available **24/7** which ensures that parents or young people who are studying or working full time have access to information, advice and support at any time.
- The offer provides a comprehensive platform to ensure all parents and young people can access **real time** information about events and changes to services or new services as they happen.

Customers can find a range of provisions that they can access **for free** or at cost.

The forum section of the local offer website gives customers the opportunity to engage in strategic planning and influence the design of SEND services.

Benefits to Southwark

- The analytics and feedback process informs our commissioning team what services and support our customers want. For the first time this information can be used to inform planning and in the joint commissioning cycle.
- For the first time staff across services working with families and young people have access to the most up to date, accurate information regarding services and advice. This ensures consistency and more efficient communication across teams.
- The online service encourages customers to seek information and advice independently. If a customer calls the service an email is sent with a link to the appropriate information on the website to encourage them to check online first next time.
- Direct feedback and interaction with families and young people helps us to decide what families want and need
- As a proportion of customers are able to access the local offer on line this leaves more time for our staff to focus on delivering face to face services to the most vulnerable and hard to reach families.
- This approach ensures that the council is compliant with the Children and Families Act 2014.

Digital Inclusion

- The Team has 3 drop in sessions per week at Sunshine House for customers who prefer to speak to someone face to face. Last year over 1,000 people were seen at the drop in. In addition we offer 1:1 booked appointments which include breakfast and after hours meetings for working parents, meetings at schools and at home where a customer is unable to leave the house.
- The Team provides a phone service available 9-5 daily. The team will access the local offer on behalf of the customer and provide the information they require.
- We have prioritised promoting the local offer to all staff working with young people and parents with SEND so that they can access the offer on behalf of the parent/young person they are working with.
- Where possible we are encouraging and modeling using the local offer so that customers can access their own information. We are piloting a project with year 11 pupils in selected schools to encourage them to use ICT and other methods to seek their own information, advice and support.

Our Next Steps

Southwark's digital strategy is the impetus for digital change in Southwark Council and the foundation for all service design activities. It is a live document that will be regularly reviewed and amended to reflect not only our on-going ambition and priorities but also our technological capabilities.

In order to promote and support digital delivery in Southwark we will carry out a number of key activities and establish a governance and performance framework that will create uniformity across the organisation, measure success and customer satisfaction.

The initial areas of focus to achieve by the summer of 2016 are:

- Broadening the existing customer experience framework of measuring channel shift to all high volume transactional services. Measuring the success of digital change could include the proportion of services offered online, volume of successful transactions carried out online versus traditional methods or the degree of resource efficiencies realised.
 - Develop robust governance to review and challenge service process, reinforcing the digital strategy, tracking progress and supporting transformative digital change.
 - Establish a network of digital champions across the organisation to act as a reference point and advisor for change.
 - Start digital knowledge sharing events across the organisation, including training, workshops, informal lunchtime learning, service reviews or digital rapid improvement events.
 - Expand the current Digital Transformation Programme to capture projects and digital action plans across the entire organisation. This includes establishing a new Digital Transformation Board.
 - Publish a series of toolkits to support service managers in designing and introducing digital processes, utilising business intelligence and applying robust monitoring and evaluation techniques.
 - Bring together digital marketing campaigns encouraging customers to make best use of their MySouthwark account and to be aware of new digital services.
 - Schedule the next review of Southwark's digital strategy to ensure that it continues to reflect the needs of our customers and the ambitions and capabilities of the organisation in line with other relevant strategies including the technology strategy.
- Attract digital business to Southwark through lobbying for high speed broadband throughout the whole borough, explore options to deliver high speed Wi-Fi across the borough and marketing Southwark as the best place to set up for digital businesses.

There are many digital projects underway in the council and these will become better supported under the umbrella of the digital strategy principles and will benefit a large number of customers. The initial next steps are to complete the following digital projects during the spring of 2016:

- Launching the first phase of the new website (beta), with a specialist web team established and a programme of continuous review commenced.
- Improving the eforms and portals for environment (waste) requests, so that these are easier for customers to submit online.
- Completing the next phase of the housing repairs online project, which will allow customers to manage their appointments online (repairs can already be requested and tracked).
- Simplifying licence applications to be eforms instead of pdf forms (removing the need to download print, complete by hand and post).

Glossary

Customers: At Southwark our customers are anyone who interacts with us in any manner. This can include residents, businesses, community groups, councillors or officers across Southwark Council.

Digital tools: Corporately endorsed pieces of infrastructure that improve the process of receiving and storing customer information digitally. This includes eforms, digital payments, My Southwark and CRM.

Eforms: Online application forms that enable services to accurately store customer request information using pre-set fields as chosen by the service area based on the customer base and their requirements. This minimises the need to use unstructured emails that can often initiate lengthy email communications to resolve customer queries.

Digital by Default: A digital service that is so compelling, accessible and easy to use that customers elect to use it as a matter of first preference, over and above any other method available to them. This is also sometimes known as digital by default when taking a more service oriented approach.

Footnotes

¹ Government Digital Strategy: November 2012

² Digital Exclusion in Southwark: 20 March 2015

³ Channel Shift: Realizing the Benefits, GovDelivery

Digital payments: A digital tool in Southwark that enables customers to pay for specific services online using a debit or credit card on completion of an online form. Customer transaction data is then sent to the service to notify that a successful payment has been made. Direct Debits, Standing Orders and direct transfers into a bank account such as BACS can also be seen as a digital payment as funds are received electronically and minimal or no officer involvement is required to complete the transaction.

Digital transaction: Any service that allows the exchange of information, money, permission, goods or services between Southwark Council and our residents, businesses or communities.

Digital infrastructure: A broad reference to existing digital tools, capabilities and frameworks that we operate within.

IT Infrastructure/platforms: A broad reference to existing IT tools including hardware, software, networks and facilities that are in place in order to develop, test, deliver, monitor, control or support IT services.



Southwark's Digital Strategy: Equality and Health Analysis

Section 1: Equality analysis details

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Proposed policy/decision/business plan to which this equality analysis relates | | Southwark's Digital Strategy | | | |
| Equality analysis author | | Heena Greenleaves, Project Manager | | | |
| Strategic Director: | | Gerri Scott, Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation | | | |
| Department | | Housing and Modernisation | Division | | Transformation |
| Period analysis undertaken | | Jan-Feb 2016 | | | |
| Date of review (if applicable) | | | | | |
| Sign-off | | Position | | Date | |

Section 2: Brief description of policy/decision/business plan

1.1 Brief description of policy/decision/business plan

Southwark Council is embracing digital as an opportunity to transform how we deliver services and interact with our customers. In doing so we can realise resource efficiencies and financial savings and be in the best position to provide an excellent digital service for customers that is reliable, safe and consistent.

Southwark's Digital Strategy is the first document of its kind at Southwark Council and the impetus for digital transformation. There are two key aspects to Southwark going digital: becoming a digital council and developing a digital borough.

A digital council focuses on understanding the needs of our customers and putting them at the center of all digital design and change, using customer feedback to continuously review and update our services. This is a new way of working for the majority of the organisation and this approach must underpin an accepting, digital culture within the organisation in order to be successful. In rethinking and delivering digital services we must also support those in our community who may be digitally excluded: not having access or the skills to use digital services.

In developing a digital borough we will continue to work closely with our communities, increasing access to digital infrastructure by improving accessibility and usability of the digital services we provide. Minimising digital exclusion is a key focus and we will continue to work with parts of our communities likely to be excluded to support the development of digital capabilities and confidence.

Our digital vision is to use technology in our operations and service delivery to improve outcomes and the lives of the people we serve. By improving our digital services customers will move away from traditional methods of contact by choice- 'digital by default.'

The case for digital in Southwark is compelling. There are significant benefits Southwark can realise by actively improving our digital offering.

- The minimization of waste and duplication of internal processes
- We can create and maintain a web presence that customers choose to consistently use
- Make financial and resource savings across the organisation
- Reinvest savings and resource into supporting the vulnerable in our communities.

Having regularly conducted surveys of our residents four specific groups have been identified who are more likely to be digitally excluded: residents over 60 years of age, disabled people, council tenants and the unemployed or those in low income jobs. Approximately 40,000 Southwark residents do not have the skills to perform basic tasks on the internet. A key objective of the digital strategy is to work with these parts of the community to minimize the likelihood of digital exclusion.

To enable the digital by default approach and to act as a digital council we will:

- Establish a standardised approach to digital service redesign
- Utilise corporately endorsed digital tools: online application forms (eforms), digital payments, Customer Relationship Management IT system and My

Southwark.

- Streamline internal, manual processes and scrutinize back office systems
- Make best use of IT infrastructure to enable sharing of non sensitive data across departments
- Share our experiences and lessons learnt from engaging with customers and from enabling change.

The strategy is centered around four digital principles that will guide Southwark Council in all digital change: customer led service improvement, digital culture, digital inclusion and continuous improvement.

Principle 1 - “Putting the customer at the centre of digital change”

Many of the ways we work as an organisation have been designed to reflect our internal structures and reflect processes that have built up over time. We will change this by putting our customers at the centre of the way we work. We will put ourselves in the customer's shoes and re-imagine services around them, using digital tools to make their experience of interacting with us smoother and quicker. We will develop relationships with our customers where they feel confident that the feedback they provide will be acted upon.

Principle 2 - “Putting digital ways of working at the heart of our organisational culture”

We will change the way we think of ourselves as an organisation by embedding digital ways of working at all levels of our organisation. We will build our digital capability, encouraged by our senior managers, by investing in our infrastructure and the skills of our workforce. Wherever possible, we will make digital ways of working part of everyone's day jobs and cultivate an environment of digital self-confidence and capability. We will provide a digital infrastructure that staff can rely on to make their jobs easier.

Principle 3 -“Ensuring that everyone can share in the benefits of digital change”

As we change the way we work, we will ensure that our customers are not left behind and unable to access the services and support they need. We recognise that the most vulnerable in our community may need extra help. By doing things more efficiently through digital, we can make best use of our time and expertise, reinvesting it into supporting the vulnerable of our community in accessing our services.

Principle 4 - “Committing to continuously improve our services”

We will take an iterative approach to maintaining and improving our services by making small and incremental improvements. Instead of completely rethinking our approach every few years, we will regularly check in with our customers and obtain feedback so we can continuously improve our services. In doing so we can save money by minimising the need to overhaul and redesign our services from scratch every few years.

Five priority areas have been identified as a focus for organisational change: a transformed website, making best use of digital infrastructure, smarter ways of working with business intelligence and analytics, digital inclusion and digital communication.

The Digital Strategy is a guide for service managers to lead digital service design and transformation and how best to play a key part in developing a digital culture within Southwark Council.

The Digital Strategy will be a live document that is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the needs of our customers and the ambitions of the organisation. As a result this equality and health analysis will be updated as further data sets are collated.

The draft Digital Strategy will be taken to Cabinet on 9th February 2016 for sign off.

Section 3: Overview of service users and key stakeholders consulted

| 2. Service users and stakeholders | |
|---|--|
| Key users of the department or service | All internal (officers and councillors) and external customers (residents, communities, businesses). |
| Key stakeholders were/are involved in this policy/decision/business plan | Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation, Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation and Performance, Deputy Cabinet Member for Digital Strategy, Chief Officer Team, Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Officers in Housing and Modernisation. |

Section 4: Pre-implementation equality analysis

This section considers the potential impacts (positive and negative) on groups with 'protected characteristics', the equality information on which this analysis is based and any mitigating actions to be taken.

The first column on the left is for societal and economic issues (discrimination, higher poverty levels) and the second column on the right for health issues, physical and mental. As the two aspects are heavily interrelated it may not be practical to fill out both columns on all protected characteristics. The aim is, however, to ensure that health is given special consideration, as it is the council's declared intention to reduce health inequalities in the borough. The Public Health Team can assist with research and data.

| | |
|---|---|
| Age - Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds). | |
| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | Potential health impacts (positive and negative) |
| 20% of Southwark residents over the age of 60 years have no access to the internet at home compared to 92% of 16-24 year olds. Access to the internet is not directly linked with the ability to use it. A high number of people aged 60 and above are unable to perform basic tasks online such as completing an application form online (48%), using a search engine (36%) or sending or receiving an email (30%). It is identified that those in the community over the age of 60 are more likely to be digitally excluded than those who are younger. | No current data available. |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based | Health data on which above analysis is based |
| Southwark residents survey-August 2015 | No current data available. |
| Mitigating actions to be taken | |
| <p>Significant work is being undertaken in the community to minimise digital exclusion which includes Digital Hubs providing one-to-one digital skills and training. An EU funded project will create new community engagement tools for various groups in our communities.</p> <p>Service areas in developing digital projects will be required to identify any potential negative impacts on the community due to an individual's age, and implement measures to minimise this.</p> <p>The contact centre will continue to handle emergency requests, such as housing repairs emergencies and</p> | None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate. |

pest control emergencies, which will support those over the age of 60 with few digital skills to access services.

Disability - A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

75% of Southwark residents with a disability have access to the internet at home. This is compared with 93% of residents who do not have a disability. In relation to digital skills the disabled community have a lower rate of digital capability. 78% of disabled residents have sent or received an email compared to 96% of non disabled residents. 66% of disabled residents have completed an online application form compared to 93% for non disabled residents. This disparity demonstrates that both access and digital capability is an issue in the disabled community.

Potential health impacts (positive and negative)

No current data available.

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Southwark residents survey-August 2015

Health data on which above analysis is based

No current data available.

Mitigating actions to be taken

Significant work is being undertaken in the community to minimise digital exclusion which includes Digital Hubs providing one-to-one digital skills and training. An EU funded project will create new community engagement tools for various groups in our communities. Engagement with deaf forums in Southwark will improve access and information for our deaf community ensuring that needs are met.

Service areas in developing digital projects will be required to identify any potential negative impacts on the community due to disability, and implement measures to minimise this.

The contact centre will continue to handle emergency requests, such as housing repairs emergencies and pest control emergencies, which will support disabled customer with few digital skills or access to the internet to be able to receive services.

Blue badge applications which in the mainstream are online only are offered as an over the phone service for customers if required.

None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate.

| Gender reassignment - The process of transitioning from one gender to another. | |
|---|--|
| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | Potential health impacts (positive and negative) |
| There are no areas of focus or key work streams within the Digital Strategy that specifically target gender or gender reassignment. It is therefore probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative impacts on the transgender community. | It is probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative health impacts on the transgender community. |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based. | Health data on which above analysis is based |
| No current data available. | No current data available. |
| Mitigating actions to be taken | |
| None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate. | None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate. |

| Marriage and civil partnership – In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples and must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters. (Only to be considered in respect to the need to eliminate discrimination.) | |
|---|--|
| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | Potential health impacts (positive and negative) |
| There are no areas of focus or key work streams within the Digital Strategy that specifically target those that are married, in a civil partnership or neither. It is therefore probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative impacts on anyone who is married, in a civil partnership or not at all. | It is probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative health impacts on anyone who is married, in a civil partnership or not at all. |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based | Health data on which above analysis is based |
| | |

| | |
|--|--|
| No data sets record marital status of individuals. | No data sets record marital status of individuals. |
| Mitigating actions to be taken | |
| None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate. | None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate. |

Pregnancy and maternity - Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | Potential health impacts (positive and negative) |
|---|--|
| There are no areas of focus or key work streams within the Digital Strategy that specifically target gender, pregnancy or maternity. It is therefore probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative impacts on pregnant women or those on maternity. | It is probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative health impacts on pregnant women, or those on maternity. |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based | Health data on which above analysis is based |
| No data sets record pregnancy or maternity status. | No data sets record pregnancy or maternity status. |
| Mitigating actions to be taken | |
| None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate. | None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate. |

Race - Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. N.B. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller are recognised racial groups and their needs should be considered alongside all others

| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | Potential health impacts (positive and negative) |
|--|---|
|--|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>In Southwark the white and BME community both have high access to internet at home (white: 90% and BME: 89%) and a high percentage of people have the ability to perform basic online functions.</p> <p>There are no areas of focus or key work streams within the Digital Strategy that specifically target people based on their race. It can be assumed that digital exclusion as a result of race will be minimal.</p> | <p>It is probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative health impacts on individuals based on their race.</p> |
| <p>Equality information on which above analysis is based</p> | <p>Health data on which above analysis is based</p> |
| <p>Southwark residents survey-August 2015</p> | <p>No current data available.</p> |
| <p>Mitigating actions to be taken</p> | |
| <p>Service areas in developing digital projects will be required to identify any potential negative impacts on the community due to an individual's race, and implement measures to minimise this.</p> | <p>None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Religion and belief - Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.</p> | |
| <p>Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan</p> | <p>Potential health impacts (positive and negative)</p> |
| <p>There are no areas of focus or key work streams within the Digital Strategy that specifically target individuals based on their religion or beliefs. It is therefore probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative impacts on individuals based on their religion or beliefs.</p> | <p>It is probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative health impacts on individuals based on their religion or beliefs.</p> |
| <p>Equality information on which above analysis is based</p> | <p>Health data on which above analysis is based</p> |
| <p>No data sets record religion or belief.</p> | <p>No data sets record religion or belief.</p> |
| <p>Mitigating actions to be taken</p> | |
| <p>None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate.</p> | <p>None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate.</p> |

| Sex - A man or a woman. | |
|---|---|
| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | Potential health impacts (positive and negative) |
| <p>Approximately 49% of Southwark residents are male and 51% are female. 52% of Southwark employees are female and 48% are male.</p> <p>There are no areas of focus or key work streams within the Digital Strategy that specifically target an individual based on gender. It is therefore probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative impacts on anyone based on their gender for both internal and external customers.</p> | <p>It is probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative health impacts on individuals based on their gender.</p> |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based | Health data on which above analysis is based |
| <p>Southwark residents survey-December 2015 Workforce report 2014/15</p> | <p>No data available currently.</p> |
| Mitigating actions to be taken | |
| <p>None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate.</p> | <p>None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate.</p> |

| Sexual orientation - Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes | |
|--|---|
| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | Potential health impacts (positive and negative) |
| <p>There are no areas of focus or key work streams within the Digital Strategy that specifically target an individual's sexual orientation. It is therefore probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative impacts on anyone based on their sexual orientation.</p> | <p>It is probable that the Digital Strategy will have no particular positive or negative health impacts on individuals based on their sexual orientation.</p> |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based | Health data on which above analysis is based |
| | |

| | |
|---|---|
| No data sets record sexual orientation. | No data sets record sexual orientation. |
|---|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| Mitigating actions to be taken None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate. | |
| Socio-economic disadvantage – although the Equality Act 2010 does not include socio-economic status as one of the protected characteristics, Southwark Council recognises that this continues to be a major cause of inequality in the borough. Socio economic status is the measure of an area's, an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, health, living conditions and occupation. | |
| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan | Potential health impacts (positive and negative) |
| 84% of social tenants have home internet access compared to 97% of all homeowners. This disparity is also noted in the ability to perform basic online tasks between the two groups. 9% of those not in Southwark have no internet access at home of which 6% are in social housing. It is evident that those not in work and those who reside in social housing are more likely to be digitally excluded than otherwise. Whilst there are no areas of focus or key work streams within the Digital Strategy that specifically target an individual's socio-economic status it is recognised that those in low paid work, the unemployed, or those in social housing will be more likely to be digitally excluded. Engagement activities will focus on trying to mitigate this. | No data available currently. |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based | Health data on which above analysis is based |
| Southwark residents survey-August 2015 | No data available currently. |
| Mitigating actions to be taken | |
| Significant work is being undertaken in the community to minimise digital exclusion which includes Digital Hubs providing one-to-one digital skills and training. An EU funded project will create new community engagement tools for various groups in our communities. Service areas in developing digital projects will be required to identify any potential negative impacts on the community due to an individual's age, and implement measures to minimise this. | None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate. |

Human Rights

There are 16 rights in the Human Rights Act. Each one is called an Article. They are all taken from the European Convention on Human Rights. The Articles are The right to life, Freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, Freedom from forced labour , Right to Liberty, Fair trial, Retrospective penalties, Privacy, Freedom of conscience, Freedom of expression, Freedom of assembly, Marriage and family, Freedom from discrimination and the First Protocol

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

There are no anticipated negative impacts on Human Rights as a result of the Digital Strategy.

Information on which above analysis is based

No current data available.

Mitigating actions to be taken

None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate.

Section 5: Further actions and objectives

| 5. Further actions | | | |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| Based on the initial analysis above, please detail the key mitigating actions or the areas identified as requiring more detailed analysis. | | | |
| Number | Description of issue | Action | Timeframe |
| 1 | Lack of complex data referencing protected characteristics | Commence data collation within each digital project | From February 2016-onwards |
| 2 | Impacts for each protected characteristics | Major digital projects will need to carry out an impact analysis and take action to mitigate negative impacts | From February 2016-onwards |
| 3 | Detailed trend analysis | This is taking place with the resident survey and will need to take place on an individual project level also | From February 2016-onwards |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | |
| 7 | | | |

| 5. Equality objectives (for business plans) | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Based on the initial analysis above, please detail any equality objectives that you will set for your division/department/service. Under the objective and measure column please state whether this objective is an existing objective or a suggested addition to the Council Plan. | | | | |
| Objective and measure | Lead officer | Current performance (baseline) | Targets | |
| | | | Year 1 | Year 2 |
| None at this point | None at this point | None at this point | None at this point | None at this point |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

5. Health objectives (for business plans)

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| Darren Merrill | 1 | Others | |
| Victoria Mills | 1 | Paula Thornton, Constitutional Officer | 5 |
| Mark Williams | 1 | | |
| Electronic Versions (no hard copy) | | Total: 16 | |
| Fiona Colley | | Dated: 31 January 2016 | |
| Michael Situ | | | |