

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	CABINET	
DATE OF DECISION:	30 th October 2024	
REPORT TITLE:	Principal Social Workers Annual Reports 2023 – 2024	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR:	Annette McPartland Corporate Director Adult Social Care & Health Debbie Jones, Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education	
LEAD OFFICER:	Sharon Judd, Principal Social Worker Adult Social Care and Health Directorate Sharon.judd@croydon.gov.uk Jo George, Principal Social Worker Children, Young People & Education Jo.George@croydon.gov.uk	
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Yvette Hopley Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care Councillor Maria Gatland Cabinet Member for Children & Families	
KEY DECISION?	No	N/A
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	N/A
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1. The Adult Social Care and Health Directorate, and the Children, Young People and Education Directorate deliver services within the framework of the Executive Mayor’s Business Plan priorities, Future Croydon Transformation Plan; and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.2. Adult Social Care is an essential part of the fabric of our society. At its best it enables and transforms peoples’ lives whether they need support with mental health, because of physical disabilities, learning disabilities, or because they are becoming older and are in need of additional support. Children’s Social Care equally provides essential services to children, their families and care experienced young people up to the age of 25.
- 1.3. Adult Social Care supports people to work, to socialise, to care and support family members and to play an active role in their communities and, when necessary, protects people to keep them safe from harm. Children’s Social Care supports children and young people to be safe, have their needs met to achieve their developmental, educational and social potential to the full.

- 1.4. The aim is to put adult and children's social care in Croydon on a sustainable footing whilst ensuring that people who need services receive them. The Council is delivering a substantial programme of change, including our financial model, market management and social care practice; as well as delivering statutory duties.
- 1.5. Over the next few years, the Directorates are expected to:
 - 1.5.1. Maintain our statutory services and safeguard our most vulnerable residents.
 - 1.5.2. Deliver key objectives in the Future Croydon Transformation Plan, including a minimum £20m of savings between 2024-30.
 - 1.5.3. Receive a positive outcome from the Care Quality Commission assurance programme.
- 1.6. The annual Principal Social Worker (PSW) Reports are an opportunity to review, reflect and celebrate the achievements of what the role has delivered against the above vision and priorities.
- 1.7. These reports are focused on the professional practice of Croydon's social care workforce rather than direct impact on residents. However, by its nature, if social care practice can be demonstrated to be of a high quality, the positive impact on working with and taking decisions with our residents will be the outcome. The reports:
 - Provide an update on the key achievements for 2023-2024.
 - Promote the ongoing work of the PSW, and other areas of adult and children's social care practice development.
 - Highlight priorities for 2024, including preparations for Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Ofsted assurance.
- 1.8. In particular, the inaugural report from the statutory Adult Principal Social Worker (PSW), highlights some of the achievements since the stand alone PSW was appointed and discusses the priorities for 2024-2025. The report notes the development of Social Work Practice Sessions, Forums and Conferences which aim to embed learning and good practice. It discusses quality assurance initiatives to both highlight good practice and areas for development across the directorate.
- 1.9. In particular, the inaugural report from the Children's Principal Social Worker (PSW), highlights achievements in recruitment activity, career progressions achieved and the growing depth of experience within the Children's Social Care workforce. The new Practice Framework building on prior work provides a strengths-based approach to working with children and families in Croydon. The directorate demonstrates the willingness to continuously improve impact noting the positive feedback received as referenced in the report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. For the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet is recommended:
 - 2.1.1. To note the Annual Report of the Principal Social Worker for Adult Social Care 2023-24 (as attached at Appendix A).
 - 2.1.2. To note the Annual Report of the Principal Social Worker for Children's Social Care 2023-24 (as attached at Appendix B).

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. Good quality social care practice is core to delivering the statutory requirements of the Care Act 2014; and forms key lines of enquiry in the Care Quality Commission Assurance Programme.
- 3.2. Providing high quality social care practice for children, families and young people in the borough is a statutory requirement.
- 3.3. The reports provide insight into social care practice within the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate, and Children, Young People & Education Directorate, to the Executive Mayor, our workforce, partners, providers, communities, residents, and carers.

4. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1. The Role of the Principal Social Worker was initiated by the Social Work Reform Board and recommended in the 2011 Munroe Report. In adults, it has since developed under the Care Act 2014 and is a statutory requirement. "Local authorities should make arrangements to have a qualified and registered social work professional practice lead in place" - Care Act Guidance (2014) Section 1.27.
- 4.2. Recent best practice developments have seen Principal Social Workers produce an annual report on their programmes of work. Aligned to Croydon's transformation journey this report is the Croydon Council's first such publication and will be an annual occurrence going forward.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1. Although not a statutory report, the decision to produce and publish one is aligned to the best practice principles noted in 5.2 and as part of preparation for Care Quality Commission and also Ofsted inspection.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1. Not required.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO EXECUTIVE MAYOR'S BUSINESS PLAN

- 7.1. The role of the Principal Social Worker contributes to the following Council priorities cited in the Executive Mayor's Business Plan:

- The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services.
- People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer.
- Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential.
- Make Croydon safer for young people.
- Work closely with health services, police and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector to keep vulnerable children and young people safe from harm.

7.2. The role of the Principal Social Worker further supports the following Council priorities:

- Sound financial management and sustainability – ensuring services are value for money and maximising opportunities for joint investment.
- Good customer service and operational delivery – delivering services that are outcome focused and informed by the resident’s voice on what they need and would like from services.

8. IMPLICATIONS

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1. The Principal Social Worker Report reviews the current provision and assesses the best strategy for the future. Should there be a requirement for additional funding, normal governance processes will need to be followed, with the production of a business case for consideration.

Comments approved by Head of Finance (ASCH) on behalf of the Director of Finance. (Date 31/07/2024)

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in the report.

8.3. **Comments approved by the Head of Social Care & Education Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 11/09/2024)**

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.4. There are no direct HR implications arising from this report. However, the information presented will shape and influence our workforce practice, policies and procedures, which will be in line with our normal HR policies and procedures.

Approved by: Debbie Calliste, Head of HR for Adult Social Care & Health on behalf of the Chief People Officer of Human Resources (Date: 31/07/2024); Denise Lloyd-Taylor, Business Partner CYPE on behalf of the Chief People Officer of Human Resources (Date:

02/09/2024)

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.5. In terms of equality impact, a strategic and overarching impact assessment was approved in August 2023 (see Appendix Ai). It sets out the principles and approach the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate will take in developing and implementing the core requirements of its 2024 – 2027 statutory delivery, transformation plans and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 8.6. It will be a living document. Updated at relevant points to ensure evidence and impact considerations are captured and inform decisions. Where there is substantial service or policy change identified through the diagnostic, specific equality impact assessments will be initiated at the design phase of implementation. This will include an expectation of proportionate co-production/engagement with residents, carers, staff and partners.
- 8.7. At present, the evidence has not identified specific potential for discrimination, and we have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.
- 8.8. There is a firm commitment that all potential changes occurring as a result of the diagnostic and new operating model will require detailed equality impact assessments to support decision making / recommendations.
- 8.9. Children Social Care Equality Impact Assessment is attached, Appendix Bi.

Comments approved by Ken Orlukwu, Senior Equalities Officer, on behalf of Helen Reeves, Head of Strategy & Policy on 31/07/2024.

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

- 9.1 No.

HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

- 9.2 Not required.

10 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Principal Social Worker Annual Report 2023 – 2024 (Adults)

Appendix Ai – Equality Impact Assessment (Adults).

Appendix B – Principal Social Worker Annual Report 2023 – 2024 (Children's)

Appendix Bi - Equality Impact Assessment (Childrens – TO FOLLOW)