

HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2013-16

Towards a Healthier Tower Hamlets Summary



Introduction from the Mayor of Tower Hamlets



Welcome to *Towards a Healthier Tower Hamlets*, Tower Hamlets' Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This document provides a framework for improving the health and wellbeing of the local population.

The aims of the strategy are to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents while reducing health inequalities and promoting choice, control and independence.

It was developed following wide-ranging discussions and consultation with local residents, patient groups, carers, and health and care professionals. The extensive dialogue identified four main priorities for the strategy: maternity and early years; healthy lives; mental health; and long-term conditions and cancer.

The strategy sets the framework for the Health and Wellbeing Board to work together to improve health and wellbeing in Tower Hamlets for the next three years. The Health and Wellbeing Board represents the key partners involved in improving health locally and this strategy is a statement of how we will work together to achieve improvements in health outcomes for all local people across all stages of life. It builds on the existing strong partnership working within the borough and the evidence within our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

Vision and Principles

The over-arching vision for the strategy is to

- **Improve health and wellbeing throughout all stages of life to**
 - Reduce health inequalities; and
 - Promote independence, choice and control

Some key principles underpin this vision – in particular putting patients first, ensuring health is reflected in all policies and understanding and reflecting the diversity of the borough.

Tower Hamlets Context

Tower Hamlets is a borough of rapid change and stark contrasts. In recent years, Tower Hamlets has experienced the largest growth in the country – both in terms of new development and in terms of population size. The borough also has a relatively young population, and just over half the population is from black and minority ethnic groups.

Deprivation and unemployment are high. Nearly half of children in the borough live in poverty – the highest child poverty rate in the country. But at the same time, average earnings of those who work, but don't necessarily live, in the borough is high and there is significant visible wealth in areas such as Canary Wharf and the City fringe.

Tower Hamlets has undertaken a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) to understand the health and social care needs of the local population. This shows that life expectancy in Tower Hamlets is lower than the rest of the country. Premature death rates from the major killers (cancer, heart disease, and lung disease) are amongst the highest in London as are rates of TB and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

Despite this challenging context, Tower Hamlets has tremendous social capital – the voluntary sector is strong with deep roots, community activity is well embedded and innovation is widespread.

The strategy builds on these strengths to develop solutions to tackle the health challenges we face.



Strategic Framework

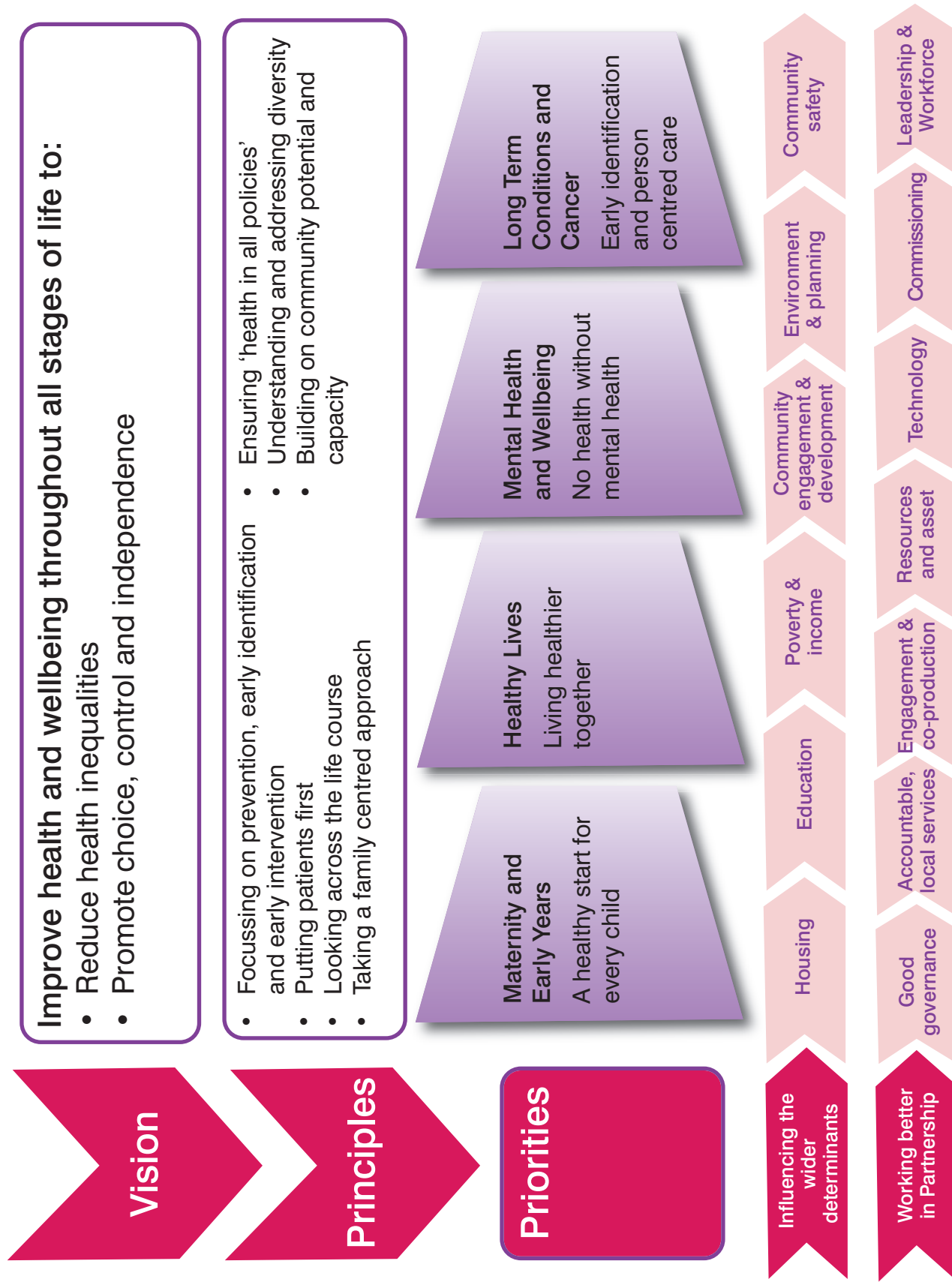
The strategy has four main priorities, which are:

- Maternity and early years – a healthy start for every child
- Healthy lives – living healthier together
- Mental health – no health without mental health
- Long term conditions and cancer – early identification and person centred care

For each of these priorities, the strategy sets out what we want to achieve and how we plan to do this.

The diagram overleaf provides an overview of the framework of the strategy.





Our Priorities

Priority 1: Maternity and Early Years

A healthy start for every child

Maternal health, before, during and after pregnancy, and the first few years of a child's life are a critical period for a child's longer term health and well-being.

The outcome objectives for Maternity and Early years are:

- Good and improving maternal health – including maternal nutrition, good mental health, decreasing maternal obesity and decreasing numbers smoking at time of delivery
- Maintaining reduction in under 18 conceptions and supporting teenage parents
- Early detection and treatment of disability and illness and ensuring that all children achieve development milestones
- Maintaining low infant mortality rates and promoting good health in infancy and early years
- Decreasing levels of obese and overweight children, providing more opportunities for active play and healthy eating
- Reducing dental decay in 5 year olds

Priority 2: Healthy Lives

Living healthier together

Living a healthy life prevents illness and enhances wellbeing. We know that people who do not smoke, take adequate physical activity, eat a healthy diet and drink alcohol in moderation are four times less likely to be at risk of dying early than those who do not adopt these behaviours. We also know that they tend to have better mental health.

The outcome objectives for Healthy Lives are:

- Stopping the increase in levels of obese and overweight children
- Reduced prevalence of tobacco use in Tower Hamlets
- Reduced prevalence of sexually transmitted infections and promote sexual health
- Reduced levels of harmful or hazardous drinking
- Reduced rates of drug use



Priority 3: Mental Health and Wellbeing

No health without mental health

Good mental health and wellbeing is fundamental to quality of life: it impacts on physical health and life expectancy, on family life and relationships, on educational achievement and employment, and on social interaction and participation. At least one in four people will experience a mental health problem at some point in their life and one in six adults have a mental health problem at any one time.

Due to the wide ranging issues around mental health and wellbeing, a separate Mental Health Strategy is being developed. This is due to be published shortly. The proposed Mental Health and Wellbeing outcome objectives are:

- More people will have good mental health
- More people with mental health problems will recover or maximise their wellbeing, enabling them to live life as fully as possible with their condition
- More people with mental health problems will have good physical health
- More people will have a positive experience of care and support
- Fewer people will experience stigma and discrimination



Priority 4: Long Term Conditions and Cancer

Early identification and person centred care

Long term health conditions and cancer have a significant impact on quality of life; reducing the ability of those experiencing them to participate in employment, social and family life, contributing to the development of disability, reducing life expectancy and affecting mental wellbeing.

The Long Term Conditions and Cancer outcome objectives are:

- Improved patient experience and co-ordination of health, housing and social care for those with single or multiple long term conditions
- Reduced prevalence of the major 'killers' and increased life expectancy
- More people with long term conditions or cancer diagnosed earlier and surviving for longer
- More people with learning disabilities receiving high quality care and support
- More carers having good physical and mental health and feel fully supported



Wider social and environmental factors

Health is affected by a variety of social and environmental factors, including education, poverty, quality of housing, physical environment and community cohesion. This Health and Wellbeing Strategy recognises this and includes actions to work with a range of local partners to tackle these related issues. Proposals include:

- Recognising the role of social housing providers and staff in promoting more healthy lifestyles and a commitment to work with the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum to develop this role;
- Increasing understanding and awareness of healthy living through the council's Healthy Schools programme;
- Monitoring the impact of welfare reform changes on health and supporting the roll-out of the partnership Financial Inclusion Strategy across the borough;
- Promoting the health benefits of employment, especially in relation to mental health, and developing the role of GPs and other health services in supporting people back into work;
- Maximising the impact of the council and key health organisations as significant employers in terms of the role they can play in improving employment opportunities, particularly for those with lower skills, and promoting employment for those with disabilities and mental health problems;
- Developing initiatives such as the Green Grid which seeks to ensure the best use is made of limited open space throughout the borough creating a network of high quality well-connected open spaces to promote bio-diversity and healthy, active lifestyles.



Delivering the strategy

Delivery plans have been developed for each of the priority areas, setting out what partners will do to achieve the agreed outcomes. The Health and Wellbeing Board will oversee progress on delivery of the strategy. Targets have been set for the key priority areas and performance will be monitored regularly by the Board through regular performance updates and feedback from Healthwatch Tower Hamlets, which will ensure the patient and community voice and experiences are heard. This combination of performance data and user experience will be vital to ensure the Board has a clear overview of progress towards outcomes and the quality of local services. This is particularly important at a time when the provider and commissioning framework has undergone significant change.

Supporting delivery of the programme are a number of 'enablers' – these are the ways of working and things we need to do to ensure that the strategy happens. The key ones are:

- Prioritising working with our local communities through engagement activity and co-production;
- Integrating health and social care – bringing different providers together to deliver joined up, patient centred care;
- Ensuring most efficient shared use of resources and physical assets;
- Using technology to improve outcomes;
- Commissioning with commitment – ensuring we use the commissioning of health services to maximise social impact which will improve health outcomes.

The delivery of this strategy, and achievement of our ambitious outcomes, will require all those responsible – the council, local health organisations, the voluntary sector, communities and individuals – to work effectively and enthusiastically in partnership. The strategy sets a clear direction of travel which partners have committed to working towards. The next three years will be vital in ensuring we turn our vision of a healthier Tower Hamlets into a reality. We are keen to hear from local residents about issues affecting health and wellbeing in the local area to ensure that the strategy is informed by experiences on the ground as it continues to develop its key role in improving health and wellbeing in Tower Hamlets.

