

better: integrating services and making them more accessible, as well as improving the response when things go wrong.

Liberal Democrats value the important role the voluntary, independent and community sectors play in the life of our communities and in delivering public services. To ensure all providers of public services are accountable to their users and the public, a public authority (if possible a democratically accountable one) should always take the decision about whether a service should be provided or commissioned.

We will:

- ♦ Improve consumer protections in public services, with a review of complaints handling processes, exploring the options of mirroring the private sector ‘super-complaint’ system in the public sector and reforms to the current system of ombudsmen.
- ♦ Introduce a ‘community trigger’ mechanism to enable the public to require a review of the provision of a particular service being delivered consistently poorly.
- ♦ Extend Freedom of Information laws to cover private companies delivering public services.
- ♦ Work with Local Authorities to bring services together at a local level to provide a better service to citizens, and support users in pooling their personal budgets into mutual support arrangements.
- ♦ Continue and expand the What Works Network to promote evidence-based policy making, establish an incubator for social enterprises developing innovative solutions to policy problems and expand the use of public competitions to encourage innovation in public services.
- ♦ Require the highest standards of data protection by public service providers, including requiring that where data is used for research purposes it must be anonymised wherever possible, and impose a moratorium on the creation of new government databases without Parliamentary authority.