

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET
16 MARCH 2017

REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor McCoy
Environment and Housing – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Smith

ACCOMMODATION FOR CARE LEAVERS AND HOMELESS YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Summary

This report provides an update to Cabinet on the work that has taken place since a report came to Cabinet in July 2016 around the accommodation needs of care leavers and homeless young people.

The report also updates Members on the Government Review of Supported Housing.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- (1) Note the report.
- (2) Receive further reports updating on the potential funding implications for Children's Services when the new arrangements come into place for funding Housing related support.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

Best practice indicates that a multi-agency approach is the most effective way of making decisions about how best to deal with children and their families to secure the best possible outcomes.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

AGENDA ITEM

**REPORT TO CABINET
16 MARCH 2017**

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

ACCOMMODATION FOR CARE LEAVERS AND HOMELESS YOUNG PEOPLE

SUMMARY

This report provides an update to Cabinet on the work that has taken place since a report came to Cabinet in July 2016 around the accommodation needs of care leavers and homeless young people.

The report also updates Members on the Government Review of Supported Housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is asked to:

- (1) Note the report.
- (2) Receive further reports updating on the potential funding implications for Children's Services when the new arrangements come into place for funding Housing related support.

DETAIL

1. There is a legal requirement for the Council to provide suitable accommodation to care leavers and homeless young people aged 16 and 17.
2. Since July 2016, a small working group, led by the previous Director of Children's Services, has met to discuss the identified needs for accommodation for care leavers and homeless young people in the Borough.
3. The group has comprised of representatives from Children's Services, Housing, Finance and Children's Commissioning (Public Health).
4. The group has considered all of the current children looked after 16 plus who either are or will become eligible care leavers in future years with a view to projecting need for accommodation – this included 130 care leavers and 62 sixteen and seventeen year old young people in care.
5. There has been an increase in young people looked after "staying put" within their foster placements and where it is known this will be the plan for current looked after children who will become care leavers this has been factored in.
6. The current number of staying put placements is 19 and it is predicted that will increase by a further 12 over the next 24 months (19 expected to start and 7 expected to cease) and there may be further pressures thereafter. Whilst this is seen as very positive practice for the young people this will put increased pressure on the Supported Accommodation budget to the value of £60k in 2017-18 rising to £120k in 2018-19 and will also mean a number foster placements will not be available to other looked after children.

7. The current breakdown of Supported Accommodation is at Appendix A – it is felt that this level of Supported Accommodation should meet the needs of young people.
8. A review of all of the Supported Accommodation receiving payment of Housing Related Support funding made by the Local Authority has been led by Julie Nixon. Representatives of the Children’s Working Group have also been part of this work.
9. A report outlining that work to date went to Cabinet on 19 January 2017 – Commissioning of Short Term Housing Related Support Services. This report highlights that new revised contracts will come into place by July 2017 – this will include those services for children and young people.

Access to Supported Accommodation

10. Access to supported accommodation for young people aged 16 and 17 or care leavers is following an assessment of need by the lead worker (Personal Advisor or Social Worker) and a subsequent referral to Youth Accommodation Panel.
11. The panel sits every 3 weeks and considers referrals for emergency accommodation in retrospect, requests for planned supported accommodation and requests for priority banding for those young people ready to take up their own tenancies independently via Choice Base Lettings, and is a direct link to the housing ‘Gateway’ in respect of access to other all commissioned accommodation and if needed additional floating support.
12. The panel is managed and chaired from Children’s Services (Resource Team), however the membership is wider and includes providers of young people’s commissioned accommodation and support and other relevant services including the link to the ‘Gateway’ via the Housing representative, Youth Direction, Leaving Care and Youth Offending.
13. Accommodation is not considered in isolation, there is recognition that for young people to be successful in their transition to independence, the right support must be in place at the right time and this support should to be holistic hence the wide membership of the panel.
14. Having membership on the panel from Housing and a link to the Housing ‘Gateway’ supports seamless move on plans for young people and is a mechanism that promotes timely decisions re tenancies through Choice Base Lettings and priority banding reducing the risk of delay. This promotes a smooth transition from accommodation provided for young people to accommodation provided for adults.

Ofsted SIF

15. Since the report to Cabinet in July 2016 the Ofsted Report – Single Inspection Framework has been published.
16. Ofsted looked at the outcomes and experiences of children who may become homeless and also of services for care leavers.
17. The Sub-Judgement for the Experience and Progress of Care Leavers was Outstanding – as of January 2017 only 5 Local Authorities out of 117 Local Authorities inspected.

Ofsted Noted the following in the report

18. Care Leavers at University are supported to return to their chosen living arrangements in the area at holiday times.

19. Strong partnership arrangements were evidenced that ensure that virtually all care leavers move onto suitable accommodation of their choice and when they are ready to do so. At 90% this is well above that found nationally. (The current figure is 89%.)
20. Young Inspectors review all semi-independent accommodation to check that it is of a suitable standard and somewhere that they would want to live.
21. Accommodation and living needs are addressed well because of the effective youth accommodation panel and services that tackle young people's needs holistically and ensure the right support is put in place.
22. Care Leavers are encouraged to remain in supported placements beyond the age of 18 and an increasing proportion do so.
23. The number of staying put arrangements had doubled from 2014/15 to 2015/16. Young people value the support they get and there are an increasing range of transitional flats and supported living arrangements which provide an effective transition into independence.
24. Young people value the work of the dedicated weekend support worker as well.

Services for Homeless Young People

25. Between April 2016 – January 2017, there were 24 referrals relating to 21 young people (3 young people referred into the Department on 2 occasions as being homeless). Of the 24:
 - 12 young people went to live with other family members – with support offered by the Local Authority;
 - 2 young people were provided with emergency short term accommodation and then returned home within a few days;
 - 2 young people were found accommodation, but declined to become looked after;
 - 4 young people became looked after;
 - 1 young person is currently in supported accommodation and will become looked after;
 - 2 young people were not deemed to be homeless following an assessment by the Social Work Team;
 - 1 young person staying with extended family for short period whilst accommodation sought.

Ofsted noted the following around Services to Homeless Young People

26. Service and support for young people aged between 16 and 17 who become homeless or at risk of homelessness are very comprehensive.
27. There are excellent multi-agency arrangements and a range of services are offered to ensure that any vulnerable young person will be offered a holistic assessment, appropriate accommodation and if required and agreeable to them, will become looked after by the Local Authority.

Government Review of Supported Housing

28. Government has recently released a consultation paper regarding how in future (from 2019/20) it proposes to fund supported housing. 'Supported housing' covers a range of accommodation some of which is short term (with the aim of managing crises / rehabilitation / providing a stepping stone to independent living) and some of which is long term (and supports individuals to live independently in the community). The types of people

in supported housing includes vulnerable young people such as care leavers and homeless young people (as detailed in **Appendix A**).

29. The costs of supported housing are frequently higher than mainstream housing for a variety of reasons (higher maintenance, repairs and rates of turnover, the specific characteristics of residents, the inclusion of communal areas and facilities such as enhanced security etc.). At present rents and eligible service charges are covered via the payment of Housing Benefit (or Universal Credit), however in future Government proposes to limit the payment of the core rent and service charges up to Local Housing Allowance rates and for this to continue to be funded through Housing Benefit (or Universal Credit). Government then propose to devolve funding to Local Authorities to provide additional 'top-up' funding to providers, reflecting the higher average costs of offering supported accommodation. This funding will be ring-fenced and the 'top-up' will be set on the basis of current projections of future need.
30. Currently a piece of work is being undertaken (involving a range of officers across Finance, Social Care and Housing) to identify the impact of these proposals on the Council, on commissioned housing providers (including supported accommodation services provided to young people) and on both current and potential supported housing tenants. A bespoke report will be presented to Cabinet once this exercise is complete and additional information is released by Government.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

31. The proposals detailed within this report are aimed at directly addressing the accommodation needs of care leavers and homeless young people in our Borough, they were informed by a detailed needs assessment which has examined both current and project service demands and explored how these accommodation needs can be best addressed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

32. The current 2016/17 budget allocated to Supported Accommodation is £428k. The majority of expenditure on this area relates to 'Staying Put' arrangements and 'Supported Lodgings' providers, with smaller amounts covering University accommodation and Supported accommodation for 17 year olds who are unable to claim housing benefit.
33. The Council currently receives a grant to cover some of the costs of 'Staying Put'. This currently stands at £77k for 2016-17 and notification of the 2017-18 allocations is expected in February/March 2017.
34. It is not anticipated that the pressure will be met through an increased Staying Put Grant allocation and as such it will have to be managed within the wider Children's Services budget.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

35. The proposals contained within this report will ensure that the Council continues to discharge its statutory duty towards care leavers and homeless young people aged 16 and 17.

RISK ASSESSMENT

36. Low risk.

COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

37. This report contributes to the following policy principles in the Council Plan:

- Protecting the vulnerable through targeted intervention, including young people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.
- Promoting equality of opportunity through targeted intervention, including access to affordable housing.

CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

38. For those children 16 plus who are looked after, the Council has a responsibility as Corporate Parents to ensure their needs are appropriately met.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

39. Consultation with relevant Cabinet Members.

Name of Contact Officer: Jane Humphreys

Post Title: Director

Telephone No. 01642 527053

Email Address: jane.humphreys@stockton.gov.uk

Education related?

No

Background Papers

Cabinet Report dated 14 July 2016 – Accommodation for Care Leavers and Homeless Young People

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Consultation will take place with relevant Cabinet Members

Property

No

This is a breakdown of Supported Accommodation

16 plus accommodation in Stockton-on-Tees

Supported Accommodation

Name	Provider	Ages	Type	Staffing	Tenure	Commissioned/ Spot Purchased	Crash Pad?
Fairway	Thirteen Care & Support	16-25 Years	6 x en-suite rooms, shared kitchen/ communal areas	24 hours/ 7 days a week	Licence Agreement	Commissioned	No
Parkfield Hall	Northstar Housing	16-25 Years	8 x one bed flats 2 x 2 bed flats	24 hours/ 7 days a week	AST (6 months)	Commissioned	1 x Crash Pad
Sanctuary Supported Living (155) Norton Road	Sanctuary	16 plus	6 x one bed flats	24 hours/ 7 days a week	AST (6 months)	Commissioned	1 x Crash Pad
Community Campus	Community Campus 87	16-25 Years	Range of one bed and house share properties	Floating support (approx. 7 hours per week)	AST (minimum of 6 months tenancy agreed)	Commissioned	No
Resource Properties	Resources – SBC	16-25 Years	2 x one bed flats & 1 x 2 bed house	Floating support	Licence Agreement	Funded by Resources	No
'Staying Close' Conversion	Resources – SBC	18-25 Years	2 x one bed flats	Floating support/ Resi staff support	Licence Agreement	Funded by Resources	No
Supported Lodgings	Resources – SBC	16-25 Years	8 Providers offering 12 placements in total 2 in assessment	24 hours/ 7 days a week	Licence Agreement (can be asked to leave at any minute)	Funded by Resources	No