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for People Services
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Children's Integrated Commissioning

Children in Care Accommodation Strategy & Sufficiency - Update

Purpose

- 1.1 The Children in Care Accommodation Strategy attached as Appendix 1, is a joined-up system wide response to improve local placement sufficiency for Children in Care (CiC) and to reduce demand and costs. The Strategy sits under the Children in Care Placement Commissioning and Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023 and is linked to the Corporate Parenting Strategy, Children In Care Pledge, Children & Young People's Plan and wider Council Plan.
- 1.2 This is a joined-up system wide aspiration to engage and commit to develop and deliver an innovative and integrated partnership service for Children in care under the auspicious of the "Derby Model". To co-produce a set of principles and priorities to deliver multi-agency local provision for children with complex needs facilitated by the Children in Care Joint Strategy Development Group, to establish innovative approaches to place children closer to home and facilitating a broader mix of accessible accommodation.
- 1.3 This report provides an update in relation to the establishment of the joint Children in Care Joint Strategy Development Group, which works in partnership with Health, Education, and Social Care to support Children and Young People (CYP) with complex needs.
- 1.4 Significant progress has also been made on the Small Childrens' Residential Homes project to establish six small homes (initially two properties) with the tender for phase 1 launched in June 2022, contract award scheduled for the end of October 2022. The first home (s) is planned to open at the end of February 2023, following completion of the Ofsted registration process and mobilisation by the provider.
- 1.5 Derby City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council have also submitted a bid for DfE Capital Funding in support of D2N2 Specialist Childrens Home provision to provide additional specialist local placements for children with complex needs. A successful outcome will commence the development plan beginning in 2023, with work to be completed by 2025.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the establishment of an integrated Children in Care Joint Strategy Development Group across Health, Education and Children's Social Care.
- 2.2 To note progress on the Small Childrens' Residential Homes project.

- 2.3 To note submission of a capital bid to the DfE for Children's Residential Homes Capital Funding D2N2 Specialist Childrens Home provision.

Reasons

- 3.1 Further developmental work and reprioritisation of resource into the remaining workstreams for delivery under the Childrens' Accommodation Strategy. Including a widening of the vision for the Children in Care Joint Development Strategy Group, across the Derby and Derbyshire footprint.
- 3.2 A preferred provider has been selected following evaluation and moderation of bids received for the Small Childrens' Residential Homes.
- 3.3 Derby City and Nottinghamshire have submitted a bid for DfE Capital Funding in support of D2N2 Specialist Childrens Home provision. To address current shortfalls in geographic areas with fewer children's homes; ensuring sufficient provision for children with more complex needs.
- 3.4 Development of the Derby Model for Children in Care continues to progress following initial workshops.

Supporting information

- 4.1 Over the last five years there has been ongoing development work and a significant number of initiatives in relation to placements for Children Looked After, aiming to improve local placement sufficiency and reduce cost and demand.

The main areas of concern regarding residential Children Home provision for Derby are:

- the increasing number of children and young people placed out of area;
- the increasing costs of this type of provision and increasing use of external provision on an interim basis;
- the difficulty in sourcing suitable residential placements for complex young people;
- the number of young people in residential provision as an appropriate fostering placement was not available.

The Children in Care Accommodation Strategy project began in September 2021, as part of the Demand Management Programme within the Working Smarter Portfolio. The aim of which is to increase sufficiency and local placements through an integrated approach with Social Care, Health Education and Provider (s), leading to better outcomes for Children in Care, with improved wrap around support services.

- 4.2 This is a strategic system wide priority to improve outcomes for children, increase the number of local placements and to manage increasing placement costs. Achievements in relation to some of the project priorities for the Children's Accommodation Strategy to date are summarised below:

- **Explore Partnership & hybrid model opportunities** – The Derby Model and the Small Childrens' Residential Homes.

- **Establish emergency, specialist, mainstream and flexible provision -**
D2N2 Children's Home Specialist placements.

- 4.3 In order to progress this strategic and integrated transformation work across Social Care, Health and Education, a Children in Care Joint Strategy Development Group has been established to work in partnership for a joined-up system approach to support children in care with complex needs. This group will report progress to the Joined-Up Care Derbyshire Childrens Board. There are four key workstreams that are underway:
- Strategic Partnership for Children with Complex Needs – Developing the Derby Model;
 - Engagement and co-production with children in care;
 - Small Childrens Residential Homes development;
 - Increasing specialist placements (D2N2).
- 4.4 Significant progress has been made on the Small Childrens' Residential Homes project with the tender for phase 1 (initial two properties) launched in June 2022, contract award scheduled for end of October 2022 and the first home (s) to open at the end of February 2023. The aim of this project is to establish six small children's homes for either solo placements, or two placements in each home. This will continue to progress over the next three years, in partnership with our proposed children in care provider due to be appointed in November 2022. The complex procurement and evaluation process has now been completed.
- 4.5 The DfE invited local authorities to apply for matched capital funding to create additional provision for children's homes for children and young people in their area. Our joint bid with Nottinghamshire County Council was submitted to the DfE by the deadline of 9 September 2022. The bid is being led by Nottinghamshire County Council and involves requesting funding for the creation of additional specialist provision for children stepping up to or down from more intensive levels of care.
- For Derby, the bid intends to support the establishment of a new, small, specialist Children's home, local to Derby, and working collaboratively with partners to achieve this. Derby's proportion will be approximately £0.3m, which will require £0.3m matched capital funding from the Council, which is a condition of the DfE bid criteria. This match funding is in place. The DfE will announce successful bids later this year, and works are to be completed by March 2025.
- 4.6 A key aim outlined in our Children in Care (CiC) Placements Commissioning and Sufficiency Strategy 2020 – 2023 is for 75% of all CiC to be placed locally where appropriate.
- 4.7 In September 2022, the Council had 57 children and young people placed in residential homes, with 16 placed internally and 41 placed in external residential settings.
- 4.8 After significant increases in the number of Children in care over the past few years, the numbers have now begun to reduce from a high of 671 in August 2021 to 623 in August 2022.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 In relation to the Small Childrens' Residential Homes project Market Engagement and Social Value Consultations took place in May 2022 with the wider market, along with Site Visits with potential Providers. Information from these consultations further helped inform and shape our commissioning and procurement processes.
- 5.2 In starting the progress the Derby Model, there has been initial engagement with children and young people to ensure the voice of the child is at the centre of any developments.
- 5.3 The Children in Care Joint Strategy Development group was created from the Joint Commissioning Health Workshop to identify to consider options for an integrated strategic partner and provider for Children in care placements.

Other options

- 6.1 None in relation to this report.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 In relation to the Small Childrens' Residential Homes project, detailed analysis and understanding of the pricing schedule submitted by the preferred Provider for the refurbishment, care and non-care costs will be undertaken.
- 7.2 In relation to the DfE Capital Funding in support of D2N2 Specialist Childrens Home provision, the overall bid is for £0.6m DfE capital funding with matched funding from Derby City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council for £0.6m (£0.3m each), resulting in total capital funding of £1.2m, should the joint bid be successful.

Legal implications

- 8.0 In relation to the Small Childrens' Residential Homes, this has progressed in accordance legal and procurement procedures and development of legal contracts/

Climate implications

- 9.0 None arising directly from this report.

Other significant implications

- 10.1 A key aim outlined in our Children in Care (CiC) Placements Commissioning and Sufficiency Strategy 2020 – 2023 is for 75% of all CiC to be placed locally where appropriate.
- 10.2 The bid for DfE Capital Funding in support of D2N2 Specialist Childrens Home provision supports the Councils strategy to increase local placement and reduce costs.
- 10.3 By developing the Derby Model for Children in Care with complex needs, this will help improve outcomes for children and young people by increasing provision for local placements. Supporting the Corporate Parenting and Sufficiency Strategy by enabling more children/young people to be placed closer to home and facilitating a

broader mix of accessible accommodation. Supporting the Council's ability to meet its sufficiency duty under the Children's Act 1989

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	N/A	
Finance	N/A	
Service Director(s)	Gurmail Nizzer, Director for Children's Integrated Commissioning	29/09/2022
	Suanne Lim, Director for Early Help and Children's Social Care	29/09/2022
Report sponsor	Andy Smith, Strategic Director for People Services	
Other(s)		

Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Children's Residential Accommodation Strategy

Childrens Residential Accommodation Strategy

Aims		Right placement, right time, right child	Value for money, good quality provision	Voice of the child	Best use of resource	Local sufficiency – 65% in Derby/75% <20miles	Maximise occupancy & stability – 80% occupancy
Principles		Mix of provision from public, independent and third sector providers	Mitigate risk & maximise occupancy through a mix of provision which is able to meet a range of needs	Market & cost management through being a local yet single commissioner	Leverage capital and value through hybrid/partnership models and opportunities	Maximize use of existing local providers where feasible (rather than attract new)	Use of data to inform timely decision making and planning across the range of placements and provision
How	Deliver planned internal specialist provision - Cluster and Annex	Review the size/mix of internal mainstream Childrens Homes estate to increase occupancy % informing future planning	Establish Derby block contracts with D2N2 link, moving towards risk sharing and single commissioner arrangements		Explore Partnership & hybrid model opportunities	Deliver Data Dashboard covering all placement types, finances and Preventative impact	
	Extend the Transition Homes pilot, considering recommendations	Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimal size Costs of small homes/ multiple dimensions of care Refurbishment/ changes timelines for internal provision 	Establish emergency, specialist, mainstream and flexible provision	Start small, with multiple flexible arrangements allowing scale up	Review Support & Accommodation housing options for YP 16/17 yrs	Deliver the planned Collaborative Specialist home (via DFE Capital)	Review budgets to consider split between internal and agency, and up to date child need
	Deliver planned UASC homes pilot				Test and deliver a hybrid model - 3 rd party provider operating Derby-leased premises		