



**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 3 MARCH 2020**

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE INVESTMENT PLAN

**REPORT OF THE
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to set out the proposals for the Children's Social Care Investment Plan to procure four properties and commission a new team to provide a new model of residential care for the most complex and vulnerable children and young people in Leicestershire.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The proposals have been developed within the Children's Innovation Partnership which was established to drive forward key elements of the Care Placement Strategy 2018-2021. The Care Placement Strategy is an overarching document which brings together key departmental strategies within the overall pathway of edge of care through to leaving care.
3. The Cabinet approved the formation of the Children's Innovation Partnership on 6 July 2018.
4. This Committee received an update on the overall progress of the Children's Innovation Partnership on 21 January 2020.
5. Approval was given by the Cabinet in June and October 2019 to approve capital investment into social care accommodation based support services. It was agreed that the Director of Corporate Resources, following consultation with the Lead Member for Corporate Resources and the Director of Adults and Communities or the Director of Children and Family Services, has delegated powers to commit up to £2m capital per scheme.

Background

6. In 2018, innovative work was undertaken by the County Council to explore establishing a partnership that would enable more creative

working to design and develop services for children, young people and their families. A tendering process was undertaken in December 2018 after which the County Council entered into a Children's Innovation Partnership with Barnardo's.

7. The Partnership was tasked with carrying out a number of Design Briefs to bring about improvements in the areas covered by the Care Placement Strategy. The first of these areas was Residential Care.

Proposals/Options

Residential Design Brief

8. A period of comprehensive design work was carried out between January – September 2019, led by Barnardo's. The design work analysed strengths, areas for development and opportunities within the County based on:
 - Data analysis on the cohort of Leicestershire children in care conducted by data analysis company Machinable, focusing on demand, placement and process characteristics
 - Primary research conducted by the Barnardo's Service Design Team, with workshops involving subject experts from the County Council and Barnardo's, scheduled one-to-one interviews with professionals, and one-to-one interviews with eight young people who had current/previous experience of Residential Care both in and out of county
 - Secondary research conducted by Barnardo's national Policy and Research Team, considering national trends in policy and practice.
9. This design work led to the proposal of an asset-based solution for local provision in Leicestershire. The proposed solution contains three elements which will be delivered in two phases; these are explained in more detail below:

Phase 1:

 - Assessment and Resource Team (ART)

Phase 2:

 - Hub containing three assessment beds (to also house the ART)
 - Three Multi-Functional Properties

Assessment and Resource Team (Phase 1: implementation by September 2020)

10. The first element of the proposal is for Barnardo's to recruit to a new Assessment and Resource Team (ART). The team will contain specialist roles such as Educational Psychologist, Clinical Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist and Therapeutic Worker, and the staff will work as part of the team around the child, working closely with colleagues in other disciplines such as health, social care and police.
11. The ART will work with young people in an outreach capacity. These young people could be in residential care, foster placements, adoptive placements, hospital, or living at home. The team will be able to work with up to 12 young people at a time, and the resource will be focused on the most vulnerable young people. The team will ensure strong staff to child ratios, and the skills to provide the following types of support according to the presenting needs of the child:
 - Crisis intervention
 - Comprehensive assessment and care planning
 - Transitional support packages
 - Family work to facilitate a return home
12. Alongside working with up to 12 young people in an outreach capacity, the ART will be working with the young people in the Hub assessment beds (see below).
13. The ART will also work closely with Leicestershire County Council services such as the Dedicated Placement Support Team. This will enable the teams to share learning and best practice.
14. Costing for this provision has been produced based on the development of a highly specialist ART. Including direct worker costs, management, administration, clinical supervision, accommodation and service running costs, the indicative cost per child/young person would be £660 per week. At full capacity, this provision would have an annual cost of £411,840.
15. The current Multi-Disciplinary Intervention Support Team Leicestershire (MISTLE) contract provided by Action for Children offers similar provision to the ART. This project will therefore be decommissioned and the children and young people currently supported within the MISTLE project will transfer to receiving ART support. The County Council, Barnardo's and Action for Children are working in collaboration to consider TUPE implications and ensure continuity of service for these young people.
16. The current contract value of MISTLE is £450,000, compared with the annual value of ART of £411,840.

Hub containing three Assessment Beds (Phase 2: implementation January 2021 – January 2022)

17. The ART will be located in a Hub. This will also contain three assessment beds which will be supported by the ART and will be used to work to contain the anxiety and distress that children exhibit at the point of family or placement breakdown. They will help the child to feel safe and emotionally contained through clear and consistent boundaries and predictable nurturing routines. This stabilising process will help children to build trust with the adults allowing them to explore their world safely. Within these nurturing routines they will be offered a balance of activities and primary play opportunities to keep them busy, aid their learning and development, and build on their sense of self.
18. The beds will be used for a period of assessment of need, delivered by the ART. This assessment period will allow for a placement to be found for each young person based on a thorough understanding of their needs. These beds could be for young people:
 - With emotional and behavioural difficulties
 - With complex health and social care needs
 - Who are young parents
 - Who have unregulated behaviour
 - With high needs related to a delayed transfer of care
 - Who are particularly at risk from going missing
19. Following the assessment period, the ART will support each young person to transition into a new placement or to return home. Once the new placement commences, the ART will continue to support the young person in an outreach capacity to provide consistency of support which research tells us is of great benefit to supporting positive outcomes.
20. The total cost of these assessment beds, including support from the ART, would be £5,200 per week. This does not include capital cost for the property.

Multi-Functional Properties (Phase 2: implementation January 2021 – January 2022)

21. The third element of the proposal is the procurement of three properties to be used as Multi-Functional properties. Each of these properties will be fully self-contained, multi-functional and double occupancy – each will be able to house up to two young people as well as staff accommodation. There is the potential that for some young people, it would not be appropriate to fill both rooms as a result of their needs. In

these situations, a decision could be taken to provide a single occupancy placement.

22. One of these properties will be regulated for use by children under 16. The other two properties will be initially unregulated, meaning they are only able to provide placements for young people aged over 16. The provision will work to a recognised kite mark of quality to give assurances, but in being unregulated it will not be limited to any specific kind of provision – these placements can therefore be used flexibly according to the needs of the young people.
23. After an interim period of 6-12 months, the demand and usage of the two unregulated properties will be reviewed. At this stage if it is clear that there is consistent demand for a particular type of provision, one or both of these properties could be registered for a specific cohort of young people. This will be kept under review.
24. It is important to note that these properties will be used to place looked after children and will be appropriately staffed; they are not proposed as rental accommodation.
25. Including direct worker costs, management, administration, accommodation and service running costs the indicative cost per child/young person would be £2,438 per week for 16+ provision, and £5,477 for under 16. This does not include capital costs for the properties.

Drivers

26. This proposal has been developed based on the findings from the Residential Design Brief. It has not been developed as a savings initiative, but as an opportunity to meet the requirements of the service and improve outcomes for children and young people through developing:
 - Needs based commissioning, supporting the local market to better accommodate children who are being placed out of county at high cost
 - Flexible beds within the Multi-Functional Properties at a standard cost that add in extra support depending on the child's needs and keep them in county
 - Better placements through the use of the assessment beds – getting it right first time
 - Better placement stability through ART support
 - Keeping children in placements which best meet their needs and preventing breakdown with ART support.

27. Although this proposal is not being presented as a savings initiative, it is anticipated that growth can be reduced as a result of having more local provision. Out of county placements are often significantly more expensive than in county placements, and also result in significant travel costs for social workers. Additionally, placement breakdowns often lead to escalations of need and therefore increased cost of subsequent placements.
28. A number of case studies have been developed which provide an indication of how a child's journey could be changed under the proposed new provision. These outline the child's actual journey, the anticipated journey under the new provision, the costs associated with each, and a narrative explaining the benefits in terms of outcomes for each child. These case studies are attached as Appendix A.

Resource Implications

29. In June 2019, the Cabinet approved a report from the Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Adults and Communities for capital investment into social care accommodation based support services. A further report was taken to the Cabinet in October 2019 for approval to allocate an additional £10m to the capital programme. It was agreed that the Director of Corporate Resources, following consultation with the Lead Member for Corporate Resources and the Director of Adults and Communities or the Director of Children and Family Services, has delegated powers to commit up to £2m capital per scheme.
30. The Director of Children and Family Services has been invited to sit on the Social Care Investment Plan Board which oversees this work. It is proposed that the capital investment required for this new model of provision would follow this governance process.
31. The proposal requires the purchase and adaptation, or if not possible the design and build, of four properties. Based on market research, it is anticipated that this could cost up to £2.5m. This is additional resource beyond the £10m agreed in October 2019, as this has already been allocated.
32. As a result, a Cabinet decision is required to allocate additional capital investment to this programme. A report is being presented to the Cabinet at its meeting on 24 March 2020.

Demand

33. Financial and demand modelling has indicated that had this provision been available in the financial year 2019/20, usage would have been such that there could have been avoided costs of approximately £359,000 against this investment.
34. This provision will be needs-led, so usage will be dependent on the needs of the cohort of looked after children. As this provision will be

delivered as part of the Children's Innovation Partnership with Barnardo's, it will be fully scalable. If demand is greater than the available provision, options will be explored to expand this model through recruiting additional staff to the ART and/or investing in additional properties. If demand drops from the estimated current level, there is the opportunity to scale down the model, or sell the provision to other local authorities. Initial conversations have taken place through the Regional Strategic Commissioning Group, and it is already evident that there is significant interest in this.

Conclusions

35. The Committee is asked to comment on the proposals contained in the report.

Background Papers

36. Report to Cabinet, 6th July 2018: [Children's Innovation Partnership](#)

Report to Cabinet, 25th June 2019: [Capital Investment Into Social Care Accommodation Based Support Services](#)

Report to Cabinet, 22nd October 2019: [Request for an Addition to the 2019/20 Capital Programme for the Social Care Accommodation Development Plan](#)

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

37. The proposal is for provision which is needs-led, and will be targeted to support the most vulnerable children and young people.
38. An Equalities and Human Rights Assessment will be produced to accompany the Cabinet Report.
39. Additional Equalities and Human Rights Assessments will be produced for each phase of delivery.

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Examples of Potential Provision & Costs

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