

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	13 October 2020
Title of Report:	Business Case for Supported Accommodation for young people aged 16+ (in care and care leavers)
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Emma Crowther, Strategic Commissioning Manager
Contact Email:	Emma.crowther@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	16+
Key Decision:	Yes
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

Plymouth City Council has a statutory duty under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989 to ensure there are sufficient placements in the local area to meet the needs of children and young people in care. These placements need to cover a broad range of provision, including children's homes, residential special schools and foster care. This also includes supported accommodation for young people aged 16 and 17, and some young people as they leave care and step into independent living. This type of provision is not currently required to be regulated by Ofsted or the CQC, as it offers support rather than care. The DfE are currently considering the introduction of some national quality standards for this type of provision and this is welcomed in further driving up quality.

This business case describes the current contractual arrangement for supported accommodation for young people aged 16 and 17, and some young people as they leave care. It sets out the proposal for a new arrangement via a procurement. It also describes the longer term ambitions for a more integrated system for young people in care aged 16+ and care leavers.

This approach relates to existing revenue on spend for placements, and proposes some adjustments to how this funding is used to support value for money; it does not request additional funding or describe any reduction in service.

Recommendations and Reasons

The recommendations are as follows:

- Proceed with a procurement for a new contract for 16+ supported accommodation to replace the Peninsula framework
- Permission for contract award to be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families

These recommendations will enable a new contract and up to date service specification to be put in place in a timely way, to support the development of the local placement market and help meet the needs of young people in care and care leavers.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Four other options were considered and discounted:

Possible option	Reasons for discounting option
Cease to commission a service	<p>The current contract expires on 31st March 2021. Ceasing to commission the service would mean that any new placements would be spot purchased under general Council terms and conditions, not specific to this type of provision. It would also mean that opportunities to seek further clarity on cost and quality are missed, as well as the strategic development of future provision.</p> <p>There is also the risk that spot purchase arrangements may breach procurement regulations, particularly if a provider is offering more than one placement to the Council.</p>
Extend the current contract	<p>The current contract has already been extended while it was held by Devon County Council (in 2017 and 2018) and while held by Torbay (2019 and 2020) and does not allow for any further contract extensions. The contract specification has not been updated since 2013 and the terms and conditions date from the same time and do not align with current Plymouth's terms and conditions. A procurement gives the opportunity to refresh both to reflect current need and priorities.</p>
Continue with a joint procurement, led by Torbay Council	<p>The plan for Torbay's service has changed so that the remit is now much wider than 16+ supported accommodation. It includes much of the service offer that Plymouth already has in the Complex Lives Alliance. The areas of overlap would now be a very small part of the Torbay contract. This option also limits the opportunities to have more proactive long-term local conversations with the provider market for Plymouth.</p>
Add to the Complex Lives contract	<p>This option would breach procurement regulations as the intention to add new providers in this way was not included in the Complex Lives procurement. Given the level of spend of £1m per year; this contract requires a separate procurement and contract. Conversations to join up referral pathways and design future models of provision will take place separately from the procurement.</p>

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The proposal aligns with the Corporate Plan as follows:

Our Priorities	Alignment with the Corporate Plan
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A Growing City	The procurement will support the stability of good quality providers with existing provision in the city, and encourage new provider to move into Plymouth, creating local jobs. The specification for the service is clear about the level of need and skills required to support young people, creating interesting employment roles.
A Caring Council	The service aims to help keep young people and young adults safe, and able to take opportunities to maximise their life chances. There is a focus on understanding the impact of trauma, in line with Plymouth's status as a Trauma Informed City.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The revenue budget for this service is part of the existing spend on placements for children and young people in care and care leavers. The procurement will aim to improve Value for Money by improving transparency of the weekly placement costs paid by the Council. The inclusion of a block contract element to the procurement will also aim to drive efficiencies via a % reduction in weekly placement costs.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

The service aims to support the placement of Plymouth young people within the city boundary as much as possible (dependant on individual needs). This will reduce the need for social workers, Personal Advisers and other professionals to need to travel out of city.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

The service aims to support young people in care and care leavers to be supported in a safe, warm and welcoming environment which meets their needs and enables them to maximise positive opportunities. It aims to help young people begin to overcome past trauma and inequalities they may have experienced.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		<i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Supported Accommodation for young people aged 16+ (in care and care leavers)							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N/A							

Sign off:

Fin	DN 24.9.2 0	Leg	MS/2 5.09.2 0	Mon Off		HR	N/A	Assets	N/A	Strat Proc	EC/SC/00 1/BC/0920
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Jean Kelly, Service Director, Children, Young People and Families											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 09/09/2020											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Jemima Laing (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People) approved verbally Date approved: 10/09/2020											