

Agenda for a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held remotely on Monday, 18 January 2021 at 4.30 pm

Members of the Committee – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP
Thirkill (Chair) Farley Tait	Smith	Knox

Alternates:

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP
Mohammed Nazir Shafiq	K Green	Stubbs

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Chair of Children in Care Council

Jude MacDonald

Sue Lowndes

Steven Greenbank

Bradford District Clinical Commissioning Group

Bradford Education

West Yorkshire Police

Notes:

- A webcast of the meeting will be available to view live on the Council's website at <https://bradford.public-i.tv/core/portal/home> and later as a recording
 - Approximately 15 minutes before the start time of the Corporate Parenting Panel meeting the Governance Officer will set up the electronic conference arrangements initially in private and bring into the conference facility the Members of the Panel. The officers presenting the reports at the meeting of the Panel will have been advised by the Governance Officer of their participation and will be brought into the electronic meeting at the appropriate time.
 - If any further information is required about any item on this agenda, please contact the officer named at the foot of that agenda item.

From:

Parveen Akhtar

City Solicitor

Agenda Contact: Jill Bell/Su Booth

Phone: 01274 434580/ 07814 073884

E-Mail: jill.bell@bradford.gov.uk/susan.booth@bradford.gov.uk

To:

A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

The City Solicitor will report the names of alternate Members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed Members.

(Jill Bell/Su Booth – 01274 434580/07814 073884)

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

(Members Code of Conduct - Part 4A of the Constitution)

To receive disclosures of interests from members and co-opted members on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

Notes:

- (1) Members may remain in the meeting and take part fully in discussion and voting unless the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or an interest which the Member feels would call into question their compliance with the wider principles set out in the Code of Conduct. Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.*
- (2) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*
- (3) Members are also welcome to disclose interests which are not disclosable pecuniary interests but which they consider should be made in the interest of clarity.*
- (4) Officers must disclose interests in accordance with Council Standing Order 44.*

(Jill Bell – 01274 434580/Su Booth 07814 073884)

3. MINUTES

Recommended –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2020 be signed as a correct record (previously published).

(Jill Bell – 01274 434580)

4. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

(Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 3B of the Constitution)

Reports and background papers for agenda items may be inspected by contacting the person shown after each agenda item. Certain reports and background papers may be restricted.

Any request to remove the restriction on a report or background paper should be made to the relevant Strategic Director or Assistant Director whose name is shown on the front page of the report.

If that request is refused, there is a right of appeal to this meeting.

Please contact the officer shown below in advance of the meeting if you wish to appeal.

(Jill Bell - 01274 434580/Su Booth - 07814 073884)

B. BUSINESS ITEMS

5. STRATEGIES TRACKING

1 - 74

The report of the Strategic Director for Children's Services (**Document "R"**) introduces two strategies – Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy and Sufficiency Strategy.

Recommended –

That Members of the panel note and approve the contents of the strategies or alternatively offer feedback that can further strengthen these important documents.

(Richard Fawcett – 07949 489308)

6. DEPARTMENT OF PLACE

75 - 84

The report of the Interim Strategic Director, Place (**Document "S"**) provides information on the work of The Department of Place' support and activities for Looked After Children and young people across a wide range of services.

Recommended –

The views of Panel Members are sought on the range of activities and actions outlined in Paragraph 2 of this report and on areas for further development.

(Jason Longhurst – 01274 434748)

7. YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

85 - 102

The report of the Director of Children’s Services (**Document “T”**) provides an update on Youth Homelessness.

Recommended -

The views of the Corporate Parenting Panel are requested.

(Kirsty Askew – 01274 437500)

8. LEAVING WELL UPDATE

103 -
140

The report of the Strategic Director of Children’s Services (**Document “U”**) provides an update to the panel on developments in respect of the Leaving Well ‘app’ a pathway planning tool for care leavers.

Recommended –

The views of the Corporate Parenting Panel are requested.

(Kelly Bidmead/Carly Turpin – 01274 435568)

9. ADVOCACY SERVICES

141 -
150

The report of the Strategic Director for Children’s Services (**Document “V”**) provides an overview regarding the independent advocacy service that enables children and young people to be supported and heard in matters that affect them.

Recommended –

The panel are respectfully recommended to note the progress made in this area and support the ongoing work in this service particularly with regards to advocating the Independent Visitors Service.

(Amandip Johal – 01274 431620/07773 248040)

10. WORK PLAN 2020/21

151 -
156

The Corporate Parenting Panel Work Plan 2020/21 (**Document “W”**)
is submitted for consideration by the Panel

This page is intentionally left blank



Report of the Strategic Director for Children's Services to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 18th January 2021

R

Subject:

- **Draft Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy**
- **Draft Sufficiency Strategy**

Summary statement:

- This report introduces two new strategies to the Corporate Parenting Panel as the final stage of consultation before final "sign off".
- The Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy is an over-arching strategy that covers all areas of work including Corporate Parenting.
- The Sufficiency Strategy is a more detailed, sub-strategy that focusses in more depth on the issue of placement quality and sufficiency.

Mark Douglas
Strategic Director for Children's Services

Report Contact: Richard Fawcett
Phone: 07949 489308
Email: richard.fawcett@bradford.gov.uk

Portfolio:

Children and Families

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report introduces the following new strategies to the Corporate Parenting Panel as the final stage of consultation.

- Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy
- Sufficiency Strategy

2. BACKGROUND

Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2021/22

2.1 The draft strategy has been written in consultation with practitioners and leaders across the partnership and aims to set out clear and ambitious aims for our children across the following areas of priority:

- A strong culture of Corporate Parenting
- Helping children to stay within their families
- Ensuring that our children and young people have a voice
- Having a safe, stable and secure home
- Having the right support to be safe, healthy and to achieve
- A positive transition to adulthood

2.2 Within each priority area the strategy identifies what we currently know, what we have already done and what we still need to do across the partnership.

2.3 This then influences the action plan arising from the strategy. The impact of which will be monitored by the new Children in Care Partnership and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

2.4 The production of the strategy has been influence by the following drivers:

- The need to ensure that a reader is able to get a sense of Bradford, our children, our strengths and areas for improvement
- The need to set out our vision and ambitions for our children
- The need to articulate what “corporate parenting” means in Bradford
- The need to celebrate our children and young people and the challenges that they can face in the care system
- The need to create an accessible and easy to read document that brings all of this to life for the reader but which also provides a framework for the work that is needed.

2.5 The previous strategy was a three-year strategy. The decision was made that this new version would be a one-year strategy due to the fact that we are in a rapidly changing environment. Prior to the end of 2022 the Children in Care Partnership will begin work on scoping the next iteration and dependant on the levels of progress made, consideration will be given to a strategy that covers more than one year.

Sufficiency Strategy 2021/22

- 2.6 This is a sub-strategy and focusses in more detail on issues related to sufficiency of placements for children in care.
- 2.7 Publication of a Sufficiency Strategy is a legal requirement.
- 2.8 The draft follows the same outline as the over-arching strategy and is designed to be able to be read as a “free-standing” strategy if required.
- 2.9 It is supported by a detailed action plan which is already in place and being monitored within Provider Services. Next year the Children in Care Partnership will take a key role in monitoring progress.
- 2.10 The strategy inevitably links closely to other strategies. For example, a key contributor to the aim to reduce the number of children who need to enter care is the work being done in relation to the early help offer, which has its own strategy, partnership and action plan.
- 2.11 Again it has been decided that this will be a one year strategy for the reasons outlined above.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 None

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 N/A

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 N/A

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1.1 We have a legal duty to publish a Sufficiency Strategy.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The diversity of the children in care population and the need for services to respond and embrace this is a key theme running through both strategies.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

N/A

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

N/A

7.6 TRADE UNION

N/A

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

N/A

**7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

N/A

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

Corporate Parenting is a key element of the Children in Care Strategy and one which the Corporate Parenting Panel will need to consider further in 2021.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

N/A

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

8.1 N/A

9. OPTIONS

9.1 N/A

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 For members of the panel to note and approve the contents of the strategies or alternatively to offer feedback that can further strengthen these important documents.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 -Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy
- 11.2 Appendix 2 -Sufficiency Strategy

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 12.1 Copies of both draft strategies are attached.

Strategy for Children in Care and Care Leavers

2021 – 2022

DRAFT 31

Contents	Page
Foreword by DCS Mark Douglas and Lead Member Councillor Adrian Farley	3
Foreword by CICC and CLC Members	4
What our children and young people are telling us	5
What our carers are telling us	6
Introduction to Bradford	7
Priority – a strong culture of corporate parenting	9
Priority – helping children to stay within their families	12
Priority – ensuring that our children and young people have a voice	16
Priority – having a safe, stable and secure home	18
Priority – having the right support to be safe, healthy, happy and to achieve	23
Priority – a positive transition to adulthood	29
Governance and Performance Management	33
Children in Care and Care Leavers Priorities and Action Plan	35

Foreword

Welcome to Bradford Council's Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2020.

This document sets out our vision, ambitions and plans for our children in care and for our care leavers.

- **Our vision** is to ensure that children are given the best start in life to be safe, healthy, happy and resilient.
- **Our aim** is to consistently deliver services with care and compassion to strengthen families through a positive working relationship.
- **Our mission** is to always put children at the heart of all we do.

As Corporate Parents for over 1300 children Bradford Council has a unique and very special responsibility. Looking after these very diverse and highly vulnerable children and young people is one of the most important things that we do. We want our children and young people to be happy and healthy, both physically and emotionally, to be safe and protected from harm and exploitation, and to be supported to achieve their potential.

We have to be ambitious for our children. Children in care and care leavers face challenges that their peers do not and life is often harder for them as a result of their experiences. All of them have experienced adverse experiences during their early lives and many have experienced trauma. We need to champion their rights and ensure that ourselves and all of our partners understand them and work together to help them to achieve their potential.

We also need to ensure that they have the chance to influence the plans that we make for them as individuals, but that they also have a voice on how our services are developed. Without this we cannot possibly know if the work we are doing is good enough.

Above all we need to provide them with the best possible care.

Our strategy sets out what we have done already but also acknowledges that we still have much to do. It invites us to work together to achieve our key priorities and to always put the care of our children in care and care leavers at the heart of everything we do.

Strategic Director of Children's Services Mark Douglas and Lead Member Councillor Adrian Farley

Foreword by CICC and CLC Members

DRAFT 31.12.20

What our children and young people are telling us

I want to know my social worker and have their direct phone number and I know who to contact if they are not in work

Encourage and support me to bet the best that I can be and help me reach my dreams

I need to know that I can trust you with my private information

I want a social worker who will stick with me and not be changed

My behaviour is because of the situation I am in. It is not me as a person

Support me to take part in meetings about me and help me understand what is happening and why

When I leave care don't just cut off contact. Some workers have been important people in my life for a long time.

If we have to meet in school, please do not make it obvious that I am in care

What our carers are telling us

Rachel works in one of our own children's homes and has this to say about the importance of children's homes for some children and young people:

For many young people who are looked after, living within their own family isn't safe - they don't need a foster family. They have a family. They don't need another one.

For these young people, living in a children's home means they have access to a wide range of adults who have very different personalities and life experiences. They come from a range of ethnic backgrounds and hold a range of beliefs. This allows the young people greater access to the menu of life. They are blessed with a team of people who care for and about them.

If relationships with one adult are hard, there is still someone who the young person can access for support.

The young people we care for, have, more often than not, had a number of placements moves - each of which has added to their sense of loss and impacted on their self-esteem. Many of these are foster placements which have broken down or extended family members who have been unable to meet their needs. With change of placement often comes change of education provider and loss of friends.

Our young people are amazing human beings. They are resilient, they are used to blending in the background, pushing people away, keeping them at arms-length. Expecting loss.

They test you and challenge you. They remember the smallest detail and live their lives on high alert. They show their feelings through their behaviour. And we have the amazing job of seeing past it and reaching the young person hiding behind their protective layer.

As the staff team around them, we have to be tenacious enough to see the chinks in their armour and find a way in. Children who have experienced adverse experiences have built in radars - they know who is genuine, who is on their side. Our work is about building and maintaining safe relationships - so our young people can grow and thrive. They learn to trust again. Slowly.

Through play, empathy, honesty, acceptance we see the young person in a way the rest of the world doesn't. As residential practitioners we are properly blessed to be a significant part of their journey.

Wendy and Michael are foster carers for Bradford Council:

All foster children are unique individuals, but in some ways they are alike too. There are common threads for children in care, so you have to be true to yourself as a carer and know what you can handle.

So many children who are fostered have struggles with anxiety or anger and it is common for them to find friendships difficult. You have to be able to put the work in to build children's self-esteem. Our younger three children all have some degree of special needs. We have needed to build up good relationships with their school and daily contact with one teacher or another. It is certainly never dull being a foster carer!

1. Introduction to Bradford

Our vision is to ensure that children are given the best start in life to be safe, healthy, happy and resilient.

Our aim is to consistently deliver services with care and compassion to strengthen families through a positive working relationship.

Our mission is to always put children at the heart of all we do.

Bradford is a dynamic city with a rich cultural heritage. In terms of population size, we are the fifth largest local authority in England with over half a million people living in the district. We are also a young city, with a higher proportion of children and young people than average for the rest of England and over a quarter of Bradford's people are under eighteen. We are also an ethnically diverse district with more than a quarter of our residents describing themselves as Asian or Asian British.

In common with the rest of England, we have seen a rise in demand for children's social care services and an increase in the number of children in need of help and protection. We too have seen a significant increase in the number of children who need to enter care. Alongside this in September 2018 we were inspected by Ofsted and our services for children in need of help and protection were assessed to be inadequate leading to an overall inadequate rating. All of these factors present significant challenges in the context of increasing demand alongside an improvement process.

This strategy sets out our plans for children in care and care leavers under six priority areas:

- A strong culture of Corporate Parenting
- Helping children to stay within their families
- Ensuring that our children and young people have a voice
- Having a safe and secure home
- Having the right support to be safe, healthy, happy and to achieve
- Having a positive transition to adulthood.

We believe that everything we have done and everything that we still need to do can be captured within one of these priorities.

The strategy sets out the things we have achieved already but acknowledges that there is still a great deal to do both for the council and our partners. There are a number of other key strategies that link either directly or indirectly to this one including our Placement Sufficiency Strategy, our Participation Strategy and our Early Help Strategy.

The strategy is supported by a comprehensive action plan that is reviewed regularly and scrutinised by a number of forums including the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

This strategy is written in the context of a considerable challenge caused by the increasing numbers of children in care, the national shortage of placements and also the practice improvements that are necessary following our Ofsted inspection in 2018. The strategy follows six months of the Covid-19 pandemic which has had a huge impact on our children, communities and services. The strategy is ambitious and rightly so, and it can only be achieved with the full support of our leaders, our staff and our partners.

DRAFT 31.12.20

2. Priority – a strong culture of corporate parenting

2.1 What we know:

What is Corporate Parenting?

The concept of Corporate Parenting is defined in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and in statutory guidance published by the Department for Education in February 2018. This guidance is for local authorities and their “relevant partners” and others who contribute to the services provided for children in care and young people who have left care.

A strong corporate parenting culture means that a sense of vision and responsibility towards the children we look after and our care leavers is a priority for all of us. Across the Local Authority and the partnership, we must recognise that children in care have the same needs as other children but that they face unique challenges that their peers do not. Many have experienced trauma arising from abuse or neglect and all of them have experienced instability in their lives.

As corporate parents we must recognise that the care system is not just about keeping children safe from harm. It is also about promoting all aspects of well-being, in the way that we would do for our own children.

A strong corporate parenting culture means that everyone from the Local Authority Chief Executive to front line staff, as well as elected council members, are as concerned about those children and care leavers as they would be about their own children. Although children’s services are key, this responsibility extends to all parts of the council.

Corporate parenting is an important part of the Ofsted inspection framework however it is vital that *all* parts of a local authority beyond those directly responsible for care and pathway planning recognise they have a key role too.

We have seven key responsibilities as corporate parents:

- Promoting the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children in care and care leavers
- Encouraging them to express their views, wishes and feelings
- Seeking and taking into account their views, wishes and feelings
- Helping them gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the council and our partners
- Promoting high aspirations and securing the best outcomes
- Helping children and young people in care and care leavers to be safe, and to have stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work
- Preparing them for adulthood and independent living.

The role of elected members and the Corporate Parenting Panel

Councillors have particular responsibilities as corporate parents. It is every councillor's responsibility to make sure that the council is meeting their duties towards children in care and care leavers. Every councillor and officer within a council has a responsibility to act for those children and young people as a parent would for their own child. Lead members, members of the Corporate Parenting Panels and members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees may have particular responsibilities, but for all councillors their role as the eyes and ears of the community is particularly important. As corporate parents, all councillors need to "champion" our children in care and care leavers, recognise the uniqueness of the children in their care, and make sure each child is getting what they need to do their best.

The role of partner agencies and services

Although the corporate parenting principles defined in the guidance apply only to local authorities, Directors of Children's Services and Lead Members for Children nevertheless need to ensure that relevant partners understand how they can assist us to apply the principles. This includes all of our key partners. The Local Authority has a legal duty to make arrangements for cooperation between partners in relation to children in care and care leavers, and our partners have a legal duty to co-operate in the making of these arrangements.

Partners in health services, education, the police and the voluntary sector all have a role to play in promoting the rights and needs of our children in care and care leavers and without their cooperation we cannot fully discharge our responsibilities. It is therefore essential that our partners understand their own responsibilities and prioritise the needs of children in care and are able to contribute fully to strategies and plans.

2.2. What we have done so far?

- We have established a Corporate Parenting Panel chaired by Councillor Carol Thirkill. This is to provide a forum for regular, detailed discussion of issues, and a positive link with services and with children in care. Members of our corporate parenting panel can use their position to "champion" children in care and care leavers and to raise awareness of the role amongst colleagues. Senior officers from the Local Authority and our partners also attend the panel to provide information.
- The Bradford Corporate Parenting Panel aims to achieve the seven key corporate parenting goals by:
 - Talking to children in care and care leavers and listening to what they tell us about the help and support they receive and their experience in care
 - Scrutinising the reports from all services for children in care and from our Independent Reviewing Officers
 - Monitoring the performance and quality of services delivered by Children's Social Care and partners

- Reviewing the performance of the council and its partners in relation to education and health outcomes of our children in care and care leavers
- Scrutinising the key strategic plans for children in care and care leavers including the Sufficiency Strategy and Participation Strategy.
- Promoting a partnership approach to the delivery and development of services for children in care and care leavers
- Celebrating the individual and collective success of our children in care and care leavers, championing their rights and showing our pride in their achievements.
- We have implemented a multi-agency Children in Care Strategic Group that includes senior managers and leaders from across the partnership whose role is to bring multi-agency challenge and support to the action plans arising from this strategy and to ensure that the needs of children in care and young people who have left care remain a focus of their organisation.

2.3 What do we still need to do?

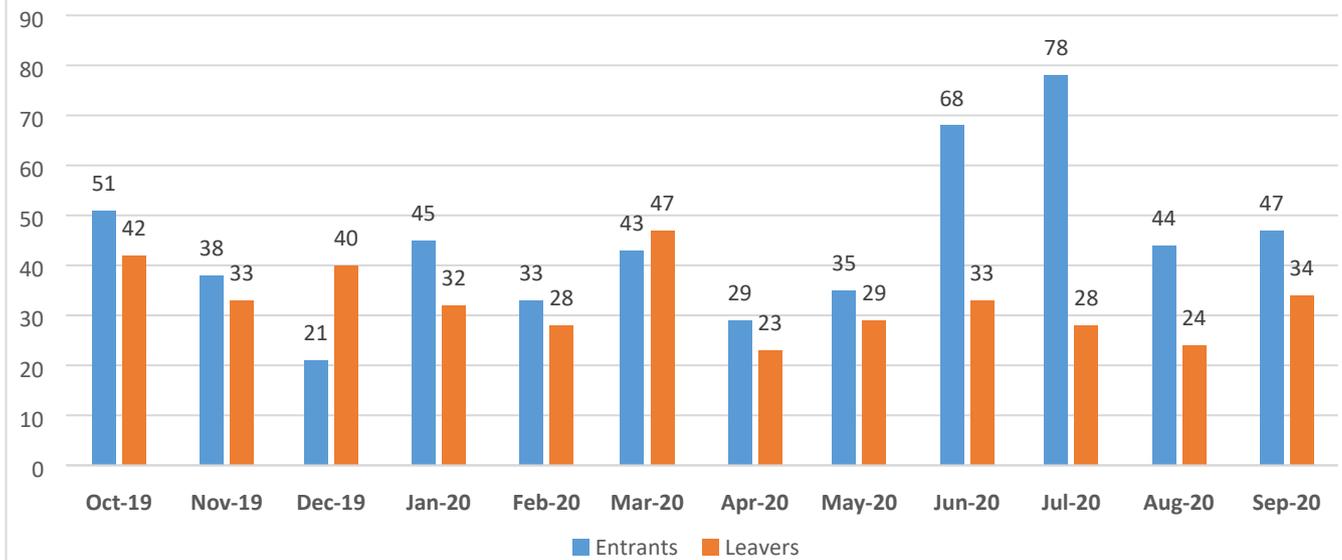
- We need to increase the extent to which the Corporate Parenting Panel hears from and is influenced by our children in care and care – experienced young people. This will involve working with the Children in Care Council to identify creative ways to enable the group to contribute to the work of the panel.
- However, we also want to extend this beyond the membership of the Corporate Parenting Panel to *all* elected members in all wards. The first stage of this process will be to identify a cohort of “champions” from the wider cohort of members who can receive additional input and use their role and influence to raise awareness of the needs of our children in care.
- We need to take further steps to ensure that corporate parenting responsibility is understood and owned by all areas of the council not just in Children’s Services, to ensure that the needs and rights of children in care are taken into account in any decisions that could affect them either directly or indirectly.

3. Priority – Helping children to stay within their families

3.1 What we know:

- In the last twelve months 525 children have entered care in Bradford. For some children this was a short period in care however for others it is a medium or long term arrangement. Some will remain in care for the remainder of their childhood.
- In the same period 388 children left care. This was for a variety of reasons. A significant number reached the age of eighteen, however other children left care due to rehabilitation or as a result of permanent arrangements such as adoption or Special Guardianship.
- These figures mean that on average 44 children enter care in Bradford every month and 32 leave care (see Table 1).
- As a result, the total number of children in care has continued to grow and in the last twelve months the overall number has grown by 137.
- This presents enormous challenges to all services that support children in care. The rising children in care numbers have presented challenges to the Council in terms of our ability to secure placements and in terms of the case-loads of our social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers. For partner agencies, the rising number has created challenges in terms of statutory health assessments, Personal Education Plans and other services specifically focussed on children in care.
- It is acknowledged that for the vast majority of children, living with their parents or extended families will give them the best chance in life. We know that for some children who enter care, their outcomes are poorer than for their peers. For this reason, our first priority is to provide the right support at the right time, to help children to safely remain with their parents or if this is not possible, within their extended families, close to their friends, schools and communities.
- Key to this aim is the expansion of the early help offer across Bradford and the need for us to support all practitioners who work with children, young people and families to implement their duty to provide support at an early stage when additional needs are identified.

Table 1: Care entrants & leavers 2020



3.2. What we have done so far?

- In order to reduce the need for children to enter care we have needed to strengthen our support offer.
- We have recently developed and launched our Early Help Strategy and Improvement Plan and are working with partner agencies to support them to take on the role of Lead Professional. It is anticipated that this will enable needs to be addressed early with families, and thus avoid escalation into statutory protective services.
- In 2017 we adopted the No Wrong Door programme as part of “B Positive Pathways” (BPP). This programme has been partially funded via the Department of Education’s Innovation Programme. BPP is a large, multi-disciplinary service that provides both residential care, outreach support and therapeutic input to families in crisis where this is a high risk of a child coming into care or where a child has already entered care. Evaluation of this programme by the DfE identifies that more than 90% of children and young people worked with were able to either remain with, or return to, their families. In the past twelve months alone, the service has worked with 120 young people and just eight have remained in care. Therefore, BPP remains key to our provision of support to young people at the “edge of care” and also to those who do need to enter the care system.
- In addition, our Intensive Family Support and Family Group Conferencing Teams have worked with large numbers of families with the primary aim of preventing escalation of concern and also engaging support from the child’s wider network.
- Our Problem Solving Court Team has worked intensively with families in care proceedings as a means of achieving sufficient change during the proceedings to allow the child to either remain at, or return home at the end of the court process.

- Our commissioned Positive Behaviour Service continues to provide intensive support to families with children aged 8 to 14 who have learning disability and who display challenging behaviour. The service continues to see good outcomes in terms of preventing the need for these children to enter full time care.
- We have introduced stronger mechanisms to track cases that are in the pre-proceedings stage of Public Law Outline (PLO). This process provides families with a final chance to work with us to make changes in order to avoid the need for us to make an application to court. The tracking process is designed to help us ensure that agreed tasks are undertaken promptly, to avoid drift which has been a problem for us in the past. In the past twelve months 116 children who have entered pre-proceedings PLO have been able to remain with their families due to the work completed.
- When a child has needed to enter care, we have continued to prioritise the need for them to remain within their extended network if this can be safely achieved. As a result, more than 20% of children who entered care in the last twelve months have been placed with extended family such as grandparents, aunts and uncles or older brothers and sisters.
- We have ensured that our Family and Friends foster carers have had access to the same support as our mainstream foster carers.
- At present more than 40% of all of our children in care are placed in a regulated arrangement with a member of their family and the majority of these family members have been approved as foster carers either temporarily under Regulation 24 (which can last for a maximum of 24 weeks) or permanently following full approval by the Foster Care Panel and Agency Decision Maker.
- Many of these children no longer need the protection of the care system and could easily progress to permanence with their relatives outside of the care system via Special Guardianship. For some families there are barriers to this. These barriers can be financial or related to the support that the carers will receive if they cease to be foster carers. We have strengthened our support offer to Special Guardians via our Special Guardianship Support Team and we are in the process of amending our allowances policy so that there is no financial disadvantage to a carer taking on Special Guardianship. We hope that this will enable an increasing number of children to safely leave care whilst remaining with their families.
- In addition, of the children who left care in the previous twelve months more than 80 were able to return home to their parents or carers.

3.3 What do we still need to do?

- Our new Early Help Strategy is in its infancy and we need to support our partners to develop the confidence to provide targeted and coordinated early help to families as a means of avoiding escalation into statutory protective services. We need to see a subsequent reduction in the number of families who need to be referred to statutory social care services.
- We are currently planning to strengthen services for families in crisis by expanding our BPP service in order to be able to support more families with an even more diverse range of support. This will involve the realignment of a number of existing services within the Local

Authority but in addition to this the continued involvement and commitment of partners to this successful approach is crucial.

- We need to do further work on our payments scheme in order to remove the financial barriers that prevent some children moving to permanence with relatives via Special Guardianship. Many of these children do not need to remain in the care system and to do so can result in them standing out from their peers and also being the victims of conscious or unconscious discrimination.
- We are also reviewing our fee payments to Family and Friends foster carers to ensure parity with mainstream foster carers in order to remove the financial barrier to relatives putting themselves forward as substitute carers.

DRAFT 31.12.20

4. Priority – Ensuring that our children and young people have a voice

4.1 What we know

- Our children must be at the heart of everything we do. This includes supporting them to have an active voice in decisions made about their lives. All decisions made about the way in which we run our service should be informed by the views of our children. We cannot know whether the services offered by social care and our partners are working unless we hear directly from the children and young people who need and use them.
- This is a key aspect of our statutory corporate parenting duties.
- We are proud of our children, young people and young adults and should publicly celebrate their many achievements, which are all the more remarkable given the adversity that many of them have experienced. By doing this we can promote wider understanding of the challenges that many of our children have faced and overcome.

4.2 What have we done?

- We have a Children in Care Council that meets regularly although the pandemic has had an impact on this. We have made the decision to separate this group into two to enable the younger and older age groups to focus more specifically on the things that are important to them.
- We have now established a Care Leavers Council and the role of Care Leavers Ambassador.
- Our case audit programme has a specific focus on the extent to which the child's voice has been sought and considered in our work.
- We have recently launched a suite of new forms within our LCS system all of which have a greater focus on the child's voice.
- We have now started a Participation and Voice Themed Group which includes representation from all areas of our service and which aims to share good practice and support the development of a Participation Strategy and Action Plan.
- Young people have continued to be part of the selection process for foster carers and some staff groups.
- Within our children's homes, children's meetings are held frequently and young people have the opportunity to have some influence over their lives.
- We commission National Youth Advisory Service to provide advocacy support to help children contribute to Child Protection Conferences and Child in Care Reviews. As a result, the extent to which children and young people participate in these meetings has increased. For example, in the past 6 months we have held over 1800 statutory reviews and the child or young person's views were only not shared in eleven.

- We have continued to offer children the chance to use Viewpoint but we are currently considering other mechanisms to enable children and young people to engage and share their views online.

4.3 What do we still need to?

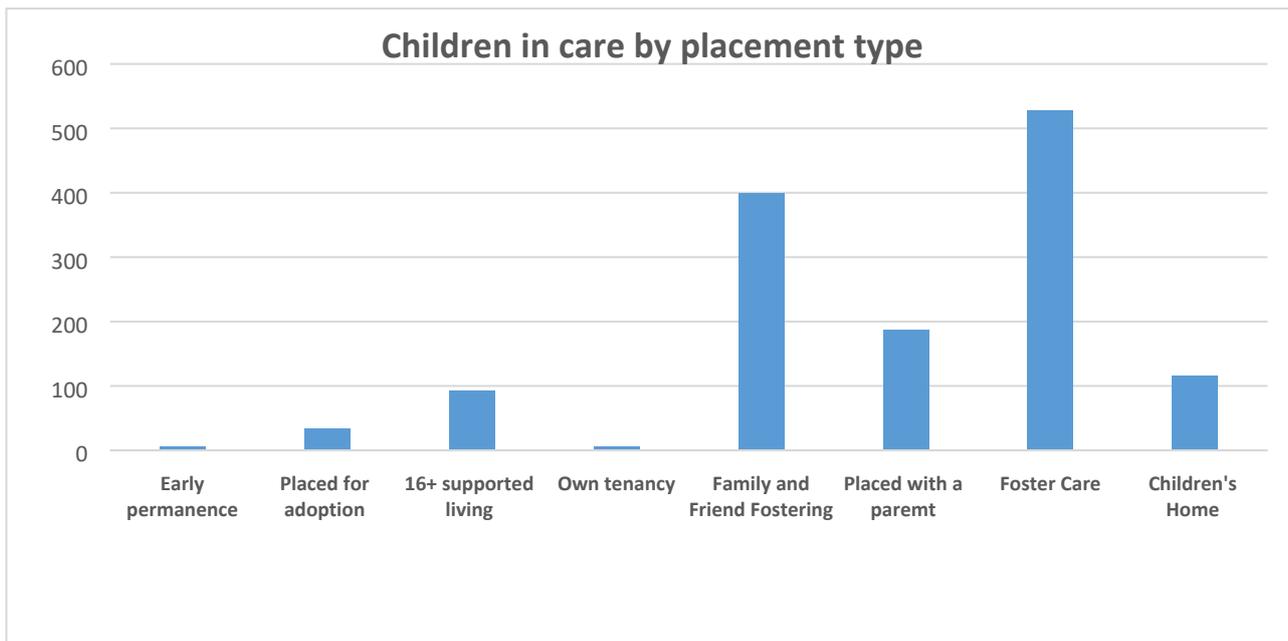
- We need to expand the role and influence of the Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Council so that these become highly influential bodies that are listened to when we are considering changes to service delivery.
- We need to undertake further work to enable young people to contribute to the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel in a way that they will find interesting, fun and useful. We need to explore new ways in which children in care and those who have left care can share their experiences with the people who can influence the development of services.
- We need to use the Participation and Voice Group to develop a Participation Strategy and Action Plan.
- We need to get better at capturing the direct work we do with children and young people in their case files and showing how this has influenced the outcome of assessments and plans.
- We need to get better at capturing feedback from young people about our services and collating this in one place so that we can share it but also learn from it.

DRAFT 31/12/20

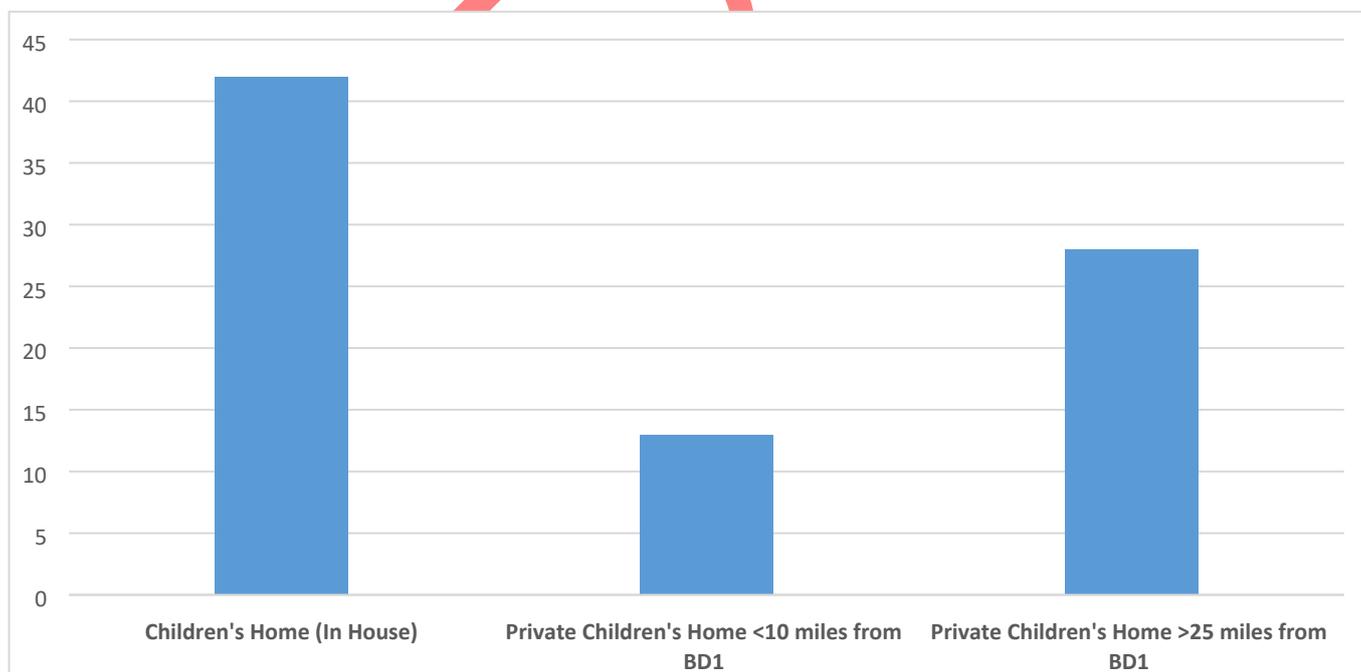
5. Priority – having a safe, stable and secure home

5.1 What do we know?

- Being a good parent means that we are responsible for making sure that our children and young people live in settled families where they can thrive.
- It also means that there has to be good, early decision-making and excellent multi-agency planning so that children don't drift or spend too long in temporary arrangements.
- This means seeking permanence for our children and young people at the earliest opportunity so that they know where they are going to be living for the rest of their childhood and who is going to be looking after them.
- We know that children and young people in care have the best chance in life when they live in settled families and feel cared for. Children and young people need to feel loved and to be able to build relationships with people who they can trust and rely on, and who look out for them.
- However, this does present a huge challenge. The increasing number of children in Bradford who need to be in care means that it is getting harder to find the right places for children to live. Alongside this there is a national shortage of foster and children's homes, particularly for older young people or those who have complex needs or who can be challenging to look after.
- Another challenge is that Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) are able to offer financial rewards to their foster carers that a Local Authority cannot compete with and many Local Authorities have seen foster carers leave them in order to work with an IFA.
- These challenges sometimes mean that we do not have a lot of placements to choose from when we are looking for a home for a child, particularly an older child. Sometimes our children can end up placed a long way from home as a result and this is something that we need to try to prevent unless there is a very good reason for it.
- As well as the *number* of placements that are available, our Sufficiency Strategy also has to consider the *type* of placements that we can offer. Our children come from a range of backgrounds and have diverse needs and we need a variety of placements to meet these needs. This includes families who are themselves from a range of backgrounds and who reflect the needs of our children, those who can provide short breaks for disabled children, sometimes requiring specific medical training, to those who can provide emergency placements for teenagers who are in crisis for example due to mental health problems or involvement in criminal justice. We need a mixed economy of emergency, short term and long term placements and a cohort of carers from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of skills and experiences.
- The types of homes that our children currently live in are shown in the table below:



- Some of our children live in privately owned children's homes and some of these are a long distance from Bradford as can be seen from the chart below. This is something that we need to address. Although for some children the nature of their harm means that being placed at a distance from their home is the safest thing for them, for many others it is based on a lack of available resources closer to home and results in further separation from their families, friends, schools and communities.



- Although placement stability in Bradford has improved in the past year, we know that around 9% of children in care experience too many changes of placement and also too many changes of social worker. This is another area that we need to address through recruitment, training

and support of carers, better care planning and support to fragile placements, and improved commissioning arrangements with the private sector.

5.2 What have we done?

- We have now developed a new Sufficiency Strategy to support our over-arching strategy for children in care and care leavers. The Sufficiency Strategy provides more detail about our plans to increase our range of placements during the next twelve months.
- We currently have 1147 approved foster carers including Family and Friends and we intend to increase this number, to provide us with greater diversity and placement choice.
- Our carers already reflect the diversity of our communities and our cohort of children in care, with over a third of our carers being from backgrounds other than white/British.
- To increase the number of placements we have available, we continue to focus on recruiting new foster carers to Bradford. We have undertaken campaigns and have been reviewing the way we assess and pay our carers to make us as attractive as possible. This activity has not slowed as a result of the pandemic.
- At present we are specifically targeting people who could provide short break placements for disabled children and this campaign will continue for the rest of this year. Alongside this we have launched a specific Skills to Foster programme for carers who care for disabled children, or wish to do so in the future.
- We have a competitive financial package but are also reviewing the way that we support and train our carers. By doing so we hope to attract new carers, keep hold of our existing carers and also improve placement stability by increasing the skills and confidence of our carers.
- As well as attracting new foster carers, we need to ensure that our existing ones stay with us. These are our most experienced foster carers and we must do everything we can to ensure that they feel valued, supported and safe.
- To this end we have successfully applied for a license to implement Mockingbird in Bradford. This scheme has been proven to support foster carers, to help retain them and also to affect placement stability. In some Local Authorities, Mockingbird has also helped them to recruit new carers because they can see what a supportive resource it is. We are expecting our first Mockingbird constellation to be live in January 2021.
- We have also been able to achieve Fostering Friendly status. This means that the Fostering Network has assessed that the council is a “fostering friendly employer” because we offer increased flexibility to any of our employees who are also foster carers. We hope that this will encourage some council staff to now choose to foster.
- All foster carers, including Family and Friends carers, have an allocated Supervising Social Worker in our Fostering Service and we have also increased the number of reviewing officers who are responsible for reviewing a foster carer’s registration every year. This means that our foster carers should be well supported and have help in identifying and meeting any learning needs.

- For those foster carers who undertake training and show particular skill, we are improving our Skills Payments system so that these carers can progress and receive greater rewards based on their levels of experience. We hope that they will be able to support less experienced foster carers but that this will also help them to stay with us.
- In the previous twelve months 60 children have progressed to permanence via Special Guardianship. The majority of these arrangements were with relatives however we have also had a number of mainstream foster carers choosing this path for children who live with them. This presents an opportunity but also a challenge in that it inevitably reduces our foster care capacity, however in all cases it has been the best thing for the child.
- In addition, 30 children achieved permanence by adoption in the previous twelve months and at present 33 children are placed with prospective adopters. We need to keep a tight grip on these cases to ensure that the case progresses to an adoption order without delay despite the impact of the pandemic on court timetables.
- We have 44 children who are subject to a Placement Order but who have not yet been placed for adoption and the majority of these have not yet been matched to an adopter. We need to ensure that we help these children achieve permanence without further delay even if this means that adoption is no longer the right outcome.
- Although we have no current plans to increase the number of beds we have available in our own children's homes, we are working to ensure that they are utilised well and that we plan ahead to reduce the need for children to be placed in the private sector.
- We are proud of our children's homes and the staff who look after our most vulnerable and complex children. Most of our homes are currently graded as good by Ofsted and this is a real achievement.
- We have increased the size of our Placement Coordination Team and reconfigured it to give more capacity for family finding.
- We have introduced new systems that will help social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers to identify fragile placements and provide extra support to try to prevent breakdown.

5.3 What do we still need to do?

- We need to keep recruiting new foster carers particularly for complex children and short breaks for disabled children. In 2021 we will work with the private sector in order to strengthen our recruitment using their expertise to target specific parts of the community.
- We need to engage with the private sector in a more coordinated way so that when one of our children needs to live in a private children's home, this can be close to their home, friends, school and community unless this is not safe for them.
- We need to start routinely using feedback from children and young people when we are commissioning placements or services.

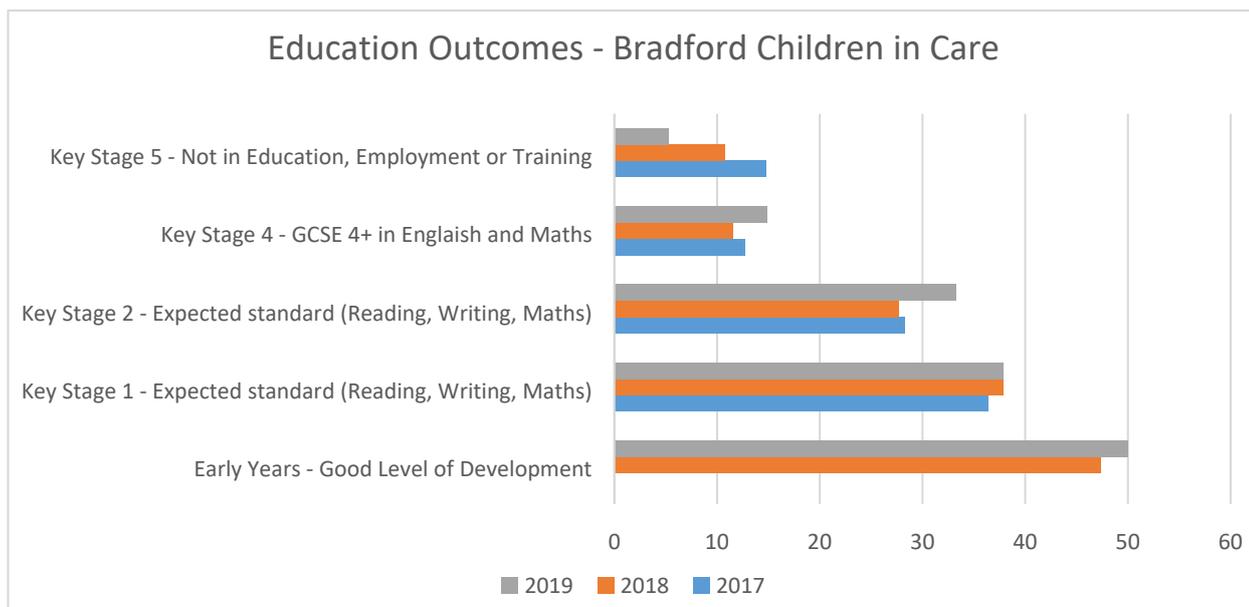
- We need to get better at helping children progress to permanent arrangements and doing this more quickly. This is something that we have not been good at and has been identified by Ofsted. Although we have new systems in place, it is an area that we must continue to focus on. Too many children spend too long in temporary arrangements without security so this is a key focus for us. We will need to work with our partners at One Adoption West Yorkshire to help reduce delays in children being matched or placed with adopters.
- We also know that we have not been good at supporting our children in care, and particularly those who are adopted, to understand their life histories.
- We have also not always been consistently good at hearing from our children and young people about what they think about their placements or about being in care. We need to do more of this.
- At present 399 children live with family or friends who have been approved as foster carers for them. Although this is an extremely valuable resource, these children are safe and well and many do not need the protection of the care system any longer. The care system can be stigmatising and can cause children in care to sometimes stand out from their peers. Children in care can also be discriminated against, both consciously and unconsciously. We need to reduce the barriers, including the financial barriers, to relatives pursuing Special Guardianship so that children can safely leave the care system without delays.
- We need to increase our effectiveness at supporting fragile placements to prevent breakdown.
- We have undertaken consultations with the parents of disabled children in respect of the short breaks offer and we know that we have work to do to make accessing this provision easier for parents.

6. Priority – having the right support to be safe, healthy, happy and to achieve

6.1 What do we know?

- All children need support from a range of adults including parents or carers, older brothers and sisters, school staff and healthcare professionals. Our children in care have often had a poor start in life and may need additional support to live happy lives and achieve their potential. Many have experienced abuse, neglect and associated trauma. We need carers who can help us to provide all our children in care with good quality wrap around care and we also need services that are accessible and responsive to the needs of our children.
- Evidence shows that education attainment influences the health, social and employment prospects of a child or young person. But children in care can face additional challenges in the education system particularly when they have had adverse experiences or inconsistent care. Therefore, children in care often need extra support and understanding if they are to achieve as well as their peers. This is even more true when children enter care at a later age or at a crucial time in their education.
- A significant number of our children in care have additional education needs arising either from their early life experiences or from disability and a number of them also have Education, Health and Care Plans. These children require additional support in school and some of them require specialist education provision, including Residential Schools.
- As good parents we are ambitious for the children we care for and our care leavers, and we expect them to receive a planned and stable education which helps them to fulfil their potential. We have high aspirations and this means helping our children in care and care leavers to get the best from their school and college education so that they have the qualifications they need to pursue their career aspirations
- Adverse experiences also mean that many children in care experience problems with emotional wellbeing and mental health. Neglect and abuse can also cause lasting physical ill-health and additional needs. Children often enter care with a poorer levels of physical and mental health than other children and nationally two thirds of children in care have at least one physical health complaint, and nearly half have a mental health issue. As corporate parents we want our children to have the best start in life, to be healthy and to receive the care and support they need in order to thrive.
- Any child in any community is potentially vulnerable to being exploited or abused, bullied or discriminated against. However, some children in care, by virtue of their experiences and situations can be at greater risk. For example, in September 2019 the All Party Parliamentary Group for Runaway and Missing Children and Adults published No Place at Home which highlighted that children in care who have been placed out of area are potentially even more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. We want our children and young people to be protected from harm and to get the help and support they need if they are at risk
- It is crucial that services for children and young people in care are aware of and sensitive to these additional needs in order to help them to stay safe, stay healthy and achieve.

- Educational outcomes for children in care have shown continual improvement over the past 3 years at all Key Stages. We know our outcomes for children in care compare favourably with national comparisons, though Key Stage 2 continues to be a focus for improvement, particularly in literacy. While we know children in care make good progress against their starting points, we expect to improve the number achieving national expected standards. We will also ensure the gap in attainment between children and care and their peers closes.
- School attendance is a priority area for our children in care as we know regular attendance is crucial to their development and achievement in education. Although the attendance rate of Bradford's children in care of 94.6% is slightly above that of all children in Bradford, the rate is significantly below the national average for children in care. We know two particular areas of concern affecting attendance rates over the last year are the numbers of Bradford's children in care who are classed as persistently absent and the numbers receiving fixed term exclusions.
- We know a good start in the early years is of paramount importance for our younger children in care. Outcomes for these children, assessed using the early years foundation stage profile, show they continue to make progress above the national average for children in care, with 50% achieving a good level of development. Although this is below that of 68% for all children in Bradford, the gap has narrowed over the past 3 years.
- At Key Stage 1, Bradford's children in care reaching the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths has been at, or above, the national average for children in care for the past 3 years, at 38%. Although there has been little relative change for this standard over three years, the attainment gap with all children (compared to children in care) has increased slightly as results for all children in Bradford have improved.
- At Key Stage 2, the number of children in care reaching the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths has improved significantly over the past 3 years to reach 33%, however this remains below the national average by 4%. The average progress which children in care in Bradford make at key stage 2, is significantly above the national average and shows the attainment gap with their peers narrowing.
- At Key stage 4, GCSE 'Progress 8' and 'Attainment 8' outcomes for Bradford's children in care remain in line with the national average. While the number of children achieving a grade 4 in English and Maths has increased to 15% it remains below the national average of 18%. However, the attainment gap for this measure at both grade 4 and grade 5, is at its smallest over the past 3 years.
- We know the number of children in care progressing into post 16 education, employment or training has improved year on year over the past 3 years. Over the past 3 years the percentage of children in care not in education, employment or training (NEET) after leaving year 11 has reduced from 14.9% in 2018 to 5.3% in 2020. The percentage of Bradford's Care leavers who were not in education, training or employment (NEET) has increase slightly and most recent data shows it at the national average of 33%. Bradford's NEET figures for Care leavers also compare very positively with statistical and regional neighbours.



- In relation to health we know that many of our children in care have had experiences that their peers have not. This can include the physical impact of abuse and neglect as well as the emotional and mental health impact of adverse life experiences. We have a shared legal responsibility to ensure that the health needs of children in care are assessed and met and we therefore need close partnership between social care services, health services and carers. In Bradford we have experienced challenges in undertaking initial and review health assessments for children in care and ourselves and our health partners recognise that this is something that needs to improve.

6.2 What have we done?

6.2.1 Care planning and assessment

- We have supported our social workers and partners by developing new tools to help them assess the needs of children and young people in care and to develop appropriate plans.
- New case tracking mechanisms are designed to help us keep oversight of individual children and young people whose plans may not be progressing or may need to change.
- Our Independent Reviewing Officers provide statutory oversight of all children in care and statutory reviews are a mechanism by which needs and vulnerabilities can be identified.

6.2.2 Being safe

- In Bradford a tri-weekly, multi-agency Risk Assessment Meeting is now held in our Integrated Front Door for the purpose of identifying children and young people who may be at risk, to share information and to develop joint plans.
- Where risk of exploitation is deemed to be high, the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Panel (MACE) is a higher level group that meets every six weeks to provide additional oversight of plans to keep children safe.

- Alongside these mechanisms, within the Department of Place the Breaking the Cycle Team offers intensive support to young people who are at risk of being criminally exploited. 95% of the young people referred to this project actively engage. This team links closely with our children's homes where some of our most vulnerable children and young people live.

6.2.3 Children who run away or go missing

- Bradford has commissioned a service to undertake Return Home Interviews for children who go missing including those who go missing from care.
- We have recently adopted the use of Philomena Protocols for all of the children and young people in our homes which allows for closer working relationships between residential providers and the police and prompt actions when a young person does go missing.

6.2.4 Being healthy

- Children in care have access to a dedicated health team who can provide advice to young people and carers and who undertake assessments of health needs.
- In addition, young people who have left care and are aged between 18 and 25 have access to two Leaving Care Nurses.
- Our new care planning tool is designed to help social workers and partners assess health needs.
- We have improved our performance in respect of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires.
- We are working jointly with our health colleagues to streamline the system by which consent is given for Initial Health Assessments as a means of reducing the delays that are caused by lack of appropriate consent. We are now sharing child-level data more routinely between health and social care to enable us to identify and resolve problems.

6.2.5 Achieving in education

- We have improved our monitoring and tracking of daily attendance at school and termly progress of all our children in care to ensure that improvement action is quickly identified and implemented.
- With our Virtual School we have taken steps to improve the quality of Personal Education Plans and the PEP format has also been amended to place the voice of the child at the forefront of the plan and strengthen their involvement in the preparation for their review.
- The quality assurance process for PEPs has also been strengthened to ensure that children have high quality PEPs which are tailored to their unique and individual ambitions, needs and abilities.
- Education Advisors are undertaking focused visits to all Head Teachers to discuss provision and support for children in care. Alongside this we have also expanded the capacity of the Virtual School so every child has a link teacher allocated to support their education.

- A digital inclusion strategy with significant resources allocated from the council has been agreed and implementation is underway. This will ensure that children in care and care leavers have access to the digital resources and support which enable them to succeed in education and prepare for their futures.

6.2.6 Staying active and having fun

- It is really important to us that our children in care and care leavers do not miss out on the holidays, trips and social activities that their peers have. We support and encourage our foster carers and children's homes to provide a range of social activities as they would for their own children.
- Within the Department of Place, our Sports and Culture service exercise their corporate parenting responsibility by:
 - Providing free gym membership to children and young people in care aged 16 and over. This scheme has now been extended to enable a companion to accompany the young person, and will also extend to junior gym membership for children in care aged 14-16.
 - Our Adventure Activities Development Team work directly with children in care and care leavers.
 - Occasional Adventure bookings from care homes or specific groups of children in care.
 - Children in care are supported to access our Multi Adventure and Holiday Courses
 - We supported a team of care leavers to enter the Dragon Boat competition and train at Doe Park
 - We have taken the Climbing Tower to the annual Care Leavers event for several years
 - We loan waterproof clothes, boots, sleeping bags to children in care who are going on residential visits
 - BASECAMPS are promoted to children in care and the Sports Development Unit liaise directly with social care staff to facilitate bookings
 - Bradford Aquatics ensure that children in care are placed immediately or put to the top of the waiting list.
 - Sports Development has accommodated children in care as volunteers working on sports activity sessions to improve employability
 - Bradford Theatres encourage access to the arts for children in care via a ticketing scheme offering them (and their foster families if applicable) free or greatly reduced price tickets to productions at the Alhambra Theatre and St George's Hall (subject to producer agreement and availability.)

6.3 What do we still need to do?

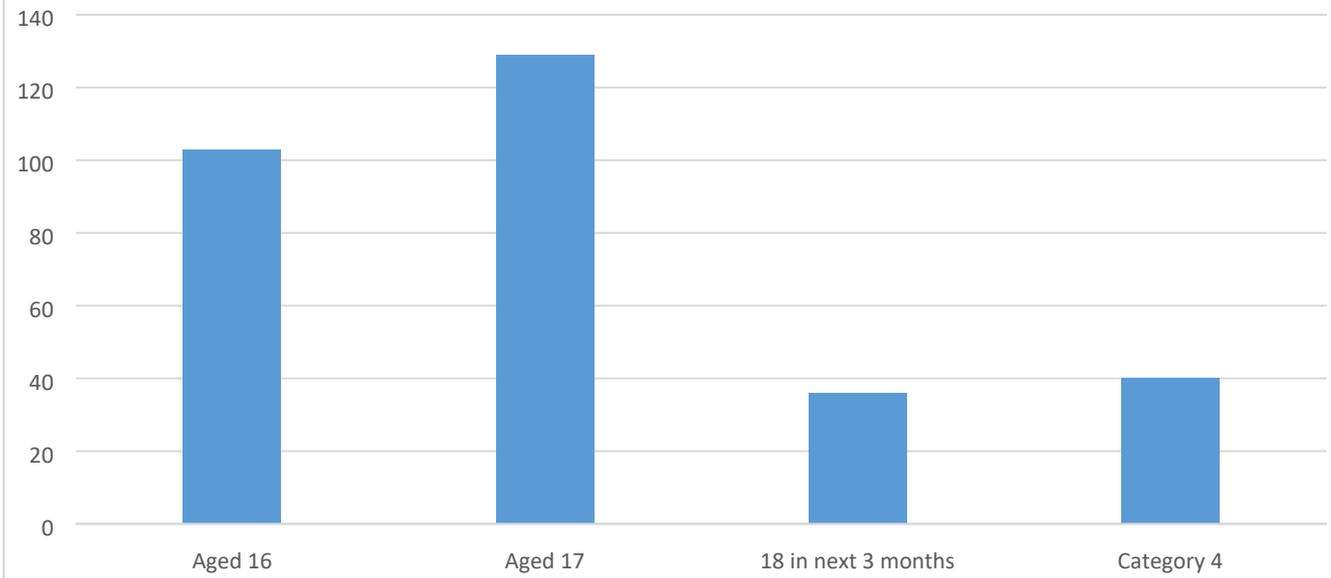
- We need to continue to deliver the Breaking the Cycle programme, growing the team if we can and increasing our understanding of the factors that make some young people more vulnerable to being exploited.
- We also need to focus on providing young people with a good “exit” from criminal exploitation for example work experience placements and apprenticeships.
- We need to further develop the partnership work around exploitation and the RAM and MACE meetings for example by co-location of services.
- We know that we need to work with health partners to improve the timeliness of Initial Health Assessments and this work has commenced.
- We also need to work with health partners to further improve the completion of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires but also to ensure that these are then used to identify additional support that is needed.
- We need to ensure that commissioning of services for children in care by ourselves and our partners is based on the needs of our population and is done jointly where possible.
- We must continue to strengthen our partnership arrangements around placement and care planning to minimise school moves where possible. We are working closely with partners to ensure suitable schools, ‘good enough’ to meet the needs of children, are arranged as early as possible and before a child is due to move where practicable.
- We need to deliver a comprehensive training and support programme to implement our improvements to the PEP process and quality assurance systems so by July 2021 all PEPs meet the high standards expected.
- We need to develop an inclusion protocol which it is expected all schools and partners will follow. This will be intended to enhance the expertise and support available through school and the Council to meet the needs of children in care, improve their attendance and reduce the risk of exclusion.
- We need to introduce progression activities to further support children in care with transition to FE and HE and also target resources through the Virtual School and 16+ Team to enhance the support to post-16 children in care and care leavers. Although we do provide support to young people going to university they are telling us that our financial offer in respect of their accommodation fees presents a barrier to them and therefore in 2021 we will be identifying ways in which we can expand our offer to make things easier for them now and in the future.

7. Priority – A positive transition to adulthood

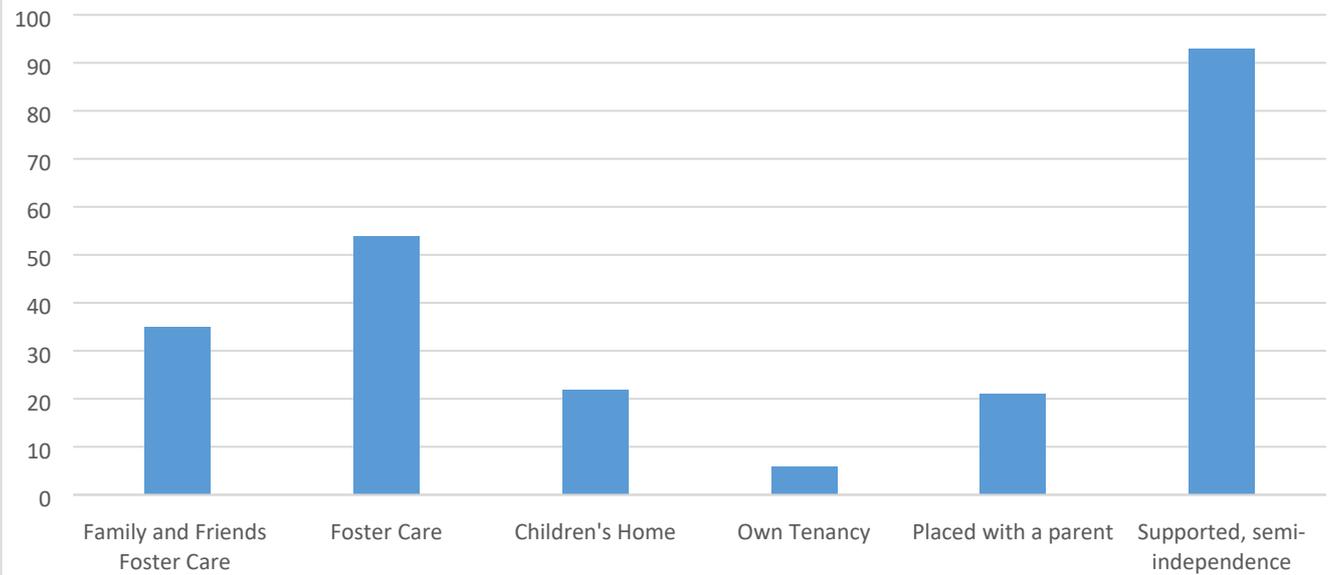
7.1 What do we know?

- For young people in care the transition to adulthood can be extremely challenging, particularly if they have not had a settled base and consistent care. They have to become independent at a younger age than most of their peers. They often struggle to cope with independent living which can then place them at heightened risk of social exclusion, homelessness, unemployment or exploitation. Many also have poor mental health, and need support to recover from past harm.
- During the transition period between 16 and 18 it is important that our young people are supported to learn the skills that they will need to live independently, in the knowledge that they will have to do this sooner than most of their peers.
- In addition, it is important to recognise that some accommodation for young people aged 16 and 17 is not registered with Ofsted, unlike children's homes and foster care provision. This kind of accommodation tends to be supported independent or semi-independent living. The fact that this type of accommodation is not usually registered with Ofsted means that we have to take additional steps to ensure that it is safe and of sufficient quality.
- It is crucial that after they reach eighteen and no longer have the framework of the care system around them, young people continue to receive care, consistency and support into adulthood, delivered in a way that reflects their needs, age and increasing maturity but also their earlier experiences.
- For children with complex needs and disabilities, the transition to adult social care services is a crucial point that can create a great deal of anxiety for parents and young people due to the different systems and thresholds. Therefore, an early plan and good joint working prior to 18 is crucial.
- More than 15% of our children in care are aged sixteen and seventeen and thus need support to prepare for adulthood.
- Within the next year 129 young people will leave care and be entitled to support as care leavers.

Children in care aged 16 and 17



16 and 17 year old placement types



7.2 What have we done?

- Our Transitions Teams work with disabled children from the age of 14 into adulthood to provide a more seamless transition from children’s to adult services.

- In January 2020 we reconfigured our services to ensure that our young people in care have a smoother transition to adulthood. The creation of the 16+ Service means that although most children in care will experience a change of worker when they are sixteen, they will then remain with this service into adulthood and beyond care meaning that they have greater consistency at a crucial and difficult time.
- All young people aged 18 to 25 who have left care have access to specialist Leaving Care Nurses who can offer advice on many issues such as sexual health, pregnancy etc.
- Our multi-disciplinary LEAP Team provides education support and young people who engage with this service receive a bursary of £30 per week if they attend as well as subsidised travel. This team helps care leavers to gain functional skills and educational qualifications that they did not manage to obtain earlier. It provides a route into additional support services related to careers, drugs and alcohol, sexual health etc.
- We have established the role of Care Leavers Ambassador to give care leavers the opportunity to shape services and also a Care Leavers Council that runs in parallel with the Children in Care Council.
- We have engaged volunteers to support and befriend care leavers.
- Any care leaver who applies for an apprenticeship with the council is guaranteed an interview if they meet the basic educational requirements. If they do not meet the requirements, the LEAP Team can support them to undertake exams, complete CVs etc.
- We have established the Smooth It Out group for young people aged 15 ½ to 21 which focuses on preparing for independence.
- Through partnership between our 16+ Service and Youth Service we are able to offer a variety of different projects of relevance to our care leavers including Youth in Mind, Breaking the Cycle and the Buddy Programme.
- We have extended our Staying Put scheme and Supported Lodgings service.
- We have provided a Cook and Eat programme (although the pandemic has impacted on this)
- The Jump Start programme assists young people in the transition from care to independence by providing pre-tenancy support.
- Young people who are approaching 18 have an opportunity to have a taste of independence via the My First Home “taster home” which runs alongside an assessment of tenancy readiness.
- Housing Options is a team of specialist workers who will provide advice and support on a variety of accommodation issues including debt.
- All Bradford care leavers are exempt from Council Tax until they are 21.

- We have committed to ensuring that all our care leavers have a smart phone and access to the internet.
- All care leavers can access council gymnasiums free of charge to help them to stay fit and healthy.

7.3 What do we still need to do?

- We need to ensure that young people who have left care are able to remain in touch with professionals, friends and family and that they are “digitally included” which for many is a challenge due to finances.
- We need to expand the “taster flat” facility to enable more young people to access it prior to leaving care and also the supported lodgings provision.
- We need to establish a “family links” model to enable young people to leave the 16+ service with a network of non-professionals who can continue to support them in the long term.
- We are planning to establish a multi-disciplinary Young People’s Central Hub where care leavers can access a range of support under one roof.
- We need to undertake a review of our pathways for young people with additional needs but who are not defined as having a disability.
- We also need to extend the take-up of apprenticeships for our care leavers and provide more opportunities.
- We need to strengthen our relationships with the private 16+ sector to enable us to ensure that semi-supported, transitional accommodation is of sufficient quality. This includes us adopting a system similar to the statutory, independent Regulation 44 Visits that we undertake in our own children’s homes to ensure that the lack of Ofsted registration of these placements does not impact on the quality of placements that we provide. We also need to liaise more closely with partners such as the police who hold valuable intelligence in relation to localities and establishments that cause concern.

8. Governance and Performance Management

8.1 Governance of the Strategy

The strategy is owned by the Children in Care and Care Leavers Partnership to provide the initial governance to oversee the delivery of the strategy. Performance reporting and impact of practice will be submitted to the Children's Services Departmental Management Team, the Children's Improvement Board and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

A number of task and finish groups will be established to look at the priority areas with agreed terms of reference and memberships.

The task and finish groups will implement the relevant aspects of the Sufficiency Plan as a partnership to improve performance in each priority area. Where necessary other subgroups or work-streams will be identified.

8.2 How partners will measure progress and success

The multi-agency partnership has been established to develop and drive forward a shared vision and strategy for children in care, with a focus on improving outcomes and promoting the needs and interests of children in care and young people leaving care. The members of the partnership will be from the primary agencies whose services have a key influence or impact on the lives of children in care and those who have left care. It is important that we quality assure the work we do both in terms of the individual service user's experience and the overall effectiveness of services. In support of this there are a number of different ways the partnership will measure progress and the impact of the strategy.

8.2.1 Strategy Action Plan

The strategy is supported by a comprehensive action plan that is reviewed regularly and scrutinised by a number of forums including the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

A detailed annual action plan has been developed to support delivery of the priorities set out in this strategy.

The action plan addresses our priority areas and is partnered by our separate Sufficiency Plan, identifying key people and timeframes for the completion of each action. Many of the actions identified are subject to detailed specific plans and are monitored and evaluated within other forums. Where this is the case the detailed plans are referenced and links made to available evidence.

This action plan specifies a planned outcome from each action described and identifies a related performance measure with national benchmark information where available.

The action plan includes the means by which we will capture the views of the widest possible group of children in care and in out of area placements.

Progress against this action plan will be monitored quarterly by the Children in Care Strategic Group and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

A schedule for the monitoring and review of the action plan to support the delivery of this strategy will be agreed with the Corporate Parenting Board and Children in Care Strategic Partnership on an annual basis.

The action plan will be subject to review and evaluation and the overall strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

8.2.2 Progress through key measures

Various measures will apply to the delivery of the strategy both quantitative and qualitative measures. We will establish the baseline data against which the strategy will be evaluated.

These measures are detailed in our new Children in Care and Leaving Care Scorecard.

DRAFT 31.12.20

9. Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy Priorities and Key Actions

Priority 1 – a strong culture of Corporate Parenting	Priority 2 - Helping children to stay within their families	Priority 3 - ensuring that our children and young people have a voice	Priority 4 - having a safe, stable and secure home	Priority 5 – having the right support to be safe, healthy and to achieve	Priority 6 - a positive transition to adulthood
<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the CIC and Care Leavers Strategic Group Review the format and plans for the CPP for 2021 to promote engagement. Consider how best to support a wider group of elected members to become champions for children in care 	<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Early Help Strategy Expand services for young people at the “edge of care” via the BPP service Remove barriers to permanence via SGO 	<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand and develop the CICC and CLC Develop a service-wide Participation Strategy and Plan Review our provision and ensure that our digital engagement platform is the right one for our children and young people 	<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to continue to recruit new foster carers at pace and develop new ways to retain our existing carers Develop a programme of work with a recruitment agency to support increased numbers of foster carers. Begin to engage with the private sector in a way that enables more children to remain closer to home We need to routinely seek, collate <i>and use</i> feedback from children and their families when commissioning 	<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver and expand the Breaking the Cycle programme Focus on providing young people with a good “exit” from criminal exploitation Further develop the partnership work around exploitation and the RAM and MACE meetings Work with health partners to improve the timeliness of Initial Health Assessments Further improve the completion of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires but also to ensure that these are then used to identify additional 	<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to ensure that young people who have left care are able to remain in touch with professionals, friends and family and that they are “digitally included” Expand the “taster flat” facility to enable more young people to access it We need to establish a “family links” model Establish a multi-disciplinary Young People’s Central Hub Undertake a review of our

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We need to help children to progress to permanence in a timely way.• We need to provide increased support to fragile placements to prevent disruption	<p>support that is needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We need to provide comprehensive training and support to implement our improvements to the PEP process• We need to develop an inclusion protocol which it is expected all schools and partners will follow.• Introduce progression activities to support children in care with transition to FE and HE• Identify ways for us to make a bigger financial contribution to University accommodation fees	<p>pathways for young people with additional needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extend the take-up of apprenticeships for our care leavers and provide more opportunities.• Implementation of independent visits similar to Regulation 44 Visits in the 16+ provision sector.
--	--	--	--	---	---

DRAFT 31.12.20

DRAFT 31.12.20

This page is intentionally left blank



children AT THE **heart** OF **all we do**



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Children in Care and Care Leavers - Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2020

Contents

Foreword	Page 2
Introduction	Page 4
Priority 1 – helping children and young people to stay within their families	Page 6
Priority 2 – knowing our children and young people’s needs	Page 10
Priority 3 – having a safe, stable and secure home	Page 13
Priority 4 – increasing our range of placements	Page 20
Doing what we say we will do – monitoring and reviewing our sufficiency action plan	Page 26
Priorities and Key Actions	Page 27

Foreword

Welcome to Bradford Council's Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2020 to 2021.

This document sets out our ambitions and plans for our children in care and for young people who have left care in the context of our duty to have sufficient placements to meet their needs. It should be read alongside our Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2020 which also considers sufficiency alongside a wider range of duties and plans.

Our vision is that our children will all have the best start in life to be safe, healthy, happy and resilient.

Our aim is to consistently deliver services with care and compassion to strengthen families through a positive working relationship.

Our mission is to always put children at the heart of all we do

As Corporate Parents for over 1300 children Bradford Council has a unique and very special responsibility. Looking after these very diverse and highly vulnerable children and young people is one of the most important things that we do. We want our children and young people to be happy and healthy, both physically and emotionally, to be safe and protected from harm and exploitation, and to be supported to achieve their potential.

We have to be ambitious for our children. Children in care and care-experienced young people face challenges that their peers do not and life is often harder for them as a result of these experiences. All of them have experienced adverse experiences during their early lives and many have experienced trauma. We need to champion their rights and ensure that ourselves and all of our partners understand them and work together to help them to achieve their potential.

The Children Act 1989 requires us to take steps to secure sufficient accommodation for children in our care who cannot live at home and whose circumstances indicate that it would be in their best interest to be accommodated by us. This is commonly referred to as 'the sufficiency duty'.

The sufficiency duty is therefore a core part of how we will meet our broader duties to ensure that the needs of our children in care are fully assessed, that effective matching takes place and that regular reviews are held to evaluate whether the child's needs are being met and to address any emerging issues.

Securing sufficient accommodation to meet the needs of children in care is a vital step in delivering improved outcomes. Having the right type of placement in the right place, at the right time, is vital to improving placement stability, which in turn is a critical success factor in relation to better outcomes and a better transition to adulthood.

We need to do more than just ensure that accommodation is 'sufficient' in terms of the number of beds that we have available. We also need to secure a range of different accommodation and carers to meet a wide range of diverse and often very complex needs.

This document sets out how Bradford aims to meet our sufficiency duty in the context of increasing numbers of children entering the care system throughout the UK and national challenges in relation to placement availability. We need to ensure that there are sufficient resources of the right type to meet the diverse needs and circumstances of our children and young people.

Above all we need to provide our children and young people with the best possible placements.

Our strategy sets out what we have done already in relation to placement sufficiency but also acknowledges that we still have much to do. It invites us to work together to achieve our key priorities and to always put the care of our children in care and care leavers at the heart of everything we do.

DCS Mark Douglas and Cllr Adrian Farley

DRAFT 29.12.20

Introduction

Our vision is that all of our children and young people will have the best start in life to be safe, healthy, happy and resilient.

Our aim is to consistently deliver services with care and compassion to strengthen families through a positive working relationship.

Our mission is to always put children at the heart of all we do.

Bradford is a dynamic city with a rich cultural heritage. In terms of population size, we are the fifth largest local authority in England with over half a million people living in the district. We are also a young city, with a higher proportion of children and young people than average for the rest of England and over a quarter of Bradford's people are under eighteen. We are also an ethnically diverse district with more than a quarter of our residents describing themselves as Asian or Asian British.

In common with the rest of England, we have seen a rise in demand for children's social care services and an increase in the number of children in need of help and protection. We too have seen a significant increase in the number of children who need to enter care. Alongside this in September 2018 we were inspected by Ofsted and our services for children in need of help and protection were assessed to be inadequate leading to an overall inadequate rating. All of these factors present significant challenges in the context of increasing demand alongside an improvement process.

This strategy addresses the specific issue of placement sufficiency. It sets out our plans in relation to placement sufficiency for children in care and care leavers under four priority areas:

- developing alternatives to children entering or staying in care, through earlier intervention and at 'the edge of care'
- increasing our understanding of our children's needs in order to be able to match our placement offer to these needs effectively
- improving placement and care planning, to help us ensure that placements meet assessed need and to minimise the number of disrupted placements and unplanned moves
- developing our residential care and fostering offers in order to provide more placement options within the district including having sufficient short-break provision for disabled children.

The strategy links with others designed to promote children's health, safety and welfare. Its success will depend on the energy and vision on colleagues working across the Council and in partner agencies.

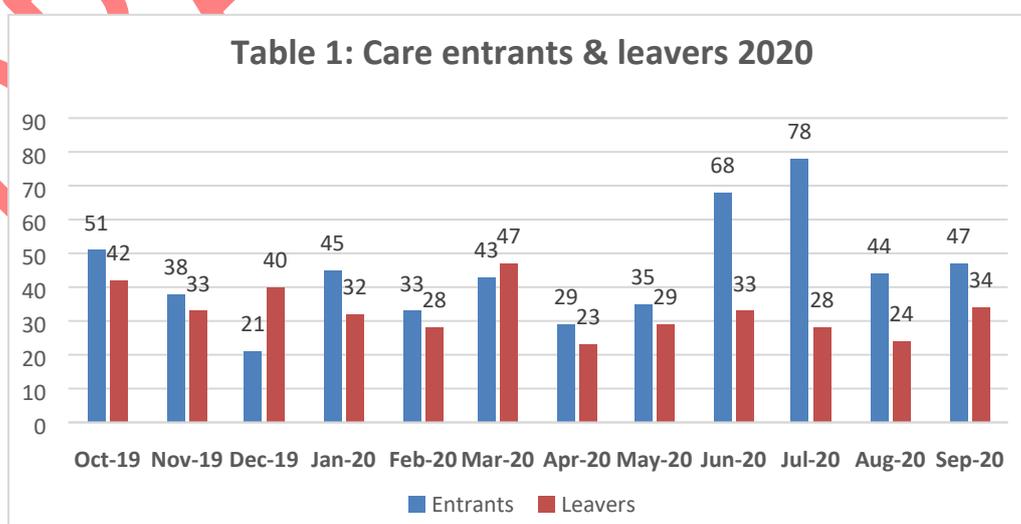
Our Aims

- To listen to and consider the views of children, young people and families and to ensure that their needs are at the centre of our planning, practice and commissioning.
- To ensure that the council and partners continue to support children in their family through partnership with universal, targeted and specialist services in order to reduce the need for children to enter care.
- To ensure that preventative services are of high quality and are available swiftly enough to respond to children's and young people's needs without delay.
- Where children cannot be safely supported within their immediate family, family and friend arrangements will always be explored as a preferred alternative arrangement where this is in the child's best interests. We will reduce barriers to this including the financial barriers.
- To ensure that we continue to work towards there being sufficient provision within Bradford to cater for the needs of our children in care who can safely remain in the district.
- To ensure that children are not placed far from home unless this is clearly the only way to keep them safe.
- To ensure that where externally provided placements do need to be used, and particularly where this provision is not registered with Ofsted, they are subject to good quality assurance incorporating the views of the child and their family about their experiences of the placement.
- To ensure that families with disabled children are able to access suitable short break provision based on a high quality assessment of their needs.
- To ensure that we improve the extent and timeliness of us achieve permanence for children and young people outside the care system and that we reduce or remove barriers to achieving this, including financial barriers.
- To increase the number of in-house foster carers by improved recruitment and retention and to support them to develop their skills and resilience.
- To work more closely with private sector and voluntary sector partners to commission independent fostering, residential and supported accommodation placements. This includes market development activities to identify gaps in the provision available; to shape the market; and, where needed, to work effectively with a wide range of high quality providers to develop a range of provision that meets the diverse needs of children and young people, in particular those who need very specific and/or specialist support to achieve positive outcomes.

Priority 1: Helping children and young people to stay within their families

What we know:

- In the last twelve months 525 children have entered care in Bradford. For some children this was a short period in care however for others it is a medium or long term arrangement. Some will remain in care for the remainder of their childhood.
- In the same period 388 children left care. This was for a variety of reasons. A significant number reached the age of eighteen, however other children left care due to rehabilitation or as a result of permanent arrangements such as adoption or Special Guardianship.
- These figures mean that on average 44 children have entered care in Bradford every month and 32 left care (see Table 1).
- As a result, the total number of children in care has continued to grow and in the last twelve months the overall number has grown by 137.
- This presents enormous challenges in relation to our ability to identify placements.
- It is acknowledged that for the vast majority of children, living with their parents or extended families will give them the best chance in life. We know that for some children who enter care, their outcomes are poorer than for their peers. For this reason, our first priority is to provide the right support at the right time, to help children to safely remain with their parents or if this is not possible, within their extended families, close to their friends, schools and communities.
- Key to this aim is the expansion of the early help offer across Bradford and the need for us to support all practitioners who work with children, young people and families to implement their duty to provide support at an early stage when additional needs are identified.



What we have done so far?

- We have recently developed and launched our Early Help Strategy and Improvement Plan and are working with partner agencies to support them to take on the role of Lead Professional. It is anticipated that this will enable needs to be addressed early with families, and thus avoid escalation into statutory protective services. As a result, we hope to reduce the number of children who need to enter care in the first place.
- In 2017 we adopted the No Wrong Door programme as part of “B Positive Pathways” (BPP). This programme has been funded via the Department of Education’s Innovation Programme. BPP is a large, multi-disciplinary service that provides both residential care, outreach support and therapeutic input to families in crisis where this is a high risk of a child coming into care or where a child has already entered care. Evaluation of this programme identifies that more than 90% of children and young people worked with were able to either remain with, or return to, their families. In the past twelve months alone, the service has worked with 120 young people and just eight have remained in care.
- In addition, our Intensive Family Support and Family Group Conferencing Teams have worked with large numbers of families with the primary aim of preventing escalation of concern and also engaging support from the child’s wider network.
- Our Problem Solving Court Team has worked intensively with families in care proceedings as a means of achieving sufficient change during the proceedings to allow the child to either remain at, or return home at the end of the court process.
- Our commissioned Positive Behaviour Service continues to provide intensive support to families with children aged 8 to 14 who have learning disability and who display challenging behaviour. The service continues to see good outcomes in terms of preventing the need for these children to enter full time care.
- We have introduced stronger mechanisms to track cases that are in the pre-proceedings stage of Public Law Outline (PLO). This process provides families with a final chance to work with us to make changes in order to avoid the need for us to make an application to court. The tracking process is designed to help ensure that agreed tasks are undertaken promptly, to avoid drift which has been a problem for us in the past. In the past twelve months 116 children who have entered pre-proceedings PLO have been able to remain with their families due to the work completed.
- When a child has needed to enter care, we have continued to prioritise the need for them to remain within their extended network if this can be safely achieved. As a result, more than 20% of children who entered care in the last twelve months have been placed with extended family such as grandparents, aunts and uncles or older brothers and sisters.
- We have ensured that our Family and Friends foster carers have had access to the same support as our mainstream foster carers.
- At present more than 40% of all of our children in care are placed in a regulated arrangement with a member of their family and the majority of these family members have been approved as foster carers either temporarily under Regulation 24 (which can last for a maximum of 24

weeks) or permanently following full approval by the Foster Care Panel and Agency Decision Maker.

- Many of these children no longer need the protection of the care system and could easily progress to permanence with their relatives outside of the care system via Special Guardianship. For some families there are barriers to this. These barriers can be financial or related to the support that the carers will receive if they cease to be foster carers. We have strengthened our support offer to Special Guardians via our Special Guardianship Support Team and we are in the process of amending our allowances policy so that there is no financial disadvantage to a carer taking on Special Guardianship. We hope that this will enable an increasing number of children to safely leave care whilst remaining with their families.
- In addition, of the children who left care in the previous twelve months more than 80 were able to return home to their parents or carers.

What do we still need to do?

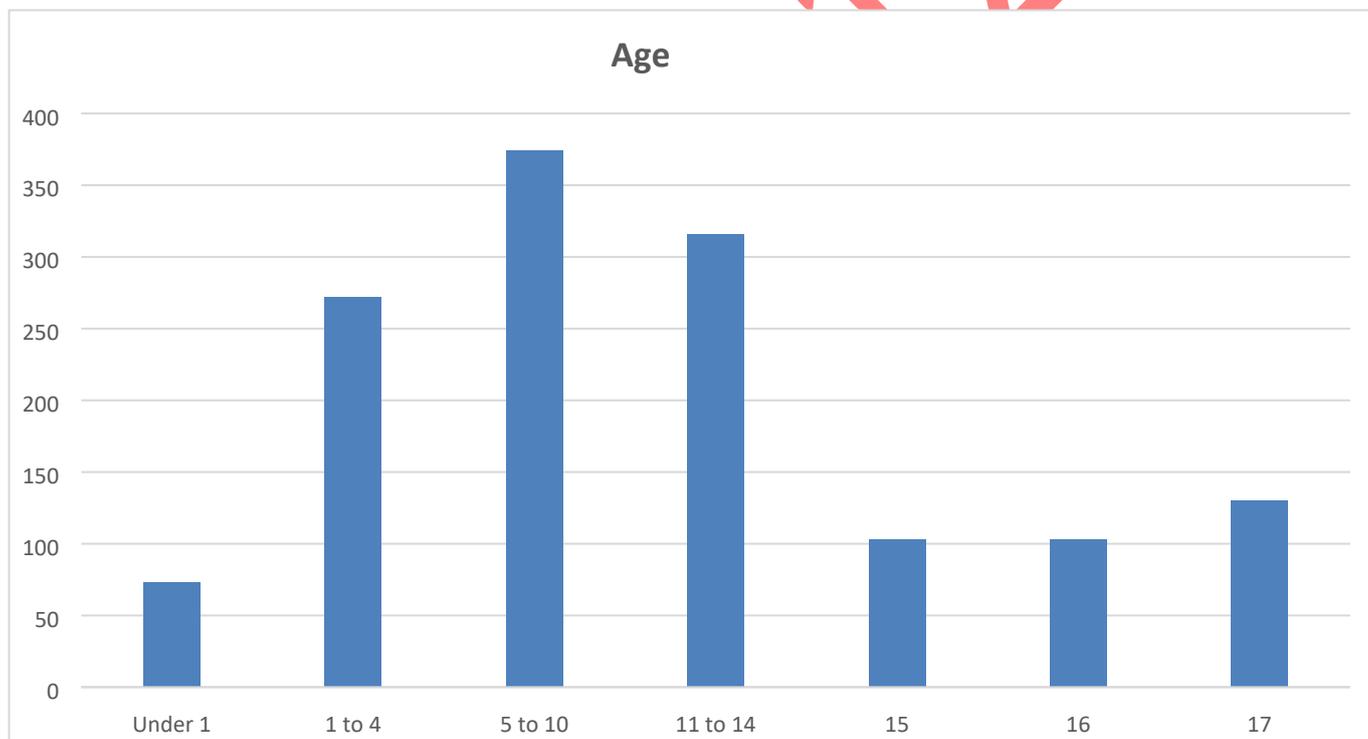
- Our new Early Help Strategy is in its infancy and we need to support our partners to develop the confidence to provide targeted and coordinated early help to families as a means of avoiding escalation into statutory protective services. We need to see a subsequent reduction in the number of families who need to be referred to statutory social care services.
- We are currently planning to strengthen services for families in crisis by expanding our BPP service in order to be able to support more families with an even more diverse range of support.
- We need to do further work on our payments scheme in order to remove the financial barriers that prevent some children moving to permanence with relatives via Special Guardianship. Many of these children do not need to remain in the care system and to do so can result in them standing out from their peers and also being the victims of conscious or unconscious discrimination.
- We are also reviewing our fee payments to Family and Friends foster carers to ensure parity with mainstream foster carers in order to remove the financial barrier to relatives putting themselves forward as substitute carers.

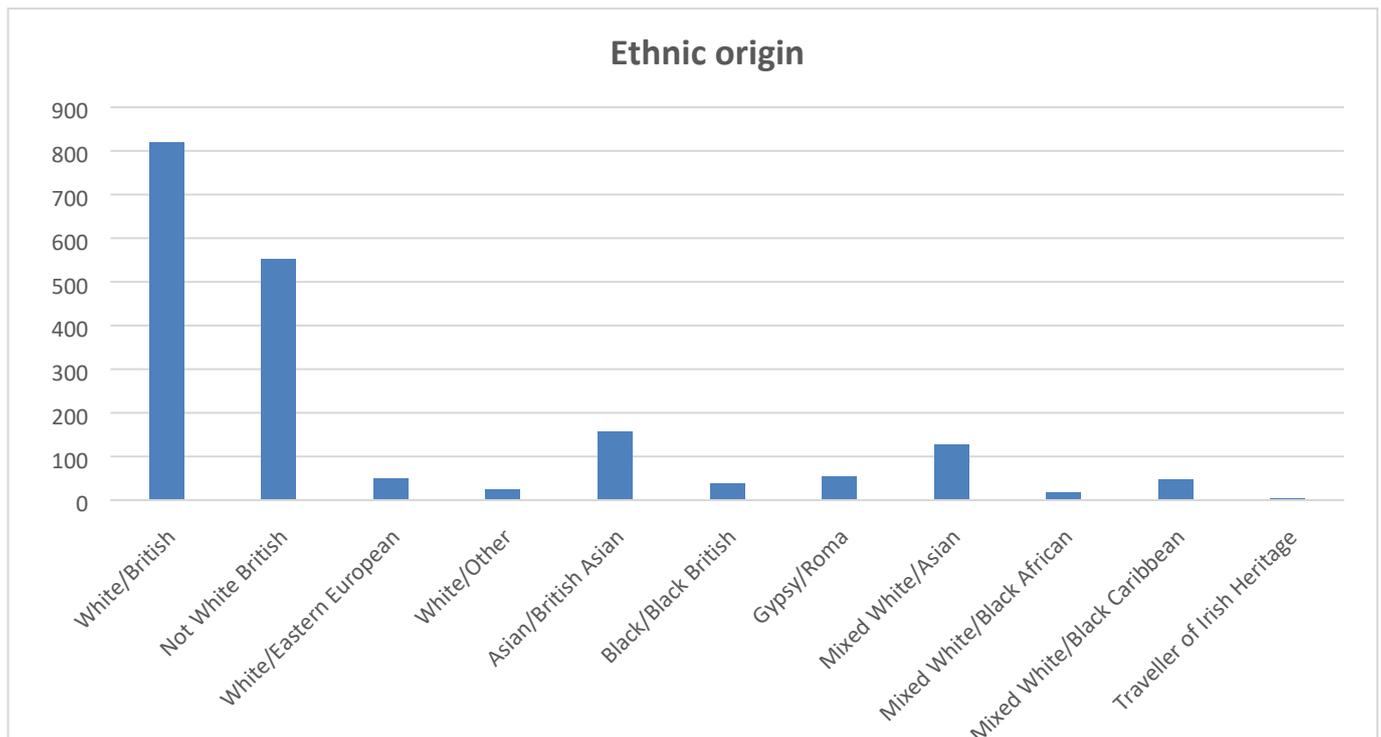
Priority 2: knowing our children and young people's needs

Meeting our sufficiency duty both in terms of the number and the type of placements that we can offer requires us to understand the needs of our current population of children in care but also be able to predict how this will change in the future. By doing so we can help to ensure that not only are we doing everything we can to reduce the need for children to enter care we are also able to provide appropriate placements for those who are not able to safely remain at home.

What we know

- We already know that our children in care and care leavers are a diverse group with diverse and sometimes complex needs.
- The tables below provide some demographic information of our current children in care





- Our children in care reflect our community in their diversity. This is not just about their ethnic origin but also about identity, sexuality, disability and other characteristics. In addition, the majority of our children in care have additional needs arising from their separation from their parents or families, their life experiences and experience of abuse, neglect, exploitation and trauma. These needs change over time. For example, issues such as gender identity or gang-related exploitation are not new, but greater awareness and improved assessment means that these factors are now identified more often in the lives of children in care. This means our carers must be able to learn and adapt in order to be able to respond appropriately.
- A group as dynamic and diverse as this requires us to have a diverse range of services and placements. Many of our children require specialist skills and high levels of care and resilience from substitute carers.
- In order to effectively meet these needs our carers both in foster homes and children's homes need to have different skills and knowledge and they also need to reflect the communities that we work with in terms of social background, faith and ethnic origin.
- Our children must be at the heart of everything we do. This includes supporting them to have an active voice in decisions made about their lives and also about the services that we deliver. All decisions made about the way in which we run our service should be informed by the views of our children.

What have we done?

- We have a Children in Care Council that meets regularly although the pandemic has had an impact on this.
- We have now established a Care Leavers Council and the role of Care Leavers Ambassador.

- We have now started a Participation and Voice Themed Group which includes representation from all areas of our service and which aims to share good practice and support the development of a Participation Strategy and Action Plan. Our placement finding teams and commissioners are part of this new group in order to support the inclusion of the child's voice in these activities.
- Young people have continued to be part of the selection process for foster carers and some staff groups.
- Within our children's homes, children's meetings are held frequently and young people have the opportunity to have influence over the way that the homes operate.
- We commission National Youth Advisory Service to provide advocacy support to help children contribute to Child Protection Conferences and Child in Care Reviews. As a result, the extent to which children and young people participate in these meetings has increased. For example, in the past 6 months we have held over 1800 statutory reviews and the child or young person's views were only not shared in eleven.
- We have continued to offer children the chance to use Viewpoint but we are currently considering other mechanisms to enable children and young people to engage and share their views online.

What do we still need to?

- We need to expand the role and influence of the Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Council so that these become highly influential bodies that are listened to when we are considering changes to how we deliver our services.
- We need to develop mechanisms to ensure that we capture feedback from children and young people about their experience of the placements that we have provided them with, so that we can use this information, together with what we ourselves know about their needs, when we are developing our in-house services and when we are commissioning providers from the private sector.
- We need to work with young people to understand their views on the need for carers from a similar social background, faith and ethnic origin. We need to work with young people to identify whether there is a need to target staff recruitment activities in order to ensure our foster carers and residential staff are able to effectively engage with the children and young people we are working with.
- We need to use the Participation and Voice Group to develop a Participation Strategy and Action Plan that takes the above into account.
- We need to develop new ways to predict the way in which our cohort of children in care will change in the future. Although we have seen an increase in the numbers of children entering care, we are also implementing new ways to help children to safely remain with their families or to leave care more quickly. All of these factors will impact on the numbers of children needing a placement and predicting this is complex.

- However, this prediction is not just about the *number* of children and young people who need a placement. It is equally about the themes that are emerging. For example, an anticipated increase in the number of very young babies entering care would require us to have more carers who were able to care for babies. Similarly, an increase in teenagers entering care later in their teens would require a different set of skills. Whilst we are very good at knowing what the *current* situation is, we need to get better at predicting how this will change in the future. We need to better understand the factors for children entering care and have best practice responses in place amongst carers who are able to effectively engage with children, enable those children and young people to see how life could improve for them and build ambition for their future with our children and young people.

DRAFT 29.12.20

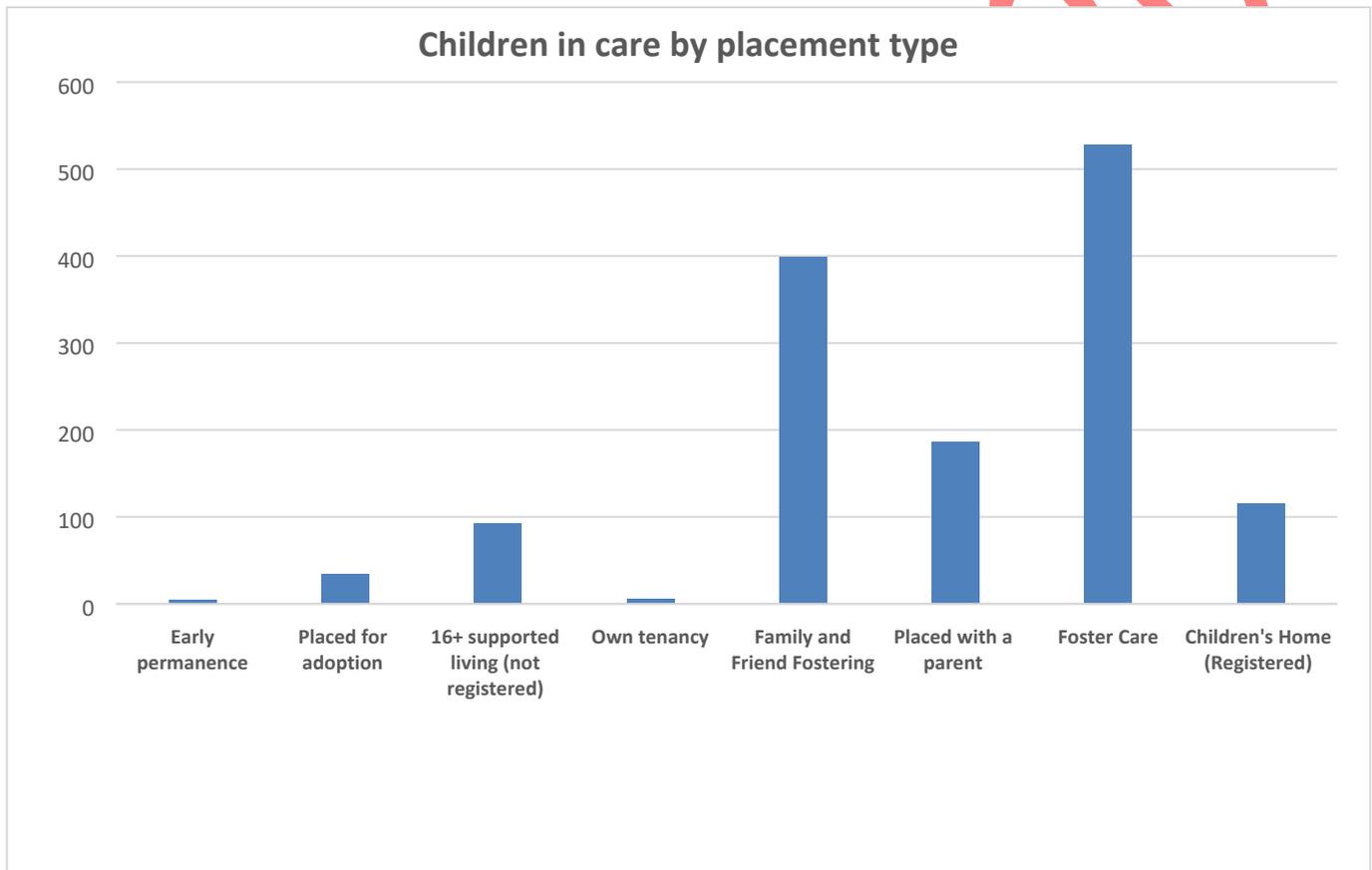
Priority 3: having a safe, stable and secure home

What do we know?

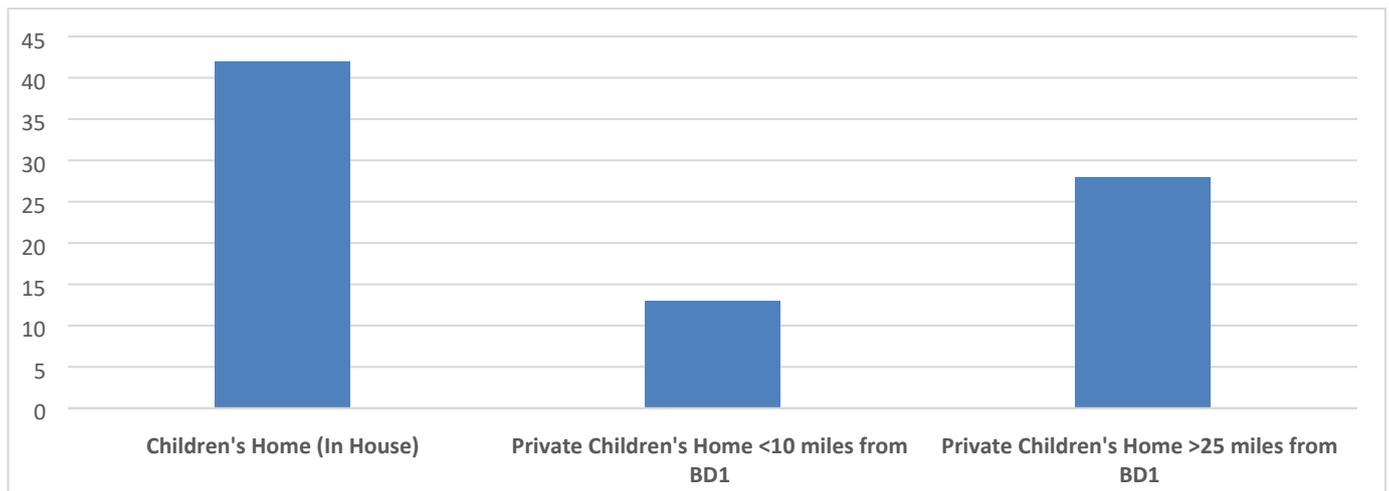
- Being a good parent means that we are responsible for making sure that our children and young people live in settled families where they can thrive.
- It also means that there has to be good, early decision-making and excellent multi-agency planning so that children don't drift or spend too long in temporary arrangements.
- This means seeking permanence for our children and young people at the earliest opportunity so that they know where they are going to be living for the rest of their childhood and who is going to be looking after them. For children who are in settled and stable placements, they should not spend too long in the care system if this level of protection is no longer needed.
- We know that children and young people in care have the best chance in life when they live in settled families and feel cared for. Children and young people need to feel loved and to be able to build relationships with people who they can trust and rely on, and who look out for them.
- However, this does present a huge challenge. The increasing number of children in Bradford who need to be in care means that it is getting harder to find the right places for children to live. Alongside this there is a national shortage of foster and children's homes, particularly for older young people or those who have complex needs or who can be challenging to look after.
- Another challenge is that Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) are able to offer financial rewards to their foster carers that a Local Authority cannot compete with and many Local Authorities have seen foster carers leave them in order to work with an IFA.
- These challenges sometimes mean that sometimes we do not have a lot of placements to choose from when we are looking for a home for a child, particularly an older child or someone who has complex needs. If we are not able to match children to placements well, the placement is more likely to break down and this places additional pressure on our placement capacity. Sometimes our children can end up placed a long way from home as a result and this is something that we need to try to prevent unless there is a very good reason for it.
- As well as the *number* of placements that are available, our Sufficiency Strategy also has to consider the *type* of placements that we can offer. Our children come from a range of backgrounds and have diverse needs and we need a variety of placements to meet these needs. This includes families who are themselves from a range of backgrounds and who reflect the needs of our children, those who can provide short breaks for disabled children, sometimes requiring specific medical training, to those who can provide emergency placements for teenagers who are in crisis for example due to mental health problems or involvement in criminal justice. We need a mixed economy of emergency, short term and long term placements and a cohort of carers from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of skills and experiences.
- The majority of accommodation that we use within the private sector is registered by Ofsted in the same way as our own, internal provision. This provides a really good layer of scrutiny

and assurance about standards that can help us to make good placement choices. In addition, our use of the regional White Rose Framework provides additional assurance. Prior to making a placement in the private sector we can read Ofsted inspection reports and other documents that will help us to know about the quality of the placement. However, in the 16 to 18 semi-supported living sector, the majority of provision is not registered with Ofsted and thus we do not always have the level of assurance that a statutory inspection framework provides. Therefore, our ability to make safe placements to an extent rests on us having trusted relationships with providers in this sector, built on feedback from young people, families and practitioners.

- The types of homes that our children currently live in are shown in the table below:



- Some of our children live in privately owned children’s homes and some of these are a long distance from Bradford as can be seen from the chart below. This is something that we want to address. The recent report from the Children’s Commissioner published in November 2020 highlights this as a national area of concern that requires a centralised response from the government. Although for some children the nature of their harm means that being placed at a distance from their home is the safest thing for them, for many others it is based on a lack of available resources closer to home and results in further separation from their families, friends, schools and communities.



- Although placement stability in Bradford has improved in the past year, we know that around 9% of children in care experience too many changes of placement and also too many changes of social worker. This is another area that we need to address through recruitment, training and support of carers and social workers and better care planning and support to fragile placements, and improved commissioning arrangements with the private sector.
- We need to develop our understanding of why placements breakdown in order to identify what support would have been effective to prevent that breakdown. For some children and young people every placement breakdown is a further rejection and a further confirmation of their lack of worth, which can significantly affect their attitude to future placements. We need to understand which young people are likely to require additional support in their first placement, in order to effectively provide that support to prevent an initial placement breakdown. This will break the cycle of rejection for children and young people and enable them to see a more positive future as possible.

What have we done?

- We currently have 1147 approved foster carers including Family and Friends and we intend to increase this number, to provide us with greater diversity and placement choice.
- Our carers already reflect the diversity of our communities and our cohort of children in care, with over a third of our carers being from backgrounds other than white/British.
- To increase the number of placements we have available, we continue to focus on recruiting new foster carers to Bradford. We have undertaken campaigns and have been reviewing the way we assess and pay our carers to make us as attractive as possible. This activity has not slowed as a result of the pandemic.
- At present we are specifically targeting people who could provide short break placements for disabled children and this campaign will continue for the rest of this year. Alongside this we have launched a specific Skills to Foster programme for carers who care for disabled children, or wish to do so in the future.

- We already have a competitive financial package but are also reviewing the way that we support and train our carers. By doing so we hope to attract new carers, keep hold of our existing carers and also improve placement stability by increasing the skills and confidence of our carers.
- As well as attracting new foster carers, we need to ensure that our existing ones stay with us. These are our most experienced foster carers and we must do everything we can to ensure that they feel valued, supported and safe.
- To this end we have successfully applied for a license to implement Mockingbird in Bradford. This scheme has been proven to support foster carers, to help retain them and also to affect placement stability. In some Local Authorities, Mockingbird has also helped them to recruit new carers because they can see what a supportive resource it is. We are expecting our first Mockingbird constellation to be live in February 2021.
- We have also been able to achieve Fostering Friendly status. This means that the Fostering Network has assessed that the council is a “fostering friendly employer” because we offer increased flexibility to any of our employees who are also foster carers. We hope that this will encourage some council staff to now choose to foster.
- All foster carers, including Family and Friends carers, have an allocated Supervising Social Worker in our Fostering Service and we have also increased the number of reviewing officers who are responsible for reviewing a foster carer’s registration every year. This means that our foster carers should be well supported and have help in identifying and meeting any learning needs.
- For those foster carers who undertake training and show particular skill, we are improving our Skills Payments system so that these carers can progress and receive greater rewards based on their levels of experience. We hope that they will be able to support less experienced foster carers but that this will also help them to stay with us.
- In the previous twelve months 60 children have progressed to permanence via Special Guardianship. The majority of these arrangements were with relatives however we have also had a number of mainstream foster carers choosing this path for children who live with them. This presents an opportunity but also a challenge in that it inevitably reduces our foster care capacity, however in all cases it has been the best thing for the child.
- In addition, 30 children achieved permanence by adoption in the previous twelve months and at present 33 children are placed with prospective adopters. We need to keep a tight grip on these cases to ensure that the case progresses to an adoption order without delay despite the impact of the pandemic on court timetables.
- We have 44 children who are subject to a Placement Order but who have not yet been placed for adoption and the majority of these have not yet been matched to an adopter. We need to ensure that we help these children achieve permanence without further delay even if this means that adoption is no longer the right outcome.

- Although we have no current plans to increase the number of beds we have available in our own children's homes, we are working to ensure that they are utilised well and that we plan ahead to reduce the need for children to be placed in the private sector.
- We are proud of our children's homes and the staff who look after our most vulnerable and complex children. Most of our homes are currently graded as good by Ofsted and this is a real achievement.
- We have increased the size of our Placement Coordination Team and reconfigured it to give more capacity for family finding and we have begun to work more jointly with our commissioning colleagues.
- We have introduced new systems that will help social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers to identify fragile placements and provide extra support to try to prevent breakdown.

What do we still need to do?

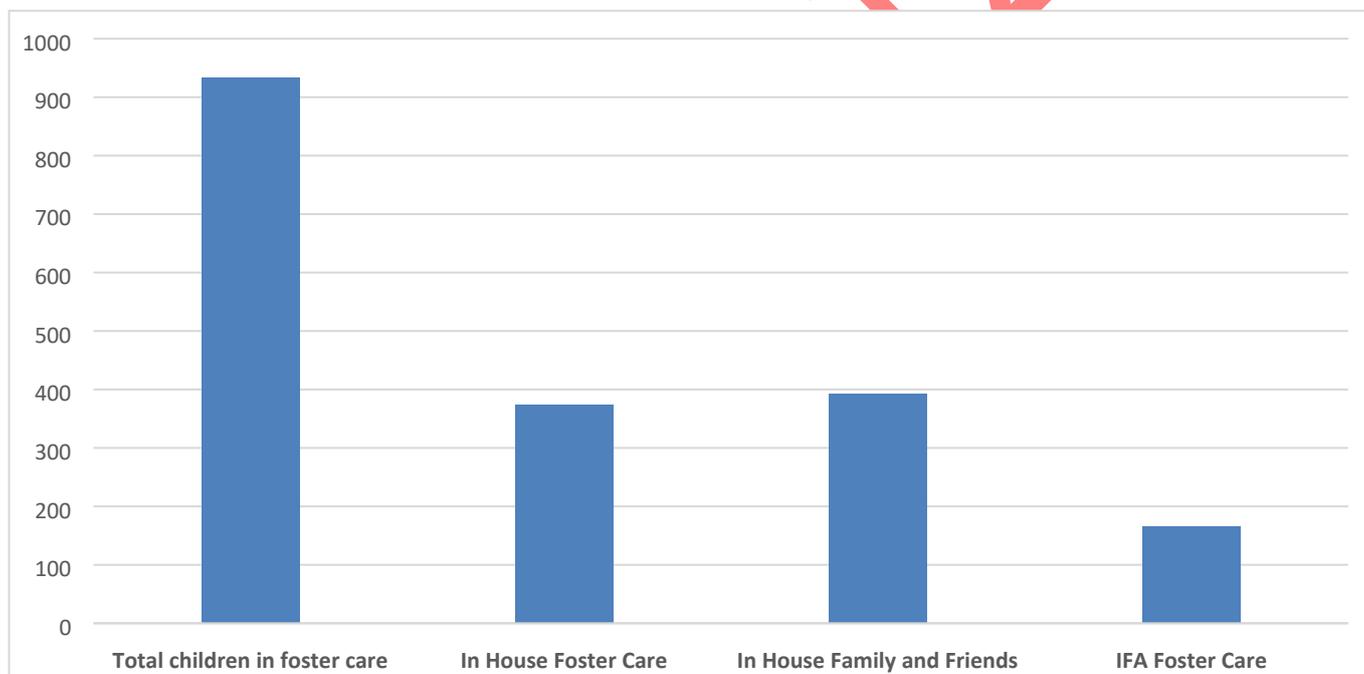
- We need to keep recruiting new foster carers at pace, particularly for complex children and short breaks for disabled children.
- We need to engage with the private sector in a more coordinated way so that when one of our children needs to live in a private children's home, this can be close to their home, friends, school and community unless this is not safe for them.
- We need to start routinely using feedback from children and young people when we are commissioning placements or services.
- We need to get better at helping children progress to permanent arrangements and doing this more quickly. This is something that we need to improve and which has been identified by Ofsted. Although we have new systems in place, it is an area that we must continue to focus on. Too many children spend too long in temporary arrangements without security so this is a key focus for us. We will need to work with our partners at One Adoption West Yorkshire to help reduce delays in children being matched or placed with adopters.
- We have also not always been consistently good at hearing from our children and young people about what they think about their placements or about being in care and then using this to change the way that we work. We need to do more of this in order to be able to change the way that we deliver our services but also to work with private providers who are commissioned by us.
- At present 399 children live with family or friends who have been approved as foster carers for them. Although this is an extremely valuable resource, these children are safe and well and many do not need the protection of the care system any longer. The care system can be stigmatising and can cause children in care to sometimes stand out from their peers. Children in care can also be discriminated against, both consciously and unconsciously. We need to reduce the barriers, including the financial barriers, to relatives pursuing Special Guardianship so that children can safely leave the care system without delays.

- We need to increase our effectiveness at supporting fragile placements to prevent breakdown. This needs to include identifying which children and young people are most likely to require additional support in their first placement, such as those entering care when older and those with a history of challenging behaviours in the community or in school. We need to consider how we ensure we are able to place those children in placements that they are able to engage with to prevent an initial placement breakdown.
- Due to the fact that it is usually not registered with Ofsted, we need to strengthen our relationships with the private 16+ sector to enable us to ensure that semi-supported, transitional accommodation is of sufficient quality. This includes the responsibility for this area of work moving to our specialist Placement Coordination Team and us adopting a system similar to the statutory, independent Regulation 44 Visits that we undertake in our own children's homes to ensure that the lack of Ofsted registration of these placements does not impact on the quality of placements that we provide.

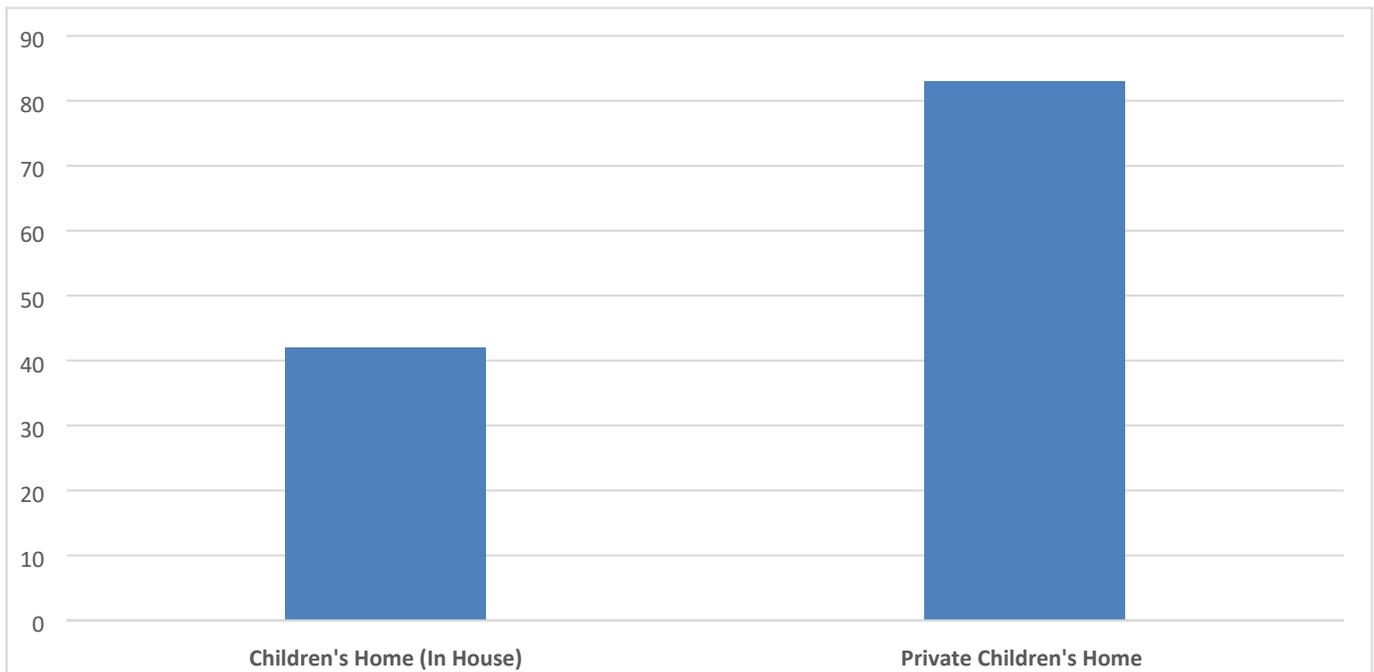
Priority 4: increasing our range of placements

What do we know?

- The majority of children in care live with foster carers, including family and friends who have been assessed and registered as foster carers specifically for children in their family. Our foster carers are one of our most valuable resources and make a huge and positive impact on the lives of our children. However, the availability of in-house placements has not kept pace with the increasing children in care numbers and in addition in all Local Authorities, some carers have transferred to Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA). No local authority can compete with the financial rewards that can be offered by an IFA and thus we have to work extra hard if we want to attract and retain our carers.
- The breakdown of children living with foster carers in Bradford is below and as can be seen more than 80% of these children are living with carers who have been assessed, registered and supported by the council, with just 18% being with IFA carers:



- In relation to our children's homes the situation is different. Bradford Council has eight mainstream children's homes that at full capacity can look after a maximum of 43 young people.
- Children's homes remain the best option for a small number of young people who have found living successfully with a substitute family to not be achievable. Our children's homes tend to care for our most complex young people and the people who work in our homes are highly skilled and extremely resilient.
- We do not currently have plans to increase the number of in-house children's homes however we will be considering this in the light of the recommendations contained within the report by the Children's Commissioner published in November 2020.



- For some young people in care aged 16 and 17 neither foster care nor a children's home are the right place for them to live until they are eighteen. Some of these young people need support to live independently or semi-independently in flats, lodgings or other types of provider usually in the private sector.
- These types of accommodation provide "support" rather than "care" and thus do not need to be registered with Ofsted in the way that children's home do. They are known as "unregulated provision" and should only be used for young people in care who are 16 or 17.
- These types of accommodation can offer a valuable, positive and appropriate home for young people aged 16 and 17 who are able to live with a greater degree of independence and who require support rather than care during their journey to adulthood and beyond.
- Currently in Bradford we have 93 young people living in this form of accommodation and the majority of them will be entitled to ongoing support as a care leaver when they reach eighteen.
- As already stated in this strategy our young people have very different experiences and needs. This means that our carers need a diverse range of skills and backgrounds in order to meet these needs.
- We need to further develop our joint commissioning with colleagues in health and education in order to ensure that children with multiple needs are offered effective support that will meet their needs. We need to build on the Joint Placement Panel approach to build a shared understanding with other commissioners of the gaps in placement availability, particularly for children and young people with more complex needs and work jointly to build more effective placement and support offers to better meet need.

What have we done?

- We have embarked on a system-wide review of fostering in Bradford, designed to re-establish fostering as a central, valued and valuable means through which to provide vulnerable children with care and certainty.
- Bradford already provides a highly competitive financial support package for our foster carers and particularly those who are able to demonstrate the necessary skills to progress from Level 1 to Levels 2 and 3.
- In order to help us to recruit more foster carers to Bradford we have:
 - Reviewed the foster care recruitment process, from the way in which initial enquiries are handled to the point at which approval is granted by the Agency Decision Maker and a first placement can commence. We know from experience that the willingness of people to foster can be significantly influenced by the promptness, courtesy, clarity and enthusiasm with which fostering services respond to their enquiries. We are determined that Bradford's Fostering Service will become synonymous with everything that is best in public service, being highly efficient, productive, accessible, culturally competent and reliable.
 - Achieved Fostering Friendly status, awarded by Fostering Network to the council for being an employer that is supportive and flexible for employees who wish to become foster carers.
 - Our Marketing Officer has utilised social media more effectively to publicise our offer and attract new carers including use of You Tube videos involving existing foster carers and Fostering Service officers.
- In order to support retention of existing foster carers and to reduce the number who choose to cease fostering or move to an IFA:
 - We have developed new processes for consultation, training and review, so that foster carers can have a voice and influence in the development of the fostering service.
 - Communications and processes for handling complaints made by foster carers have been revised to enable us to respond more effectively in order to resolve issues
 - We are developing our relationship with the Bradford Independent Foster Carers Association (BIFCA) to promote communication and to address any gaps in support as they arise.
 - We are developing a new skills progression and assessment system, so that foster carers' capacities are increased and their contribution to children's welfare is properly acknowledged and rewarded.
 - We have developed a number of in-house support groups focussing on key issues for carers including one for children who foster; one for men who foster and one for carers

who look after specific groups of children including children with disabilities, babies and teenagers.

- Our implementation of Mockingbird will also support retention by providing an extra level of support to less experienced foster carers and an opportunity for the professional progression of more experienced carers.
- We have increased our capacity to review the registration of our foster carers as these are an important mechanism by which carers' skills and development can be recognised and areas for development identified. These reviewing officers now sit alongside our Independent Reviewing Officers in order to provide a more independent viewpoint but also to enable shared learning.
- Placement disruptions and breakdowns have a negative effect on our children and young people but also our foster carers who invest a great deal of time and emotion into the children they look after. They also place additional pressure on our placements service in terms of the additional need to find new placements. Our placement stability has improved but we have developed new mechanisms by which fragile placements can be identified and supported at an earlier stage.
- We have expanded our Placement Coordination Team to enable us to cope with the increased demand and to enable us to remain effective at working with the private sector to source appropriate placements for complex children.
- We have reconfigured our services so that young people in care move to our new 16+ team when they reach the age of sixteen. Although this means a change of social worker, it means that they will then have consistency through to adulthood and beyond which for children in care is a particularly challenging time. It also means that these young people can receive the expert support of a service that is focused on the journey to adulthood and thus make the transition to semi or independent living more quickly and more successfully.

What do we need to do?

- As indicated in relation to Priority 1, we need to develop new ways to predict the way in which our cohort of children in care will change in the future both in terms of number and also *nature*. Although we have seen an increase in the numbers of children entering care, we are also implementing new ways to help children to safely remain with their families or to leave care more quickly. All of these factors will impact on the numbers of children needing a placement and predicting this is complex. However, this information is essential when we are planning our recruitment of foster carers and commissioning external providers.
- We need to engage more effectively and proactively with the IFA and private children's homes sectors in order to be able to enter into commissioning arrangements that will give us increased local capacity and flexibility but which will also offer improved value for money.
- We need to explore options for commissioning placements that will provide better value and also give providers more security in order to be able to develop high quality provision locally. We need to do this with health and education colleagues to ensure that we are able to meet the holistic needs of children and young people effectively.

- We will need to get better at monitoring these contracts to ensure that they are delivering what we need, and we will need to ensure that this is supported by feedback from children and their families.
- We are transferring the procurement of placements in the 16+ unregulated estate to the Placement Coordination Team to ensure that these future plans are extended to this area of work.
- In addition, as stated earlier we need to strengthen our relationships with the private 16+ sector to enable us to ensure that semi-supported, transitional accommodation is of sufficient quality. This includes us adopting a system similar to the statutory, independent Regulation 44 Visits that we undertake in our own children's homes to ensure that the lack of Ofsted registration of these placements does not impact on the quality of placements that we provide.
- We also need to more robustly review the placements of children who are placed in high cost placements. Children and young people's needs do change over time and where it is safe and appropriate for a young person to return to Bradford either to a foster home or children's home, we need to get better at identifying this and implementing an appropriate plan with the child.
- We need to maximise the usage of our existing placements. Not all of our foster carers are operating to full capacity. There can be a variety of reasons for this including looking after very complex children or the carer's own circumstances, health etc. However, we need to be able to identify this and address it effectively so that we can offer placements to more children.
- In order to do this, we will need to enhance our fostering information systems to enable data to be more readily captured and analysed.
- Similarly, with our own children's homes we cannot *always* operate at full capacity. There can be a variety of reasons for this for example particularly complex young people. In 2020 the pandemic has had an impact on the ability of some of our homes to operate at full capacity. Going forward we need to explore ways to ensure that additional support can be provided to homes that are particularly challenged in order to maximise the number of placements they can offer. This will include engaging with the private sector in relation to peripatetic or interim staff etc.
- We have set ourselves ambitious targets in relation to the recruitment of foster carers. For example, by the end of the next financial year we anticipate having approved thirty new fostering households which will give us new capacity for between 25 and 75 children dependant on needs and complexity.
- In order to achieve our targets for the next three years we will need to continue to expand our online presence and will be working with a specialist marketing organisation to support our Marketing Officer in this.
- Research and experience tells us that Mockingbird not only impacts on placement stability and retention of foster carers, it can also be a key element in attracting new carers. Authorities that have implemented Mockingbird well have seen them attract new carers to the profession but also to attract carers back from the IFA sector due to the enhanced support that

Mockingbird offers. Therefore, we need to ensure that our plans to launch Mockingbird in early 2021 remain on track.

- The council has already achieved Fostering Friendly status but in 2021 we need to extend this to local employers in other sectors and we have set an ambitious target for this.
- We need to finalise our work on processes for the assessment of family and friends foster carers in order to safely remove some of the barriers to people coming forward to care for children within their family.
- Once this work is completed we need to undertake a similar review of our mainstream recruitment and assessment processes in order to safely remove some of the barriers that prevent people deciding to become foster carers.

DRAFT 29.12.20

Doing what we say we will do – performance management and governance

Governance of the Strategy

The strategy is owned by the Children in Care and Care Leavers Partnership to provide the initial governance to oversee the delivery of the strategy. Performance reporting and impact of practice will be submitted to the Children's Services Departmental Management Team, the Children's Improvement Board and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

How partners will measure progress and success

The multi-agency partnership has been established to develop and drive forward a shared vision and strategy for children in care, with a focus on improving outcomes and promoting the needs and interests of children in care and young people leaving care. The members of the partnership will be from the primary agencies whose services have a key influence or impact on the lives of children in care and those who have left care. It is important that we quality assure the work we do both in terms of the individual service user's experience and the overall effectiveness of services. In support of this there are a number of different ways the partnership will measure progress and the impact of the strategy.

Sufficiency Strategy Action Plan

The Sufficiency Strategy is supported by a comprehensive action plan that is reviewed regularly and scrutinised by a number of forums including the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

A detailed annual action plan has been developed to support delivery of the priorities set out in this strategy.

The action plan addresses our priority areas, identifying key people and timeframes for the completion of each action. Many of the actions identified are subject to detailed specific plans and are monitored and evaluated within other forums. Where this is the case the detailed plans are referenced and links made to available evidence.

This action plan specifies a planned outcome from each action described and identifies a related performance measure with national benchmark information where available.

The action plan includes the means by which we will capture the views of the widest possible group of children in care and in out of area placements.

Progress against this action plan will be monitored quarterly by the Children in Care Strategic Group and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

A schedule for the monitoring and review of the action plan to support the delivery of this strategy will be agreed with the Corporate Parenting Board and Children in Care Strategic Partnership on an annual basis.

The action plan will be subject to review and evaluation and the overall strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Progress through key measures

Various measures will apply to the delivery of the strategy both quantitative and qualitative measures. We will establish the baseline data against which the strategy will be evaluated.

These measures are detailed in our new Children in Care and Leaving Care Scorecard.

DRAFT 29.12.20

Children in Care and Care Leavers Placement Sufficiency Strategy Priorities and Key Actions

Priority 1	Priority Two	Priority Three	Priority Four
Helping children to stay within their families	Understanding our children and young people's needs	Having a safe, stable and secure home	Increasing our range of placements
<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Early Help Strategy • Expand services for young people at the "edge of care" via the BPP service • Remove barriers to permanence via SGO 	<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the role and influence of the Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Council to how we deliver our services. • Develop mechanisms to ensure that we capture feedback from children and young people about their experience of the placements that we have provided them with. • Work with young people to understand their views on the need for carers from a similar social background, faith and ethnic origin. • Work with young people to identify whether there is a need to target staff recruitment activities in order to ensure our foster carers and residential staff are able to effectively engage with the children and young people we are working with. 	<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep recruiting new foster carers at pace, particularly for complex children and short breaks for disabled children. • We need to engage with the private sector in a more coordinated way • Routinely using feedback from children and young people when we are commissioning placements or services. • We need to get better at helping children progress to permanent arrangements and doing this more quickly. • We need to reduce the barriers, including the financial barriers, to relatives pursuing Special Guardianship so that children can safely leave the care system without delays. 	<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to engage more effectively and proactively with the IFA and private children's homes sectors • We need to explore options for commissioning placements that will provide better value and also give providers more security in order to be able to develop high quality provision locally. We need to do this with health and education colleagues to ensure that we are able to meet the holistic needs of children and young people effectively. • We will need to get better at monitoring these contracts to ensure that they are delivering what we need, and we will need to ensure that this is supported by feedback from children and their families. • We are transferring the procurement of placements in the 16+ unregulated estate to the Placement Coordination Team to ensure that

DRAFT 29.12.20

- Develop a Participation Strategy and Action Plan that takes the above into account.
- We need to develop new ways to predict the way in which our cohort of children in care will change in the future.

- We need to increase our effectiveness at supporting fragile placements to prevent breakdown.

these future plans are extended to this area of work.

- We also need to more robustly review the placements of children who are placed in high cost placements.
- We need to maximise the usage of our existing placements.
- We will need to enhance our fostering information systems to enable data to be more readily captured and analysed.
- We need to explore ways to ensure that additional support can be provided to homes that are particularly challenged in order to maximise the number of placements they can offer.
- We have set ourselves ambitious targets in relation to the recruitment of foster carers.
- We will need to continue to expand our online presence and we are planning to engage with a specialist marketing organisation to support our Marketing Officer in this.
- We need to ensure that our plans to launch Mockingbird in early 2021 remain on track.

DRAFT 29.12.20

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We need to extend Fostering Friendly to local employers in other sectors and we have set an ambitious target for this.• We need to finalise our work on processes for the assessment of family and friends foster carers in order to safely remove some of the barriers to people coming forward to care for children within their family.• We need to undertake a review of our mainstream recruitment and assessment processes in order to safely remove some of the barriers that prevent people deciding to become foster carers.
--	--	--	---



Report of the Strategic Director, Place to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 18 January 2021

S

Subject: Department of Place Corporate Parenting Report

Summary statement:

The Department of Place provides support and activities for Looked After Children and young people across a wide range of services. This report provides information on this work and seeks feedback from Panel members on areas for further development.

Jason Longhurst
Interim Strategic Director, Place

Report Contact: Jason Longhurst
Phone: (01274) 434748
E-mail jason.longhurst@bradford.gov.uk

Portfolio:
Children & Families

Overview & Scrutiny Area:
Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Department of Place provides support and activities for Looked After Children and young people across a wide range of services. This report provides information on this work and seeks feedback from Panel members on areas for further development.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Activities are presented below by Assistant Director area as both specific work relating to Looked after Children and young people and general provision affecting all children including Looked after Children and young people.

2.1 Economic Development and Housing

Joint working arrangements in place with Children's Services to ensure young people pathways are clear and that Looked After Children are supported effectively.

- The revised Social Housing Allocations policy places young people leaving care in the top priority band as too are foster carers and adopters (previous policy placed them in the second band)
- Working with Children's Services to ensure that all private sector accommodation used for children in care is compliant with housing standards

General provision affecting all children

- Close working with Adults and Children's Services to ensure appropriate support provision is developed and commissioned particularly Housing Related Support
- Close working arrangements and protocols with Bradford Nightstop
- Provision of adaptations for children and young people with disabilities also supports their safety and stability in their home lives, as adaptations will allow them and/or their carers to continue living in their home.
-

2.2 Neighbourhood and Customer Services

The Youth Service provides targeted and universal open access provision to support the mental, emotional and physical wellbeing of young people across the district. In the capacity of 'corporate parents' Youth Workers build and maintain voluntary relationships with young people who are looked after children. These relationships are built at a community level and seek to ensure that young people are less isolated and more connected with their peers. In addition, Youth Workers continue to present opportunities to help enrich young people's lives such as Area Opportunity Funding to remove barriers to social mobility and well being activities to help build healthy lifestyles such as cycling, cooking and promoting independent living skills.

- Facilitated by the Youth Service, looked after children and care leavers have been actively engaged in the recent work to support young people's mental wellbeing through Covid lockdown and local and national restrictions.
- Covid Young Ambassadors who include LAC young people are engaging with LAC and young people across district to ensure that district response reflects and takes on board the contributions and concerns of the districts young people, providing them with 'voice and influence' and a tailored approach.
- Breaking the Cycle team is actively working 1-1 with some LAC in the work around exploitation and serious organised crime.
- Youth Workers have made visits to most of the children's homes to work directly with young people who are LAC and care staff to do awareness raising around serious organised crime, gangs, and general criminality.
- A number of young people who are LAC also visit open access provision.

General provision affecting all children

- The Parks Service maintains parks, recreation grounds and children's play areas, providing a conducive environment for formal and informal play activities.
- Street Cleansing and Council Wardens work to create a safe and clean environment, promoting civic pride and participation in community wellbeing initiatives.
- Domestic abuse and ASB services support vulnerable families and individuals and supports action that helps people to be safe and feel safe.

2.3 Sport and Culture

- Free gym membership to the Council's Clubactive sites is available to looked after young people. The current scheme is available to young people leaving care aged 16 plus. The Scheme has been extended to include a companion to accompany the young person, and will also extend to junior gym membership for looked after young people of 14-16 years of age. *(Due to COVID restrictions this offer will be limited at the current time)*
- Adventure Activities Development Team work with Looked after Children and Care Leavers.
- Occasional Adventure bookings from care homes or specific groups of Looked after Children
- Looked After Children access our Multi Adventure and Holiday Courses
- A team from Leaving Care entered the Dragon Boat competition and trained at Doe Park
- We have taken the Climbing Tower to the annual Care Leavers event for several years
- We loan waterproofs, boots, sleeping bags to Looked After Children going on residential visits
- BASECAMPS are promoted to LAC Services and the Sports Development Unit liaise directly with LAC staff to facilitate bookings *(No basecamps were delivered in 2020 because of Covid restrictions)*
- Bradford Aquatics put looked after children in foster homes or care homes are placed immediately or put to the top of the waiting list
- Sports Development have accommodated LAC young people as volunteers working on sports activity sessions to improve employability

- (Sports Development will inform LAC Services in 2021 when they are again able to offer volunteering opportunities. This offer will be linked to the recommencement of Base Camps and the Sports event calendar)
- Bradford Theatres encourage access to the arts for looked after children and young people via a ticketing scheme offering them (and their foster families if applicable) free or greatly reduced price tickets to productions at the Alhambra Theatre and St George's Hall (subject to producer agreement and availability.)
- Volunteering opportunities at St George's Hall and work experience opportunities at The Alhambra Theatre. *(Theatres are currently closed due to COVUD19 restrictions and this will be available when the Theatres reopen)*

General provision affecting all children

- Playable Spaces Strategy adopted with £6.5m funding approved
- Start Programme, RSC Learning Performance Network, RSC Associates Schools Programme & RSC Associate Theatre Partner *(Currently not available due to COVID restrictions)*
- City of Film supports the delivery of film literacy across schools in the district to improve general engagement in learning and increased levels of literacy more specifically. Family Film Festival on Big Screen

Museums & Galleries

- All our 4 museums: Cartwright Hall, Cliffe Castle, Bradford Industrial Museum and Bolling Hall have free family areas, where everyone can play read and draw as well as spaces for eating packed lunches. Cartwright Hall has a new Family Friendly Gallery (gallery 5) which invites everyone to enjoy, explore and share ideas. Bradford Industrial Museum are working with 'Compassion for Mums Well-being', Providing mums with children some assistance and quiet spaces within the galleries
- Child-led learning is promoted in the schools offer and especially in the Art & Science of Noticing; these ideas then inform new programmes and displays.
- Bradford's Cultural Offer is promoted in the museums to Families and Schools of the District. Our free well established Family offer at weekends and during the school holidays is fun, creative and well supported. We also use these activities to support district wide events such as Bradford Children's Festival in City Park, and events in collaboration with Parks like Explore Keighley June 2019.
- Cartwright Hall host a regular Young Open exhibition, with an open entry to all 0-16 year olds from the District. Other displays of children's work take place for specific projects to celebration good work. Lilycroft Primary School's work on the significant local individual Miriam Lord is presently exhibited in the learning room at Cartwright Hall. Family display of stories took place in Cliffe Castle Museum & Park for families to support the summer reading challenge in 2018 – a link with Bradford Libraries. Bolling Hall gets regularly transformed by their local school, Bowling Park into a film set for Jumanji or Alice in Wonderland, Hansel & Gretal or a Knight School.
- We run a series of Take Over Days in our Museums where children from both primary & secondary schools learn about the workings of our buildings. In addition a number of home educated groups also work with us. We also offer support work placements. *(Currently not available due to COVID restrictions and Museums being closed)*

Libraries

- Bradford Libraries offers a range of services for Under-Fives, Children and Young People. Many of these are suitable for looked-after children or we can tailor on request to help with specific needs. Please contact Christinea Donnelly Development Officer for Children and Young people christinea.donnelly@bradford.gov.uk or Susan Brewster-Craig, Development Officer for Early Years - susan.brewster-craig@bradford.gov.uk
- Libraries for Under-Fives, Children and Young People
- Books for Under-Fives, Children and Young Adults
- We have an extensive children's book collection - fiction, non-fiction and graphic novels, with new books arriving daily in all of our libraries. Children can request books for free and we love to have book suggestions from children and young adults. We also have dyslexia friendly, large print, and audio books.
- Under-Fives, Children and Young People Library Tickets
- Under-Fives, Children and Young People have their own library ticket and children under 16 don't pay fines on overdue books. Children can borrow up to 25 items and can renew books online as well as in person or over the telephone.
- **Summer Reading Challenge**
- This is an annual national scheme to encourage children from 4 to 11 years to read for enjoyment throughout the summer holidays. It offers incentives to collect and on completion the child receives a certificate and medal to recognise their achievement. All our libraries offer the Summer Reading Challenge from mid-July to mid-September and we have an extensive number of free activities and events over the summer to support the challenge. We can support children's homes and care homes to participate in the challenge.
- Information about the challenge and all our summer events can be found on www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries as well as in our Summer Reading Challenge events booklet, available in all our libraries, City Hall, Information
- Shops and other public services. It is also available to download from our website.
- **Summer Reading Challenge Young Ambassadors**
- We offer young people between 13 and 21yrs the chance to volunteer as a Young Ambassador, to support the Summer Reading Challenge and summer activities. The scheme offers the opportunity to develop confidence, skills and social-interaction with other young people, families participating and the library staff. For further information, contact the Development Officer for Young People.
- **Bradford Libraries Rhyme Challenge**
- This challenge encourages families to learn rhymes together to promote early language acquisition and communication skills. The challenge sees under-fives and their parents learn five rhymes and receive a certificate. The rhyme challenge can be taken as a group in the library or in a childcare setting during Sept - March. Groups receive a pack of resources for up to 30 children. Groups can also be entered for the Rhyme Challenge Awards which take place each year in July. Individuals can take the challenge online at

www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries For more information on the challenge contact the Development Officer for Early Years.

- **Bookstart**

- Bookstart is a national free book-gifting programme. The programme is delivered in Bradford by the Library Service. Bookstart gives free books to every child in England and Wales at two key stages before school, as well as free packs for children with additional needs, tips and guidance on reading together, resources and activities, and much more.
- The packs are gifted via the following routes:
- Bookstart Baby Pack – Gifted via Registrars at registration of birth
- Bookstart Treasure Pack – Gifted via Childcare Settings during year the child turns four .
- Bookstart Additional Needs Packs – Contact Development Officer for Early Years

- **Bookstart Bear Club**

- This is a library incentive scheme for children five and under to encourage book sharing and regular library use throughout the year. All libraries offer the scheme and children can collect incentives such as a baby Bookstart bear, book bag, board books, picture books and swim vouchers.

- **Bookstart Bear**

- To help promote books and reading a Bookstart Bear costume is available for loan to groups. Please contact the Development Officer for Early Years for further details.

- **Regular Storytimes & Rhymetimes**

- We offer a range of regular storytimes or rhymetimes on a weekly basis in our libraries. All are welcome. Sessions are free and usually include stories, rhymes and a small craft activity. Information on specific local library provision can be found on our website www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries or at your local library.

- **Holiday Activities**

- We offer a variety of free school holiday events and activities aimed at all ages. These include author and poet visits, art and themed workshops, theatre and storytelling performances and craft activities. Information on forthcoming events can be found on our website www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries, at your local library, and the local press. We also post on Facebook and Twitter.

- **Home Educated Reading Group**

- Open to all families or those who are home schooling. The group meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month from 11am - 12noon at Keighley Library. All welcome and caters from 5 to 16 years.

- **Class Visits**

- All our libraries welcome class visits. We can offer your school and nursery a standard class visit which includes library tour and story time or we can tailor your class visit to your needs. Look out for our special National Curriculum linked events offered to schools. For class visits contact your local library or the Development Officers for Early Years (nursery visits) or Young People (school

classes). We are happy to tailor visits by children's homes or care homes or specific groups.

- **School Events**

- We offer a variety of events open to schools throughout term time. These include author visits, art & themed workshops, theatre and storytelling performances as well as supporting reading initiatives. Information on forthcoming events is usually sent to Schools and listed on Bradford Schools Online. We also host events for specific groups and would be happy to cater for children's home and care homes if appropriate.

- **Story Sack Loans**

- We offer a range of story sacks for loan to groups. A list of story sacks is available from the Development Officer for Early Years.

- **Cultural Partnerships & Events**

- Art Works are delivering the 2nd of a 3-year project, working with Unaccompanied Young Asylum Seekers. The theme is making yourself heard and they are working with local poets and rappers with the young people.

- Creative Routes work is with residential home staff and young people aged 13-18. Go Higher have funded this project specifically for underrepresented groups in Higher Education. They have been exploring how creativity can open up space and opportunity for meaningful discussion, and have worked with a printmaker, poet, film maker, willow sculptor and land artist over the last year.

- Dance United Yorkshire (DUY) delivers intensive contemporary dance and performance projects (5-6 weeks) which target vulnerable and disengaged young people between 14 and 19yrs. Projects have been running in Bradford since 2006. Across 15 years, DUY have had referrals from the youth offending service, Pupil Referral Units, Social Services and mainstream secondary schools. The projects bring young people together (approximately 20 per project) from a range of backgrounds and circumstances. Some of the young people will be 'looked after', in foster care or Leaving Care.

- The Events team have delivered a large number of diverse events and activities e.g. Bradford Festival, Illuminate Bradford, Summer fun days, Christmas activities all of which have been free to access. The programme is widely marketed across the Bradford District and the team have targeted schools ensuring each child receives flyers/programmes etc

- Bradford Council's "Response" scheme was aimed at the arts sector. As part of the pilot scheme, arts groups for grants of between £500 and £1,000 to develop ways to connect with isolated people, through means such as podcasts and streaming services. One of the projects funded was run by Bloomin Buds Theatre who delivered arts and crafts parcels to the doorsteps of those in need for them to complete during this period of self isolation. The packs are aimed at children and adults including activity packs and adult colouring in.

- The 'Our Street Gallery' is a 12-month project transforming the district's streets into a canvas. The first Episode consisted of over 50 images capturing moments and feelings of 13 to 18-year-olds from all backgrounds stuck at home during the coronavirus pandemic. The photographs were taken for Through Our Lens, a project led by Shipley photographer Carolyn Mendelsohn. In collaboration with Bradford College, she mentored more than 40 young people in photography..

2.4 Planning Transport and Highways

- Lead in creating safe and healthy places across the district.
- To encourage care leavers and young people to take up apprenticeships which would include a college education and job opportunities

General provision affecting all children

- Design and deliver safer roads across the district.
- Building control ensures safe buildings for children across the district.
- Develop and implement Planning policies that improve the lives of children.
- Contribute to an air quality plan that improves the health of children.
- Provide more quicker and attractive bus routes using clear air zone emission compliant buses
- Upgrade active travel (cycling and walking) infrastructure and provide active travel planning support for healthier lifestyles
- Provide blue and green infrastructure in development to improve the quality of life and health of children.
- Provide access to countryside, biodiversity and recreation through the work of Countryside Services and the Rights of Way Team.
- Provide opportunities for children to cycle and walk across the District.

2.5 Waste, Fleet and Transport Services

General provision affecting all children

- The Waste Service contributes to a safe and clean environment engendering civic pride and community well-being.
- PTS provides an efficient and safe system of transportation to vulnerable children and adults which enhances their quality of life.
- The Licensing Service through its statutory functions protects the young and vulnerable from age related and potentially harmful activities.
- The Emergency Management Service has an overarching role in protecting and safeguarding all residents to ensure their safety.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 None.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 All activities and actions outline in paragraph 2 are funded from within existing Department of Place Service budgets service

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 If there are no significant risks arising out of the implementation of the proposed

recommendations it should be stated but only on advice of the Assistant Director Finance and Procurement and the City Solicitor.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 No legal issues arising.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Not applicable.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

No implications.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

No implications.

7.6 TRADE UNION

Not applicable.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Actions outlined apply across the whole District and there are no specific ward implications.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

Activities and actions outlined in paragraph 2 are intended to improve outcomes for Looked after Children.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

Not applicable.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 None.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The views of Panel Members are sought on the range of activities and actions outlined in Paragraph 2 of this report and on areas for further development.

11. APPENDICES

None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.



Report of the Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 18th January 2021

T

Subject: Youth Homelessness

Summary statement:

Update on Youth Homelessness

Mark Douglas - Strategic Director of Children's Services

Portfolio: Children and Families

Report Contact: Kirsty Askew
Phone: (01274) 437500
E-mail: kirsty.askew@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

This report is to provide an update to the panel on developments in respect of the Youth Homeless Team in Bradford.

The team for 16/17 year olds, who are experiencing homelessness or rooflessness, is sited within the Leaving Care 16+ Service. For young people over 18, the team work in partnership with Housing Options to ensure their housing needs are met, alongside appropriate emotional support.

Since October 2018, where it was identified through the Ofsted inspection that there were failings in the service being provided to youth homeless young people. The service for Youth Homelessness has been part of the Improvement Plan and progress has been scrutinised by the Improvement Board. The most recent audit of young people presenting as homeless was written on 17th November 2020.

2. BACKGROUND

The audit considered 64 children and young people who were identified with the presenting need as “*Young person presenting as homeless*” between 1st July 2019 and 30th June 2020.

Of these children 18 young people were incorrectly identified as they were under the age of 16 years and therefore not eligible for youth homelessness services. They were all the siblings of the presenting child. These children were still subject to audit to consider if their needs were met but are not considered in this report.

Hence 46 young people over 16 presenting as homeless were audited. The audit has highlighted overall audit outcomes for children and young people experiencing homelessness has improved since April 2019.

All young people presenting as homeless are now managed at the Integrated Front Door and this is likely to have contributed to improved risk management.

In the majority of cases, children and young people’s views were well reported upon and their opinions were reflected in plans and assessments.

On a number of case files there was evidence of good collaboration with housing providers

In almost all cases audited, the needs of the siblings of children presenting as homeless were properly taken into account.

Risk was also appropriately assessed in the majority of cases. However, there are still areas that require improvement with some concerns being identified for 17 of these children and young people.

These include an acknowledgement that some young people have chaotic and abusive childhoods, where the risks are still current, emphasising the need for good social work chronologies that succinctly detail a child and young person’s experience. Although as is noted above most siblings of those young people presenting as homeless were adequately assessed there can be further improvement. On occasion it was highlighted contextualised safeguarding risks were not identified early enough for these children, including missing from home or

missing from education.

Case files do not consistently hold information confirming specific actions have been taken and information has been sought or shared such as case files not being clear if consent has been gained from the young person to share information or if independent advice has been sought for the young person.

This audit has highlighted improvements that can be made that will be incorporated into the Youth Homelessness Improvement Plan, most importantly to ensure there is consistency in social work practice for all children and young people who present or may present as homeless. Procedures and practice guidance needs to be widely available to support all workers across all of CSC service areas, with e-learning modules to support workers such as for children and young people remanded into custody in youth offending service. All case files to hold the correct information required to ensure a good service is being provided.

There is a need to ensure services are stream lined across the different services areas including prompt progression at the Integrated Front Door to assessment and support where it is identified the child and or young person is no longer living at home and that children are correctly classified as in need of youth homelessness support services.

A mediation service to be considered that can begin work with the presenting young person and their family within 48 hours of a young person presenting as homeless to ensure young people who can return home are afforded every opportunity and for those children and young people who are identified as being at risk of homelessness. For these children and young people there is consideration given to allocate a specialist worker from within the 16+ Leaving Care service to offer on-going support and/or consultation to the locality social work teams.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Through Care service was restructured in early 2020 into under 16 yrs and over 16 yrs services. The Youth Homeless Team now sits in the 16+ Leaving Care service, where specialist knowledge and expertise is held and being developed in this area.

The DfE have approved and signed off the Protocol for Homelessness presentation of young people aged 16/17 year olds.

16+ have recently employed an apprentice young person, who is a Care Leaver and a Care Leaver Ambassador providing a voice for children and young people who have experienced homelessness.

Recently in the latter part of 2020 a telephone help line was set up for out of hours support for young people known to 16+ Leaving Care service, this is manned by qualified social workers who volunteer their time to support our children and young people. This helpline has been so successful that it was continued over the Christmas period and into the New Year. Volunteers who have offered their services have included social workers and senior managers.

As defined by Ofsted there are a number of scenarios that count as 'unregulated'.

Supported accommodation for 16/17 years is one of these unregulated provisions. This means the provision is not registered with Ofsted and is therefore unregulated.

Bradford place young people aged between 16/17 in unregulated supported accommodation. It is recognised that nationally there has been some criticism over unregulated provision, due to the opportunity to exploit a growing commercial market. Bradford strive to ensure that all our young people are placed in supported accommodation that is reputable and has gone through a commissioning process, which is currently being strengthened through all placement activity moving to the provider service area. There are more providers now registering with Ofsted who provide support to 16/17, that Bradford are able to access for our children and young people.

Children and young people who are placed in supported accommodation usually attain the status of being a child in care under s 20 of the Children Act unless they have been supported to make a decision to receive services as a child in need under s 17 of the Children Act.

The Youth Homelessness Improvement Plan considers how, the Homeless Team links into the locality model of working to better support prevention work and mediation between the young person and family members.

Young people have spoken loudly that they want a young person's hub in Bradford. They want a one-stop shop that they can feel safe in and get all their needs met in one place. This was in previously in place via Culture Fusion and young people would like this back.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- Additional resources were diverted to the Youth Homeless Team. There has been a creation of a Social Worker post.
- It is our hope that in the future we can increase social work capacity within the team.
- One stop shop young person's hub to be created for young people. Due to COVID and national restrictions this will need careful management to be able to meet the needs of the majority of children and young people whilst ensuring safety is maintained.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

N/A

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

N/A

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Please see above. This work links into the corporate parenting stream and is cross cutting. It continues to remain on the agenda of the Cross Cutting Equality Board.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

N/A

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

It is worth pointing out that if we do not get our services right to our youth homeless children they are a high profile group with a trajectory of poor outcomes and over representation within offending circles.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

N/A

7.6 TRADE UNION

N/A

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

N/A.

**7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

N/A

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

See above.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

N/A.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

The audit highlights the current improvement path is the right one, we have been able to engage partners at a corporate level and raise awareness.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

The views of the Corporate Parenting Panel are requested.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Protocol for Homelessness presentation of young people aged 16/17 years old.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

PROTOCOL FOR HOMELESSNESS PRESENTATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16 / 17 YEAR OLD

1. Key Principles

1.1 The parents of, or those with parental responsibility for, 16 and 17 year olds are responsible for their children's welfare. Our primary commitment is to keep families together in their homes wherever possible and safe because this is usually best for the child.

1.2 It is the responsibility of all agencies to keep children safe.

1.3 Bed and Breakfast accommodation is not suitable for use by children's services or housing authorities to accommodate 16 and 17 year old young people on a temporary basis: Where this is the only accommodation available, the agency with the accommodation responsibilities will look to the other agencies to see if there is alternative accommodation available.

1.4 The experience of homelessness is damaging to young people and to their life chances: the statutory Joint Guidance states that "it is in the best interests of most young people aged 16 or 17 to live in the family home, or, where this is not safe or appropriate, with responsible adults in their wider family and friends network".

1.5 Young people should be given every opportunity to understand the options available to them and to make informed choices about their future.

1.6 Sometimes and despite everyone's best efforts, the planned pathway agreed with the young person breaks down.

1.7 Agencies will share information about a young person and their family, subject to their consent.

1.8 Duties under section 20 of the 1989 Children Act take precedence over the duties in the 1996 Housing Act.

1.9 A young person in crisis should receive a consistent, practical and immediate response which focuses on preventing homelessness in the first place and from whichever agency they first approach and a script has been developed to facilitate this.

1.10 A young person should be offered access to independent advocacy currently provided by the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS).

2. The Legal Context

This protocol is designed to ensure that the law is properly applied so that the best possible outcomes can be achieved for homeless 16 and 17 year olds.

The statutory entitlements of homeless 16 and 17 year olds are enshrined in the Children Act 1989 and the Housing Act 1996 and the relationship between these two pieces of legislation has proven to be complex and, at times, contentious. Consequently, case law and central government guidance now plays a fundamental role in the interpretation and application of the law and in the application of this

protocol. Further detailed information on the Legal context can be found in Appendix 1.

3. Young People Positive Pathway

Children Services, Housing Options and all participating agencies will work closely together to ensure that all young people have somewhere safe and suitable to live to help them make a positive transition into adulthood.

The housing pathway for young people in Bradford is underpinned by St Basil's Positive Pathway. Bradford's young people's pathway is aimed at avoiding housing crisis and ensuring that agencies work together to support young people to achieve positive outcomes in other areas of their lives alongside housing.

At Bradford Council we firmly believe that Young People:

- Need a single point of contact with limited handoffs
- Have access to information, advice and guidance early in their journey to prevent crisis situations.
- Have clarity about what will happen next, what to expect and what are, if any, the barriers
- Want to be listened to and helped to make informed choices
- Want to have their wishes heard and someone to talk to who can explain what is going to happen and what could happen
- Have the right support
- Have the right to speak to an advocate
- Have the right to be 'looked after' by the Local Authority
- Have the right to suitable and safe accommodation that meets their needs

We will deliver on Bradford Young People's needs by incorporating our pathway on the 5-stages identified in St Basil's Positive Pathway:

Stage 1: Information and advice for young people and families

Information, Advice and Guidance will be available for all young people, their families and their support agencies 'online' or at different hotspots e.g. YP hubs, leisure centres, schools, libraries, GPs etc.

Stage 2: Early Help

The early help offer is aimed at engaging with education establishments (schools and academies) to target young people and their families who may be at higher risk of homelessness but not yet reached a crisis point. In addition, Children Services have referral protocols in place with services that work with young people who may be at risk of homelessness such as the Youth Offending team, Youth Service, Education partners CAMHS and Troubles Families (Families First).

Stage 3: A Prevention Hub

A centralised prevention hub will be available for all young people. Children's Services, Housing Options will be co-located, with other partner services such as DWP, Youth Service, welfare benefits advice etc. The aim is to offer young people a single access point for wrap-around joint assessment and support for pathways into emergency and longer term accommodation, learning, training and work. Young people will be able to access a number of interventions, examples include:

- Same day (or within 48hrs) home visits to discuss with family/parents the underlying issues and informally mediate/negotiate a return back to the family home
- Formal family mediation
- Access to accommodation base or floating support via the housing related support gateway available at the Hub
- Access to emergency 'respite' accommodation to act as a cool off period with a view of returning back home through negotiations or plan for a move to suitable accommodation
- Access to welfare benefits advice services
- Access to debt and affordability/budgeting advice services

Stage 4: Commissioned accommodation and flexible support

Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Housing Services committed to aligning the commissioning of support and accommodation services to ensure that the offer to Young People is consistent, reliable and holistic and developed according to young people's needs.

The Hub will contain a gateway to commissioned supported accommodation and floating support. This ensures that support is targeted to the young people who need it - most and managed in order to meet statutory duties and the needs of young people as effectively as possible.

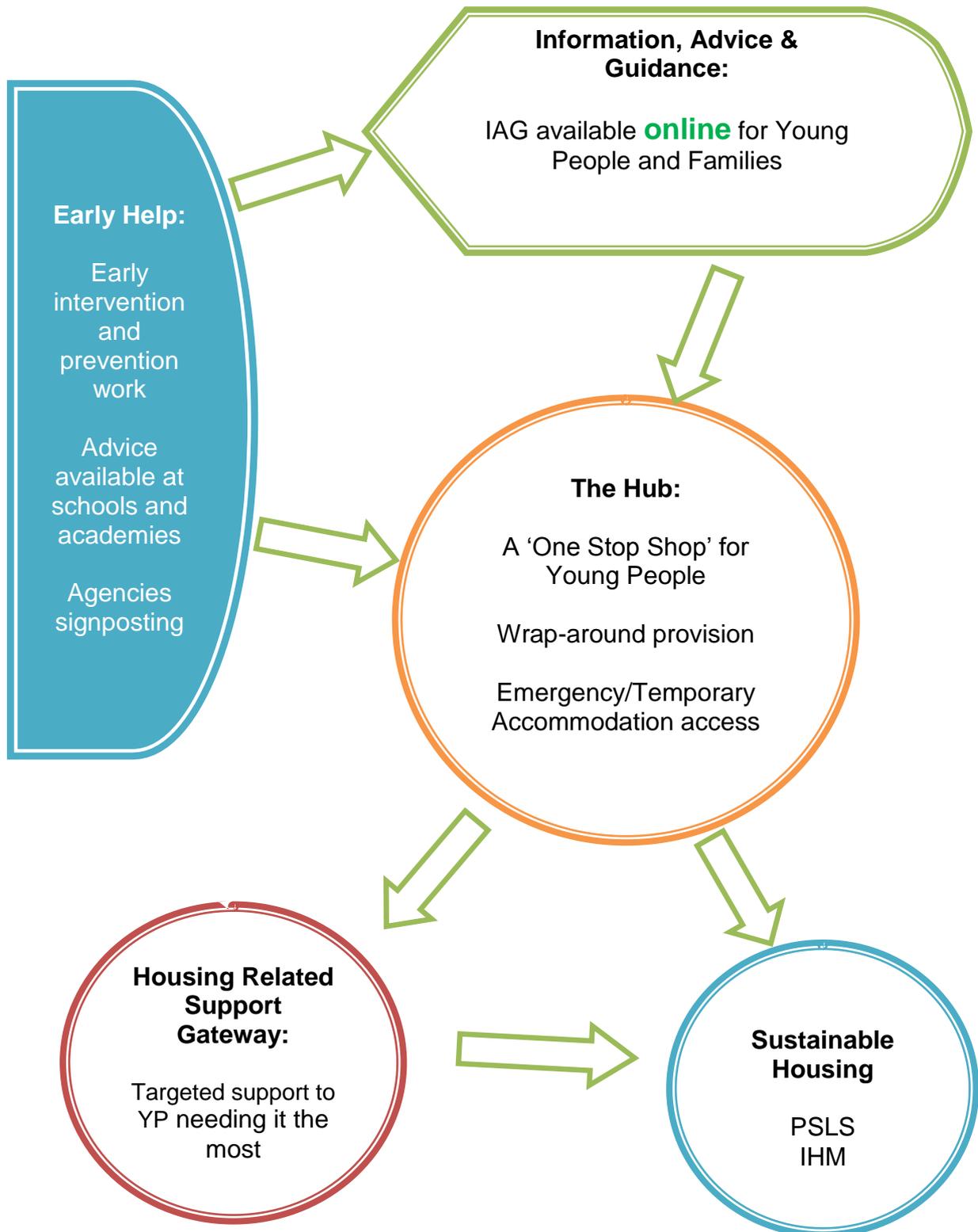
Stage 5: Housing options for young people

Young People who are presenting with multiple needs and complexities will be discussed at an Accommodation Pathways Panel co-chaired by Senior Officers within Housing Options and Care Leavers Service. Young People will be discussed within their 17th year but no later than 17.5 with a view of supporting transitions into a young adult pathway. Partner representation from, Access to housing, Early Help – Youth Provision, emotional and mental health and wellbeing and post 16 education will ensure wrap around support.

In addition to accessing supported accommodation, young people will be able to access affordable and safe housing options when they are ready to succeed in living independently. This includes accessing accommodation such as:

- a) Childrens Service Supported Tenancy Scheme
- b) The Council's Private Sector Lettings Scheme available at the Hub or online (www.bradfordhomes.org.uk).
- c) Intensive Housing Management services offered by a number of providers. These include a mixture of self-contained or shared (HMO) accommodation.

3.1 Youth Homeless Pathway @ The Hub



Appendix 1. Legal Context

The Children Act 1989, Chapter 41, Part III, Section 20 Provision of accommodation for children:

Key extracts are:

(1) Every local authority shall provide accommodation for any child in need within their area who appears to them to require accommodation as a result of—

- a) there being no person who has parental responsibility for him;
- b) his being lost or having been abandoned; or
- c) the person who has been caring for him being prevented (whether or not permanently, and for whatever reason) from providing him with suitable accommodation or care.

(3) Every local authority shall provide accommodation for any child in need within their area who has reached the age of sixteen and whose welfare the authority consider is likely to be seriously prejudiced if they do not provide him with accommodation.

(4) A local authority may provide accommodation for any child within their area (even though a person who has parental responsibility for him is able to provide him with accommodation) if they consider that to do so would safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

(6) Before providing accommodation under this Section, a local authority shall, so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the child's welfare—

- a) ascertain the child's wishes and feelings regarding the provision of accommodation; and
- b) give due consideration (having regard to his age and understanding) to such wishes and feelings of the child as they have been able to ascertain.

(7) A local authority may not provide accommodation under this Section for any child if any person who—

- a) has parental responsibility for him; and
- b) is willing and able to—
 - i. provide accommodation for him; or
 - ii. arrange for accommodation to be provided for him,
 - iii. objects.¹

If a young person is accommodated under Section 20 they become a 'looked after child' and they are afforded further protection and rights with a range of support and services, including a named social worker and a care plan. The plan must address accommodation and support with named contacts, timescales for action and review dates. Some young people who are 'looked after' will also then qualify for leaving care support and services up to the age of 21 or in some cases, up to the age of 24.²

¹ In the case of a 16/17 year old and even if a parent objects, if the young person wishes to be a Child Looked After, they can be if they are deemed competent to make that decision.

² For those young people who are looked after for 13 weeks or more after their 14th birthday and are still a Child Looked After on or after their 16th birthday, the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 applies. For those "qualifying" young people who do not meet the 13 week threshold for the above, Section 24 of the Children's Act 1989 applies.

While a local authority can offer services and support to a young person under Section 17 of the Act, they cannot substitute the Section 20 duty with Section 17 powers.

Housing Act 1996

Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 outlines the legal responsibilities of a District or Borough Council in terms of assisting people who approach the housing authority as homeless.

16 and 17 year old homeless applicants have a priority need for accommodation, except those who are:-

- A relevant child
- A child in need who is owed a duty under section 20 of the Children Act 1989.

“The primary responsibility for a child in need who requires accommodation, including a 16 and 17 year old who is homeless lies with the relevant children’s services authority. The Children Act 1989 (section 20) places a duty on children’s services authorities to accommodate a child in need, and in almost all circumstances a homeless 16-17 year old would be a child in need.

However, there remain circumstances when the housing authority will have duties towards a homeless 16 and 17 year olds, including when the young person, having been fully informed of the implications, and being judged to have capacity to make that decision, declines to become looked after under the Children Act and instead applies for assistance under homelessness legislation.”

(Homeless Code of Guidance 2018)

The Housing Act recognises that some people will be homeless and roofless before a council can carry out its enquiries and make a decision about what duty is owed. Consequently, section 188 of the Act consists of a duty to secure interim accommodation whilst action is taken to relieve the applicants homelessness or pending a decision, if there is reason to believe that the applicant may be homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need.

It is this interim accommodation duty that is used under the protocol when a homeless 16 or 17-year-old makes their initial approach to a housing authority.

Homeless applicants are entitled to a written decision under section 184 of the Act and those who receive an unfavourable decision are entitled to request a review under section 202. The deadline for requesting a review is 21 days but a local authority has the discretion to accept an out of time review. An applicant who is dissatisfied with a review decision has the right to appeal to the county court on a point of law.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Homelessness Reduction Act introduced new duties including:

- Prevention duty – which bestows a duty upon a local authority to take reasonable steps to help the applicant ensure that they do not become homeless and that either existing accommodation remains available for them or that they are rehoused.

- Relief duty –this bestows a duty upon a local authority to take reasonable steps to secure accommodation become available for at least six months.
- Duty to refer – this bestows a duty upon named public bodies to make referrals to the Housing Authority when they are aware someone may be homeless or at risk of homelessness. They require the consent of the individual and can make the referral to the Housing Authority the person chooses. This duty is intended to ensure that public bodies and local housing authorities work together in partnership to intervene early to prevent homelessness by integrating pathways and services.

The public bodies included are:

- a. Prisons
- b. Youth offending institutions
- c. Secure training centres
- d. Secure colleges
- e. Youth offending teams
- f. Probation services (including community rehabilitation companies)
- g. Jobcentre Plus
- h. Social services authorities
- i. Emergency departments
- j. Urgent treatment centres
- k. Hospitals in their functions of providing inpatient care
- l. The Secretary of State for Defence in relation to members of the regular forces (Royal Navy, Royal Marines, the army and the Royal Air Force)

Case Law

R (on the application of G) v London Borough of Southwark

The House of Lords judgment in the case of *R (on the application of G) v London Borough of Southwark* was handed down on 20 May 2009. The principal legal issue in this case was: what do the criteria in Section 20(1) of the *Children Act 1989* mean and how, if at all, is their application affected by the other duties of children's authorities in particular Section 17 of the 1989 Act and by the duties of housing authorities under Part 7 of the *Housing Act 1996*?

In *R (G) v LB Southwark* the central issue was: where a child of 16 or 17 who has been thrown out of the family home seeks help from the local children's services authority, is found to be homeless and a child "in need", and wishes to be accommodated by them under Section 20 of the *Children Act 1989*, can the children's services authority instead refer him to the local housing authority for accommodation under the homelessness legislation (Part 7 of the *Housing Act 1996*)? The case was heard on appeal from the Court of Appeal, which, by a majority of 2 to 1, had upheld Southwark's ability to refer the child for assistance under the homelessness legislation even though a duty to provide accommodation had been accepted under Section 20(1) of the *Children Act 1989*.

The House of Lords was unanimous in allowing the appeal. The leading opinion, delivered by Baroness Hale, reaffirmed the House of Lords' opinions in *R(M) v LB Hammersmith and Fulham* and sets out the approach that children's services authorities should take when performing their statutory duties to 16 and 17 year olds who are found to be homeless and "in need". The ruling confirmed the Government's

view that local children's services authorities should presume that any lone, homeless child should be provided with accommodation under Section 20(1) of the Children Act 1989 unless the child is not in the local authority's judgement (based on an initial screening assessment), a child "in need". In nearly all cases, the impact of a child being homeless and their parents being unable to provide them with suitable accommodation or care would result in such significant challenges to the child's welfare that the child will be a child "in need".

The House of Lords reiterated that the Children Act has primacy over the Housing Act in providing for children in need. The duties of local children's services authorities to accommodate children in need cannot be circumvented by referring the child to the housing authority, whose duties under Part 7 of the *Housing Act 1996* provide a safety net only for those (very few) homeless children who will not meet the criteria for accommodation under Section 20 of the 1989 Act. Examples of the small number of homeless 16 and 17 year olds who would have priority need under the homelessness legislation (by virtue of article 3 of the *Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002*) would include those whose need for accommodation did not fall within the circumstances specified in S.20(1) of the 1989 Act - for example, because they had been living independently for some time prior to their homelessness - and those whose need for accommodation fell within S.20 but who did not want to be accommodated under S.20. Such young people must be judged to be competent to make such a decision and have had the benefit of advice about the consequences of making such a decision.

Lord Neuberger's judgment, which dealt with the interrelationship between the Section 20 duty and the duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, provides that the purpose of the 2002 Order was to fill the gap whereby there had been no specific duty to secure accommodation for homeless children aged 16 or 17 whose circumstances did not bring them within S.20 of the Children Act. The purpose of the 2002 Order was not to enable a children's services authority to divert its duty under S.20 to the housing authority, thereby emasculating the assistance to be afforded to children aged 16 or 17 who "require accommodation".

It will be extremely important that there continues to be close partnership between children's services authorities and housing authorities to support local authority responsibilities under the Children Act for meeting the needs of children in their area.

Baroness Hale referred to Section 27 of the Children Act 1989, which empowers a children's authority to ask other authorities, including *any* local housing authority, for "help in the exercise of any of their functions" under Part III of the 1989 Act. The requested authority must provide help if it is compatible with their own statutory or other duties and does not unduly prejudice the discharge of their own functions. But, she said, this does not mean that the children's authority can avoid their responsibilities by "passing the buck" to another authority; rather that they can ask another authority to use its powers to help them discharge theirs.

Complaint against Dover City Council and Kent County Council, 31 July 2012

A homeless 16 year old boy, who had previously been in care and had drug-related issues, had applied to the council as homeless in January and June 2009. The council should have accepted the applications and applied a Joint Protocol agreed with the county council for dealing with homeless children in need. Both councils were found to have acted contrary to their Joint Protocol and/or contrary to law. The Local Government Ombudsman recommended that the councils between them pay £10,000 compensation.

Joint Statutory Guidance - Provision of Accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation

Following the G v Southwark 2009 House of Lords judgment, the Government issued joint statutory guidance from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (now the Department for Education) and Department for Communities and Local Government - *Provision of Accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation*. This guidance outlines the legal duties under the Children Act 1989 and Housing Act 1996 for 16 and 17 year old young people who are homeless.

The joint statutory guidance gives clear direction on the complementary roles of children's services authorities and local housing authorities in implementing their separate statutory roles. The G v Southwark judgment clarified that in the case of a homeless 16 or 17 year olds, children's law takes precedence over housing law. In light of this clarification, a fundamental principle of the joint statutory guidance is that all 16 and 17 year olds who are homeless should be assessed by children's services under the Children Act 1989 to determine whether they are a child in need, as set out in Section 17 of the Act and, if so, whether a duty exists to offer accommodation under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989.

Young people aged 16 or 17 are still children and that as such, all agencies have duties and responsibilities to act together to protect them³ if they are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

The joint guidance was recently updated in April 2018 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Education, following amendments to the 1996 Housing Act, following the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017.

Key extracts from this statutory guidance are:

- Para 2.1 "... generally, it will be in the best interests of most young people to live in the family home, or, where this is not safe or appropriate, with responsible adults in their wider family and friends network."
- Para 3.19 "Where a young person seeks help because they are homeless or threatened with homelessness it is good practice for an assessment of the young person's needs to be conducted jointly by both children's and housing services..... The lead agency will be local authority children's services, given their responsibilities for children in need in their area."
- Para 3.23 "The most crucial issues to be determined in the first instance will be whether the young person is actually homeless, if the young person is a child in need and/ or is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and/ or if the young person requires emergency accommodation. If this is the case, children's services must accommodate them immediately. The welfare of the child is paramount and a 16 or 17 year old must not be placed at risk whilst waiting for the completion of an assessment."
- Para 3.11 "Local authority duties for accommodating young people under this section are not simply a matter for local policy. The duty is engaged

³ *Working together to safeguard children*, guidance for children's services authorities and their partners published by DCSF (now Department for Education) 2010

whenever a child in need in the local authority's area requires accommodation as a result of one of the factors set out in section 20(1)(a) to (c) or in section 20(3) of the Children Act.”

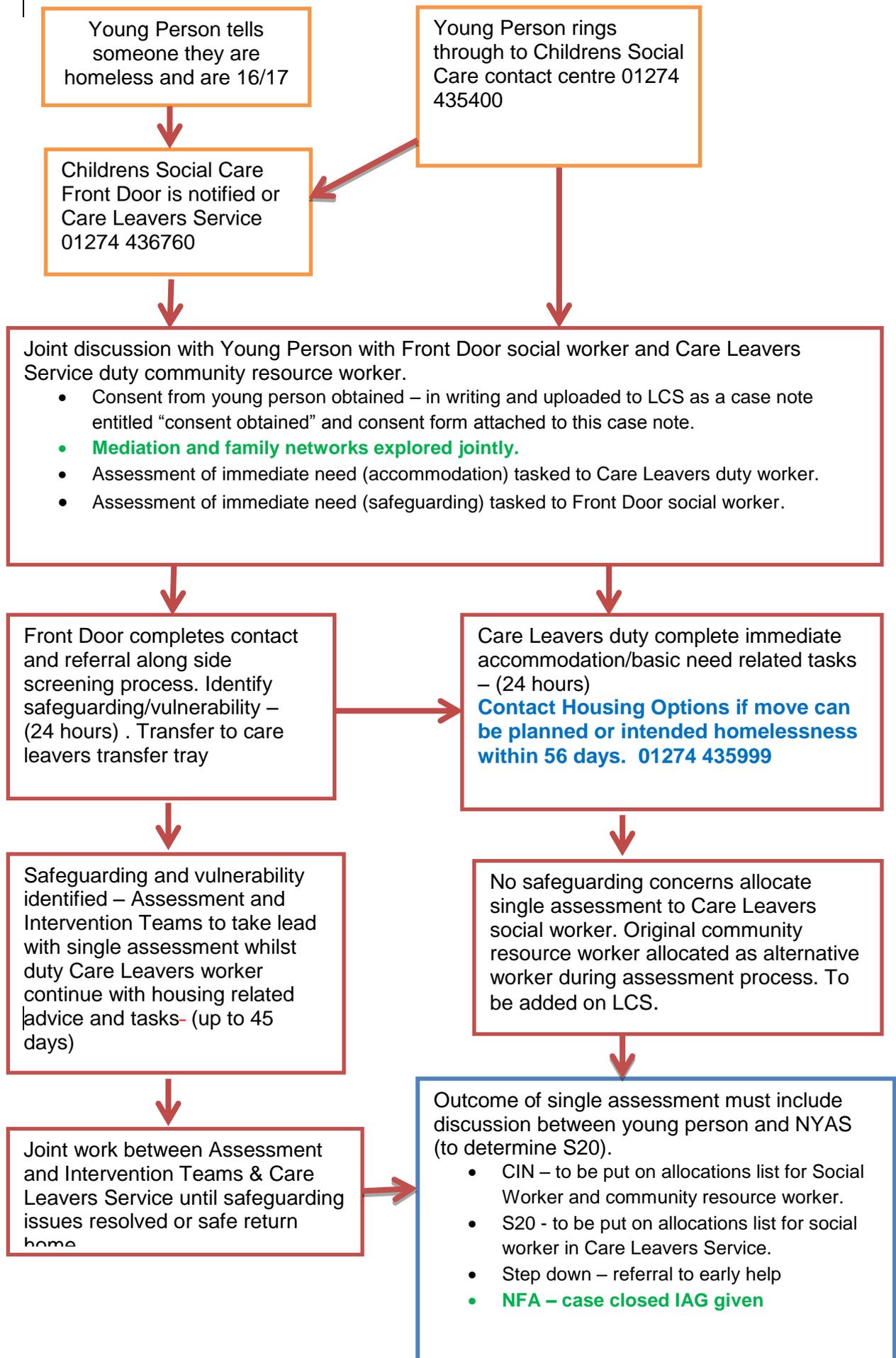
- Para 3.12 “Where a young person in need requires accommodation as a result of one of the factors set out in the Section 20(1) (a) to (c) or Section 20(3) then that young person must be provided with accommodation. As a result of being accommodated by Children’s services for a continuous period of more than 24 hours the young person will be Looked After” (except if a private fostering arrangement is in place where the parent arranges a foster carer and Children’s Services simply approve the placement).
- Para 3.42 It will be essential that the young person is fully consulted about and understands the implications of being accommodated by children’s services and becoming looked after. The social worker leading the assessment must provide realistic and full information about the package of support that the young person can expect as a looked after child....”
- Para 3.43 “Children’s services should also ensure that the young person receives accurate information about what assistance may be available to them if they do not become looked after, including from housing services under Part 7 of the 1996 Housing Act... In particular the considerations a young person needs to be made aware of are:
 - Duties of housing services to undertake an assessment, develop a personalised housing plan and to take steps to help the applicant retain or secure accommodation,
 - The requirement on the applicant to cooperate and for applicants to take steps themselves as set out in a personalised plan,
 - the accommodation offer under the relief duty – suitable accommodation which has a reasonable prospect of being available for occupation for at least 6 months,
 - the implications of turning down offers of accommodation that are suitable,
 - the possible risk of being found or becoming homeless intentionally in the future,
 - their right to request a review of decisions”.
- Para 3.47 “Young people should have access to independent advocacy and support to assist them in weighing up the advantages and disadvantages and coming to a balanced decision.⁴
- Para 3.49 “Where a 16 or 17 year old child in need wishes to refuse accommodation offered under Section 20 of the 1989 Act, children’s services must be satisfied that the young person :
 - has been provided with all relevant information
 - is competent to make such a decision and
 - that they do not need to take additional safeguarding action”
- Para 3.50 “Every 16-17 year old assessed as being a child in need but who does not wish to be accommodated under section 20 should have a child in need plan setting out the services that will be provided to meet their needs.”

⁴ “Children and young people who have received services under the 1989 Act are able to be supported to make complaints and representation with the help of an independent advocate. Children’s services should provide information about access to advocacy services when they explain the assessment process to 16 and 17 year olds seeking help because of homelessness.”

- Para 3.59 “The powers of local authorities to provide accommodation under Section 17 cannot be used to substitute for their duty to provide accommodation under Section 20(1) of the 1989 Act to homeless 16 and 17 year olds in need. Children’s services do not have the option of choosing under which provision they should provide accommodation for homeless 16 and 17 year olds. Section 20 involves an evaluative judgment on some matters but not a discretion.”⁵
- Paras 3.62-3.65 “Local authority children’s services are among the public authorities which are required to notify a housing authority of service users they consider may be homeless or threatened with homelessness”....”The referrals does not diminish children’s services responsibilities towards young people Rather it should be used to help strengthen communication between children’s and housing services, it will not be an alternative to carrying out a child in need or early help assessment”. This protocol outlines the lines of communication and how information is shared.
- Para 4.4 “Housing authorities will be unable to determine whether a 16-17 year old has priority need under the 1996 Act until a child in need assessment has been completed. It is therefore essential that referrals are made and assessments completed in a timely manner.” This will include the joint assessment between housing and children’s services.
- Para 4.15 Under the requirements of the Homeless Reduction Act (which has amended the 1996 Housing Act) housing have a duty to prevent homelessness. Where the applicant is already homeless the housing authority has a duty to relieve homelessness. This may be brought to an end in a number of ways including where the applicant has refused an offer, the applicant has become homeless intentionally from accommodation provided or has deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate.
- Para 4.19 “If the relief duty end..... children’s services will be required to carry out further assessment of the young persons needs”.
- Para 4.28 “Where a young person aged 16 or 17 is homeless and requires accommodation, does not wish to be accommodated under section 20 of the 1989 Act but is subsequently not owed an accommodation duty by a housing authority, for example because they have refused a suitable offer of accommodation or are found to be intentionally homeless, then children’s services should, given the change in circumstances, once again ask them their wishes regarding being accommodated under section 20.”
- Para 4.29 “If the young person still does not wish to be accommodated and is judged to have the capacity to make that decision, if it is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young person who is in need, they should be offered accommodation under section 17 of the 1989 Act until they no longer require accommodation or they reach the age of 18. In such cases children’s services and housing services will need to work together with the young person to ensure that they are not placed at risk of homelessness as they approach age 18.”

⁵ R (G) v Southwark [2009] UKHL 26 – para. 31
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldjudgmt/id090520/appg-2.htm>

Youth Homelessness working pathway





Report of the Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Corporate Parenting to be held on 18 January 2021

U

Subject: Care Leaving Service

Summary statement:

Leaving Well Update – Pathway Plan Process for Care leavers

Mark Douglas - Strategic Director of Children's Services

Portfolio: Children and Families

Report Contact: Kelly Bidmead & Carly Turpin – Team Managers
Phone: (01274) 435568

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

E-mail: Kelly.bidmead@bradford.gov.uk
Carly.turpn@bradford.gov.uk

1. SUMMARY

This report is to provide an update to the panel on developments in respect of the Leaving Well 'app' a pathway planning tool for care leavers.

Local authorities have duties under the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 towards care leavers.

Under Section 23 of the Leaving Care Act local authorities have duties to allocate a personal advisor and young people from 15 and $\frac{3}{4}$ must be provided with a pathway plan.

The pathway plan should consider the care leaver's need for support and assistance (which have already been identified in previous assessments) and how best to meet these needs until the age of 21 (or longer if the young person is in education or training or requests an extension of support).

The pathway plan is reviewed and updated every 6 months or when there is a significant change. The pathway plan is a collaborative document that is completed with the young person.

2. BACKGROUND

Brief Chronology of Bradford journey with Leaving Well.

Oct 18	Successful expression of interested submitted to the DofE and Social Finance be part of the Leaving well pilot.
Nov 18	Discovery Phase Commences
Feb 19	Leaving Well Implemented across Leaving Care Services
Jan 19 – Present	Continued Meetings with Social Finance and participating LA's to share Best Practice
Oct 20	Pilot ends
Nov 20	Linked in with Social Institute for Excellence to review the Pilot report to be completed and shared in Jan 21 'Looking Local' on board to further develop Leaving Well, who are IT soft wear specialists. Delivery of training to staff to improve quality of plans and Best Practice guidance written.
Dec 20	Ofsted assurance visit – positive comments received from Ofsted regarding pathway planning. Also commented that consistency around quality is needed across the service – this is known area of development.
Feb 21	Plans to complete audits on pathway plans to review quality and compliance

There are 595 young people open to the Care Leaving Services in Bradford, all young people require and pathway plan. Current performance regarding completion rate is 97.5%.

Training has recently been delivered to all staff regarding Best Practice when

completing pathway plans, expectations are that they are completed with young people and the Signs of Safety model is the preferred social work methodology. The planned audit of pathway plans will support improvements in quality.

Pathway Plans are no longer completed on Liquid Logic and young people are invited by their social worker or PA to complete the checklist section on the Leaving Well app, this is mostly done alongside their worker but young people do also complete this on their own. The checklist section of the pathway plan prompts discussions about the overall plan and from this agreed goals are determined and reviewed.

Leaving Well was created with young people and therefore is young person friendly and this is improving engagement and young people are taking ownership of their own plans. The collaboration between a young person and worker means both are accountable to ensure goals that are set are achieved.

Following the delivery of the most recent training means that the young person's voice is captured throughout the pathway plan, evidenced in bold and italic throughout the plan.

Working in partnership with other Local Authorities who use Leaving Well, we have also noted that following Ofsted visits that they have advised that pathway plans utilising current systems such as Liquid Logic do not capture the young person's voice and are not young person friendly. Leaving Well is a way to over come this barrier.

'Looking Local' are now on board to further drive forward Leaving Well, they have good links with SCIE and can further develop Leaving Well, again in collaboration with Local Authorities and young people.

Leaving Well also captures performance data using a management 'Dashboard' the Domains are as follows:

- Housing
- Health
- Education
- Relationships
- Activities
- Finance
- Identity
- Independence

This information proved invaluable recently when it was nationally recognised that Care Leavers were in digital poverty. Data from the Dashboard was used to target those young people affected.

We aim to further use this data to target other identified areas such as our NEET cohort.

- In the appendix there is an example of Leaving Well pathway plans
- Information from the Dashboard

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

What is working Well

Staff like the Leaving Well pathway plan.

The majority of young people are engaging and developing their own individual plans.

It remains a three-way process between young person, worker and team manager.

The checklist section of the plan is a quick and easy way to 'check in' with the young person

It can be used on phones, laptops, tablets.

Dashboard data can be utilised to target further areas of work.

Leaving Well is a live document.

Leaving Well continues to develop in collaboration with young people and Local Authorities

Local Authorities on board share best practice to improve quality and performance.

SCIE have completed an evaluation of the Pilot all are looking forward to this being shared.

Training has been delivered to all staff.

'Looking Local' are now on board to drive forward and have more technical knowledge

What needs to be considered

Continued engagement of involving young people developing their own plan and driving this forward as a service.

Young people to remain on board in further developing Leaving Well

The interface between Leaving Well and current systems and how this could be improved.

Outcomes of the SCIE evaluation

Consideration to roll out to a younger cohort of young people to improve their overall experience of collaborative care planning.

An on-going training and audit cycle to be in place to improve quality of pathway plans

Next Steps

To continue to provide training to workers

To involve Care Leaver Ambassadors with on-going development of the plans

Quality Assure of plans in January.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

Bradford have been successful in engaging with the pilot the Leaving Well app and have a reduction in the purchase price of Leaving Well.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

N/A

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

N/A.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

N/A

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

N/A.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

N/A

7.6 TRADE UNION

N/A

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

N/A

**7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

N/A

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

See above

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

N/A

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

N/A

9. OPTIONS

It is felt that on balance the quality of pathway plans has improved through the use of Leaving Well and improved young people's development of the plan.

At this moment we would want the authority to commit to investment going forward, which is currently being discussed and reviewed by our senior leadership team.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

The views of the Corporate Parenting Panel are requested.

11. APPENDICES

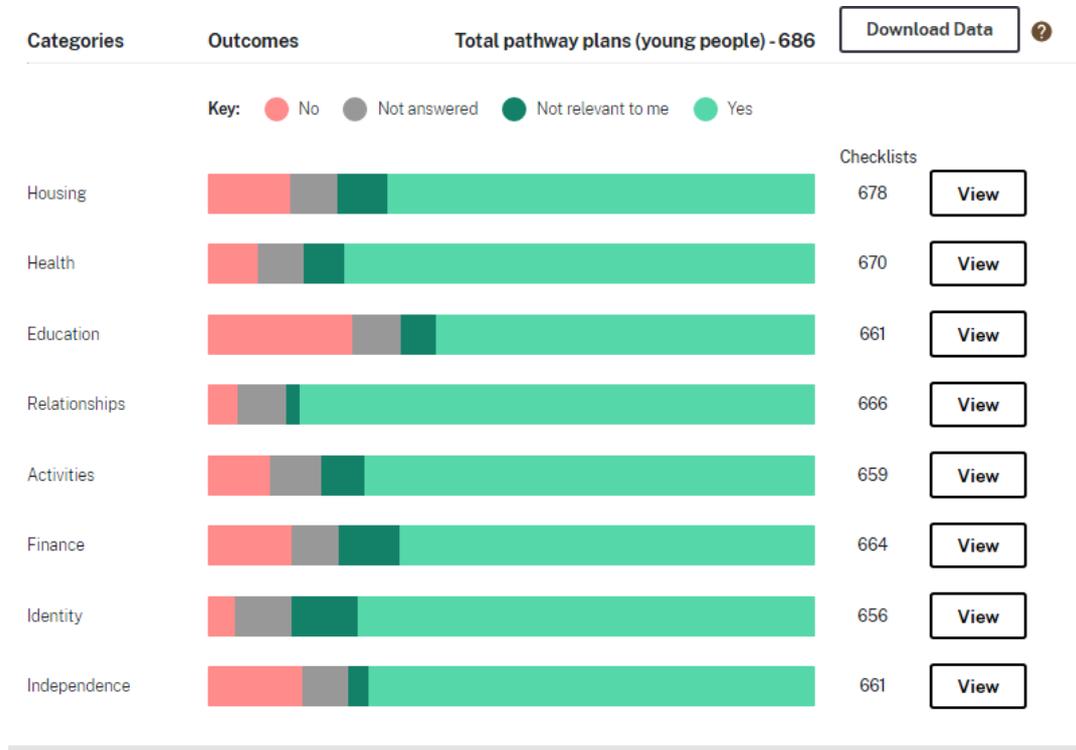
- An example of a Leaving Well pathway plans
- Overview of management Dashboard

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

N/A

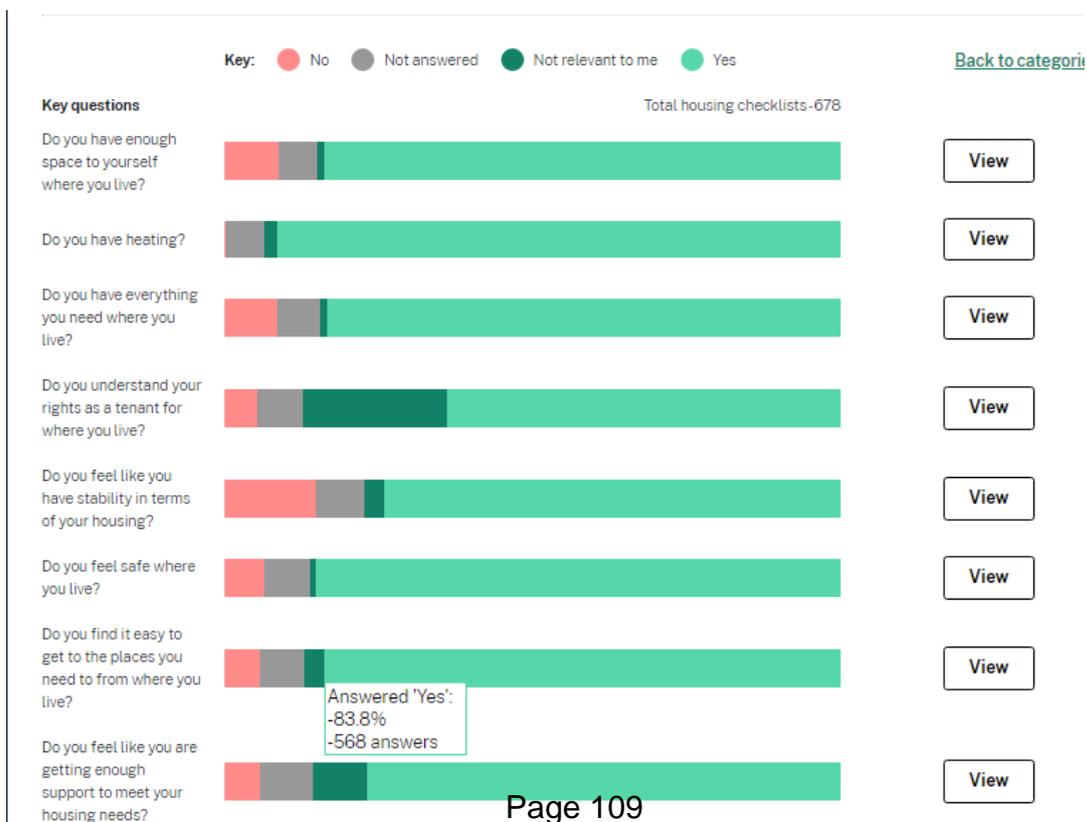
Leaving Well

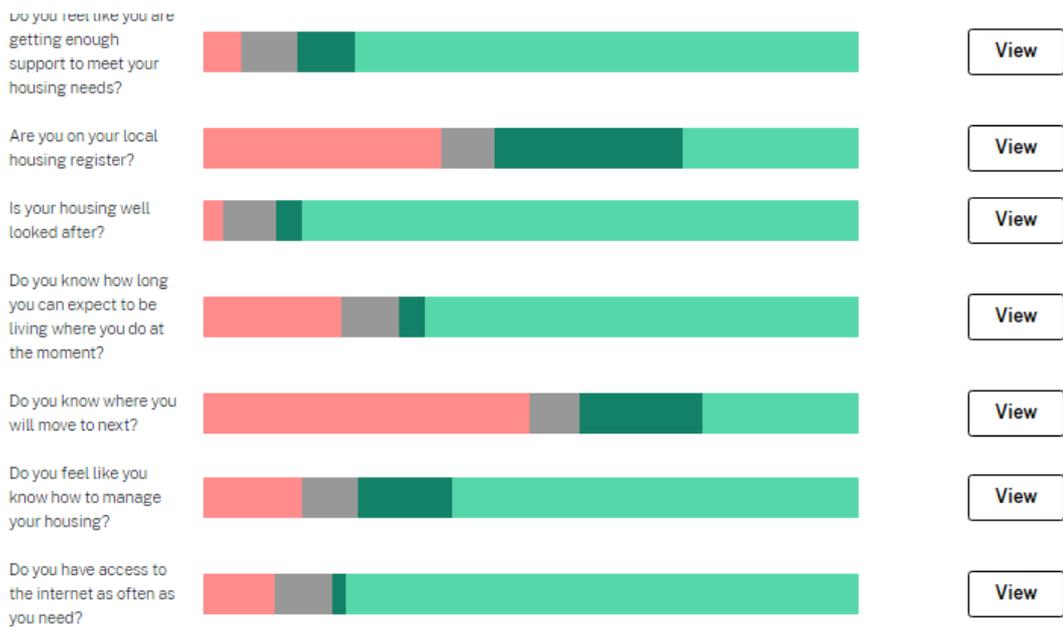
Leaving Well has a manager dashboard, where data, is pulled from the information which is added into a pathway plan. These are separated into different domains as shown below:



The dashboard, allows managers to identify areas which need intervention. Recently, the service wanted to identify which young people were living in digital poverty and needed wifi at home.

Therefore the data for this was obtained from the housing domain. The information below, shows the questions which are asked under the housing domain.





We were able to analyse the data, particularly in relation to the last question “do you have access to the internet as often as you need. This identified that 74 young people said “No”, and identifies their names



From this information we were able to put a business case together to ask for Wi-Fi for these young people. These are currently being delivered to the young people.

Another example, of how we use the dashboard is identifying young people who are NEET.



We are carrying out targeted work in the new year regarding NEET young people. To try and improve the NEET figures.

Using the dashboard highlights the strong areas within the service and areas which need improvement. It clearly identifies young people by name, which assists in intervention

H pathway plan

Pathway plan created 5 January 2021

Overview

Updated 26 November 2020

H's view about his plan

I am happy with my plan and Avon takes time to listen to me. Avon is nice worker, who always checks to see if I am okay. She worries too much about all the time about me and specially now I am living in Birmingham. Avon says she will come to see my house in Birmingham to make sure it is okay and I am safe. Avon tells me that my education is very important and she wants me to do well. I will hopefully go to college very soon, after I have sorted my house and it looks nice.

I have Avon who is my case worker from Bradford. When I first came to Bradford I met her the very first time and she looked after me and my friends. Avon is like my UK mother and I am happy I have her to help me.

I do not want Birmingham care leavers to be working with me, but only Avon, Liz the nurse and Anne Marie, who I know and she helps me like Avon and she is a very nice lady.

H support network from Bradford care leavers service are;

*Liz Gilmartin –Care leavers nurse

*Anne Marie Gill -Practice Lead –UASC –Care leavers nurse

*Yvonne E. Guy –PA –Care leavers nurse

H is a delightful quiet spoken young person, who has a lovely smile. It is a pleasure to work in partnership with H as he begins on his journey of a new life in the UK.

Has H's PA I am concerned re H's immaturity and naivety. H is an extremely vulnerable young person re; his general and safeguarding issues and his personal wellbeing. H is at significant risk of exploitation if he mixes with the wrong crowd and he could be forced in criminality / county line drug trafficking

unbeknown to him, with a desperate desire for peer groups and friendship re a sense of belonging.

H loss and separation from his family, which is of particular significant to H to find out there wellbeing and his lack of attachment from his family, due to circumstances out of his control. H's emotional and psychological issues without question has been impacted on him tremendously. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has been triggered by a terrifying event H has either experiencing it or witnessing back home in Nangarhar in Afghanistan.

I am mindful that H feels I am too intrusive and this really needs to be balance and allow H privacy has he develops a new life in the UK.

It is very important for consistent and to build a relationship up with H re Bradford care leaving service, having full case responsibility for H, but utilize and access support provision made available by via Birmingham care leavers.

My aims and objectives is to continue to work together in partnership with H on his journey of life in the UK has he adjusts to the western cultures and opportunities open to him has a young person.

Manager feedback

Updated 24 December 2020

24.11.20

Hi I am so pleased that you keep in touch with Yvonne, she does worry about you particularly when she does not know where you are. Please ensure that you keep in touch with her as she will continue to support and advise you. Now you are in Birmingham she can help you find services that you may need and can also put you in touch with the Leaving Care Service there, it is something for you to think about. Yvonne will keep me updated about how you are getting on.

Thanks

Kelly Bidmead

Team Manager

Achievements

 I want my own house and not to share with anyone
by Kelly Bidmead 5 January 2021

Goals

I want to be car mechanic a in the future.

This is the job I want to do.

Categories: *None*

Actions

- To gain the qualifications for me to achieve this**
 - Action Owner: *H*
 - Due by 29 June 2021
-

Checklist

Housing questions

Completed 8 November 2020

1. Do you have enough space to yourself where you live?

No

Not really, I am in the sitting room

2. Do you have heating?

Yes

3. Do you have everything you need where you live?

Yes

Kind of

4. Do you understand your rights as a tenant for where you live?

No

5. Do you feel like you have stability in terms of your housing?

No

I have to move here to Birmingham to find a house for myself to live in.

6. Do you feel safe where you live?

Yes

Yes it is okay

7. Do you find it easy to get to the places you need to from where you live?

Yes

I only know a little bit of Birmingham.

8. Do you feel like you are getting enough support to meet your housing needs?

No

No, I need my own house

do not like of having to share anything with a another person.

9. Are you on your local housing register?

No

I want to live in Birmingham now. Avon registered me in Bradford, but I do not to live

Page 6 of 30

there.

10. Is your housing well looked after?

Yes

It is clean and tidy

11. Do you know how long you can expect to be living where you do at the moment?

No

Until i get a house in Birmingham. I need a house, just for me and not to share.

12. Do you know where you will move to next?

Yes

I will stay in Birmingham now. Avon said it is not good moving around the UK.

13. Do you feel like you know how to manage your housing?

No

14. Do you have access to the internet as often as you need?

Yes

Housing current situation

Working well: Worries: H has had significant rapid changes in relation to his housing needs in a such a short time frame re 4 potential moves, not planned just extremely chaotic.

*22nd June to 7th Sept at Claremount in Bradford, semi-independent living. Own pod, but shared Kitchen. H did not like this accommodation and felt to confine to the small living quarters.

*7th Sept to 28th Sept –Inverness Scotland, H decided to go and live with his friend in a 4 bedroom shared flat. Spontaneous decision made by H, no discussion with his PA about this. H called to inform me he was on a coach heading his way to Scotland. His landlord –S was not made aware of H moving out of the accommodation. Reasons for leaving Inverness, he said he was scared due to other housemates were constantly fighting and he believes smoking drugs, which caused a lot of animosity and arguments with H’s friend, who tried to protect H from the other occupants. H said he friend, decided to pay for a hotel for H to stay in for one week, to keep him safe. This was due to H’s friend going to work for long hrs and H remained alone in the house for a significant period of time.

13th October H stayed overnight in Manchester, primarily due to his coach

Page 7 of 30

coming into Manchester in the early hours of the morning and I advised H he would not be able to get a connection to Bradford, due to coaches will cease running. Likewise I was not aware or given any notice that H was returning back down till he was on the coach a few hours away before getting to Manchester. No provisions were in place re emergency accommodation identified for H's return.

28th Sept –14th October H returned back to Bradford to stay with a friend –sofa surfing. Discussion with H re future accommodation and H said he was considering moving to Manchester, because his best friend was there and he believes he could really settle there.

*14th Oct -H made the decision to move to Birmingham. I wasn't made aware again of H's spontaneous departure from Bradford. H is currently staying in a 4 bedroom shared house, with a friend. H informed me that he does not have his own room, but was sleeping in the sitting room apparently on the floor. He said that he was okay, because this is what he is accustomed to when he lived back home in Afghanistan.

The overwhelming concern and worries are that H has refused appropriate accommodation identified for him in Bradford i.e. Supported lodgings with another y/p person in a large property in Shipley. He refused and cited the issues as the area was far too quiet and he would have a long journey back into Bradford to socialise and meet with his friends (15 minutes by bus). Further accommodation was a 1 bedroom flat, self-contained in a much sorted area. H refused and said he did not want this, as he had changed his mind re the area, which he initially requested. Brief conversation re; the benefits of Supported Lodgings and what this may entail for him. I advised that personally I believe this may be the right options for H, re his transition into adulthood with help, support and guidance and ready tenancy work. H disagreed and said he knew how to look after house. I stressed that he had no issues keeping his surroundings clean, cooking for himself, able to undertake grocery shopping on his own. But the fundamental part was actually managing the day to day managing of a property, taking full responsibility for paying for his bills, health and safety, Closing the doors / windows, managing living with neighbours and the overwhelming issues of taking care of a tenancy, which H has no idea whatsoever.

Third offer of accommodation opportunity, a self-contained flat at one of Claremount own property. The landlord was willing to accommodate H's needs, until a transitional plan was in place for a planned move for H. The rent was going to be drastically reduced to be in accordance with H's housing benefit entitlement. H refused and said he really did not see his future in Bradford, but was not really sure where in the UK, he really wanted to put down roots and to be settled. H was registered on Bradford social housing list, as this was what H had initially requested to be living in Bradford for a short while and then once he

had his qualifications and a good education, he was planning on relocating elsewhere; choice of preference was not identified.

H is extremely vulnerable and perceptive to individual taking advantage of his naivety and trusting personality. H is sleeping in a house with 4 other individual, who he does not know. Sleeping in the lounge area on the floor, this clearly is not acceptable or appropriate and rather concerning. H has not provided any information as to his friend's details. H has no local connection or knowledge to the area.

Next Step: H has agreed to forward me the personal details of his friend. Yvonne to liaise with Birmingham care leavers re; notification that H is a Bradford care leaver and an extremely vulnerably young person, who is sofa surfing in the area of Birmingham. Grave concerns re H's welfare and safety.

Voice of the y/p: H says, *his friend is looking for a house for him in Birmingham and speaking to different landlord on his behalf.* H has confirmed he has been to visit a few properties and felt uneasy and horrified at the state of the properties and could not really believe that people live like that. H believes that he should be given a 1 bedroom property (*not sharing with anyone*) and does not see why he should have to wait for housing, as he says *he has no home to live and where will he go?* Discussion with H re returning back to Bradford has an interim period and setting realistic goals and planning in motion. H has refused and said *he has no intentions to live in Bradford, apart from returning to visit friends in the north of the UK and Avon his PA case worker.*

Health questions

Completed 8 November 2020

1. Do you know how to access your GP if you need to?

No

I have to find a different one, because my old one is in Bradford.

2. Do you keep up to date with appointments?

Yes

3. Do you feel healthy?

Yes

H spoke about his resent health scare re Coronavirus and said he was still getting over his illness. But he was not poorly anymore

4. Do you feel like you are getting enough help to meet your health needs?

Yes

5. Do you know where to go for support with substance use if you need to?

No

I do not know where to go for support.

6. Do you feel like you can manage your emotions?

No

I think about lots of things from back home my journey. I walk from Afghanistan to Paris by myself.

Something I cannot sleep because of all the worry I have to deal with and thinking about my home country.

7. Do you know where to go for support with your mental health if you need to?

Yes

But I do not want to talk to anyone.

Health current situation

Working well: H appears fit and well. He is of slim build and about 5 5'tall. H has a really good relationship with his leaving care nurse Liz Gilmartin and has attended his health assessment appt on time. H's last health assessment recorded on the system 11.03.2020. H has fully engaged and likes to have this time to talk in confidence about health related issues concerning him in the privacy of 1-1 and being assured this is confidential and concerning his health matters, only

Page 10 of 30

with his permission will this be disclosed, if he wanted his PA to know. Discussions have been held with H re sexually health, relationship and keeping himself safe.

H does not smoke or drink alcohol which if forbidden has he is a devout Muslim. H does not partake in any substance misuse and says this bad and not good for anyone to take.

H takes on advice re looking after his health i.e. physically and he is really independent and has demonstrated he can manage rather confidently. H likes to prepare fresh healthy meals, however he is partial to consuming takeaways meals on occasions, but due to the cost this has somewhat eased as H has realized the reality re he cannot afford this treat on a regular basis.

H likes to exercise and was provided with a gym membership from the care leaver's service, to access the local council sports center. However due to the current pandemic H has not had the opportunity to use the facilities. H had a volunteer, who also assisted H with recreational activities re keeping fit, but H had limited engagement with this support before the current pandemic.

Regarding H's emotional health, H would benefit from some therapeutic counseling re; (PTSD) due to his loss / separation and trauma from his childhood.

H was registered at Bevan house GP in Bradford. However due to H moving to Birmingham, he is aware that he cannot use Bevan house GP anymore, living out of the area and he will need to find a local GP in Birmingham.

H has not received a follow-up appt re suspected appendicitis and his previous overnight stay in hospital back in April 2020. H said he feeling very well and was not concerned about a follow-up appointment. H was registered with a dentist and options in Bradford and he attended these appointments independently. But H will need to register for these supports to continue with a dentist / opticians locally in Birmingham. H had attended this appointment. Then a further appointment was made for 19th December, 2019 and H went to this appointment and was told that the dentist was not working. H has since missed 1 more appointment and a further 1 was cancelled by the dentist due to Covid. H has said his teeth are fine and is aware of the emergency dentists should any problems arise during this Covid19 periods.

H spoke about the terrible illness of being diagnosed with symptoms of Coronavirus and how poorly he was. He said he never wants to experience this again, as he felt really bad and very scared. Fortunately for H he has made a full recovery and no known lasting symptoms. H is back to his usually cheerful, happy, polite and soft spoken self.

Worries: H was diagnosed with symptoms of Coronavirus in April 2020 H was fully supported by the care leaver's service 24hrs a day. Continuous telephone calls were made to H from Friday 17th -24th April up to 23:00hrs hrs, throughout (am & pm) re; monitoring H's on-going health needs and checking that H was taking his medication on a regularly basis, which was prescribed to him by the paramedics. Joint decision taken by 111 caller operator and myself to send the ambulance crew out asap. Due to suspected Coronavirus symptoms. I had to call 999 for emergency assistant to go to H's home.

I was still on the phone to H when the paramedics arrived to see him. The paramedics took over and agreed to call me after they had seen to H. I stressed I needed to be kept update has he was a Looked after child, in the care of the local authority. Throughout the weekend and weeks afterwards H received continuous support and monitoring, phone calls were made, visits and his landlord also offered H support.

Approximate calls made in total (56) calls and text messages to support H who was in isolation and also his anxiety and this was a very distressing for H being seriously unwell and alone.

Senior management agreed that H could have takeaway meals for a week delivered to his flat along with shopping and bottled water dropped off at H's flat. This was to avoid H leaving his home to go anywhere, given the strict advice was for H to remain indoors for at least 7-14 days.

H was provided with a laptop, to continue with his college work and also to enable him to access social media to prevent boredom and the need to leave his flat.

H does not have a GP and needs to registered with one in Birmingham. H is not very proactive in seeing this has significant and the importance to be registered, along with a dentist and optician, this will take some time. H is very naive and does not have the skills to either registered on line or contact the surgery locally via telephone call, as to where he his currently residing with friends., given the current pandemic.

I'm am extremely concerned about H's welfare i.e. his emotional wellbeing and physical -Post-traumatic stress disorder, H has experienced some of these symptoms re his mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event — either experiencing it or witnessing it situation back home in Afghanistan. Likely cause H has experienced include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about events. Due to is significant lack of attachments from his family and friends. Having to leave behind his home country on his own has a young child under significant circumstances, which was not his decision or choice.

Next step: To be in contact with Birmingham leaving care in relation to notification that H is a Bradford care leaver and residing in there local authority area. Possibility of looking at working closely with Birmingham care leavers re utilize resources available for care leavers as well as our leaving care nurses in Bradford regarding H's emotional well-being, because they have a history of H medical records.

Voice of the child: H says he is good he is not poorly anymore. He said you worry too much Avon, I am much better now do not worry any more.

H agreed he will contact the local GP surgery which he says his at the end of the long road where he currently is staying at his friend's house in Birmingham.

Identity questions

Completed 22 November 2020

1. Do you feel like you are getting enough support to understand your identity?

Yes

2. Do you feel like you have a sense of belonging?

Yes

I know I cannot go back to my country because it is not safe. But I am happy here building my life and future well being.

3. Do you feel like you know your rights?

Yes

4. Do you know as much as you want to about your past?

Yes

5. Do you feel like you know about your culture, religion and race?

Yes

I am from Nangarhar in Afghanistan which is a farming community.

6. Do you feel like your culture, religion and race are respected?

Yes

7. Do you feel like your sexual identity is respected?

Yes

8. Do you feel like you can make your own choices?

Yes

9. If you have an asylum claim, do you understand what is happening at the moment and what will happen next?

NA

Identity current situation

Working well: H is very proud of his Afghanistan culture, identity and religion. H is a devout Muslim and likes to attend Friday's prayer which is very important to H.

H does not drink, take drugs or smoke and said this forbidden in his religious and

culture. H is very respectful of all nationalities and cultures. I have undertaken discussion with H re equal opportunity making references to giving everyone the same, regardless of their religion, identity, cultures, sexuality and disabilities. That everyone should be treated with the same respect.

H speaks Pushto has his first language. H can communicate very well in english. However his interpretation and understanding is without question a concern. It usually recommended, with the agreement of H that a Pushto interpreter is made available to translate on his behalf. H's voice needs to be heard and also H needs to understand the fundamental changes and implication effecting him.

Still acknowledging and celebrating his Afghanistan culture and the diversities of other cultures giving how diverse the UK is. H is in procession of his travel document. H had requested a provisional license this has not being processed as H had so many moves recently. I suggested that the best time to be in receipt of a provisional license is once H is settled in his own accommodation and this is where he's going to reside for a long time before an application will be made online for a provisional license. H was not happy about this and felt that he should be provided with a provisional license asap. However, I agreed that H can be provided with the finance, and together once he has a permanent address we will apply, but H was made aware that given the current pandemic his request for this ID document, may not be processed.

Worries: I asked H about his housemate and what were there names / age? H said he did not know, but they were kind of the same age has him, but maybe 21yrs old. He was not too sure. H question why I needed was asking this information about his housemates and said that he does not ask me about my friends. I acknowledge this and apologies for being insensitive.

I raised the question of H not really knowing them too well, given he has only just gone to Birmingham and sharing a house with strangers. I spoke about radicalisation extremists might use violence and damage to express their views. And extremist racial or religious groups might use hate, fear or violence to control and influence people. H said they are bad people and it was not nice they would do things like that.

I gave an example to say -he could attend the Mosque for weekly payers and someone befriends him via his Muslim faith and slowly they radicalise by maybe showing good deeds, but there motivation will be deceitful re gaining his trust.

I discussed his safety and placing himself at risk (safeguarding) and it would help to have planning in place re moving to another city, which he does not know. H said he was okay and he will look after himself and be careful.

H's naivety has an extremely young vulnerable adult, is an overwhelming concern. H is at significant risk of exploitation if he mixes with the wrong crowd and he could be forced in criminality / county line drug trafficking unbeknown to him, with a desperate desire for peer groups and friendship re a sense of belonging.

H has said that he really wants to live amongst other Afghanistan and feel part of the local community. H does not like Bradford and this was primarily his reasons for leaving.

Next step: To liaise with Birmingham care leavers re local resources available to integrate H into the local community re developing a sense of belonging. This ultimately is important for H to put down positive roots and start his new life in the UK. H's naivety has an extremely young vulnerable adult re; Safeguarding issues and his protection. However I am mindful that H feels I am too intrusive and this really needs to be balance and allow H privacy as he develops a new life in the UK.

To continue to work with H in terms of adapting to the western culture.

Voice of the young person: H said he is ok and very happy that he now has his travel document in his possession and living in Birmingham to start his new adult life. He clearly stated that I should not overlook his provisional licence

Independence questions

Completed 22 November 2020

1. Do you know how to keep safe online?

Yes

2. Do you think that you have enough skills to live by yourself?

Yes

Brief conversation re Supported Lodgings and what this may entailed. I advised that personally I believe this may be the right options for H, re his transition into adulthood with help, support and guidance. Further discussion was had with an interpreter to explore H's views / understanding. But H confirmed he can manage by himself.

3. Do you feel like you know how to cook?

Yes

4. Do you feel like you are getting enough support to live independently?

Yes

I will need my own house , just a little bit of knowledge to manage the responsibilities.

5. Do you have an email address?

Yes

6. Do you feel like you have a say in your plan to independence?

Yes

7. Do you have a passport?

Yes

I have my travel document now.

8. Do you have a birth certificate?

No

I do not have one from my country.

9. Do you have a driving licence or provisional driving licence?

No

Not yet, because I have moved, I have the money for one, which Avon gave me.

10. Do you know what your National Insurance Number/PPSN is?

Yes

Independence current situation

Working well: H is very proud of his Afghanistan heritage his roots and often talks very fondly of life back home. H says that his job as a small child was to tend to the cows and the sheep's in the fields and this is what most children / young people did back in Afghanistan. This was something which was passed down to them by their fathers / uncle for the male relatives to do. H said girls and women stayed at home to prepare and cooked food for the boys and men. H said that it was his responsibility to see to all the herds. Something he really enjoyed and took great pleasure in his daily work back home in Afghanistan. H said it was a big responsibility and very hard work for very long hours 7 days a week.

H has developed his skills here in the UK. H is able to shop, cook and prepare good quality meals for himself. H does not like to rely on anyone or seek support.

H is always well presented and he is able to see to his self-care skills. One point to note is that H take great pride in physical presentation and likes to be clean and tidy always. H is very fashionable and loves to buy the latest trainers and age appropriate clothing. H likes to regularly have his hair cut. No concern in this area.

Worries: H does not appear to have fully settled in the UK. I am concerned in terms of where does H sees himself regarding starting a new life on his own in the UK. H still has the tendency of reverting to some aspects of life back home in Afghanistan. For example when I spoke to H about his current housing accommodation needs; H made reference that back home in Afghanistan Avon everybody sleeps on the floor it doesn't matter you don't need a bedroom for yourself and you don't need a big house. He was residing in a property sleeping on the floor in the lounge which he felt was acceptable.

H has gained some independence skills re seeing to his overall physical needs. However he appears to lack some insight re his independence skills. H needs to slowly develop these skills re tenancy skills, by working together in partnership with his PA and other agencies who may come on board.

Next step: Further support to be provided to H re his independent skill, particularly around housing and local resources to aid H's development re managing to adapt to live in Birmingham.

Voice of the young person: *H said he is okay and can manage with a little bit of support. But he stated that he does not want to have different people involved re*

trying to offer him support around aspects of his independence.

Finance questions

Completed 16 November 2020

1. Do you have a bank account?

Yes

2. Do you have enough money to pay for everything you need and also have a good life?

Yes

But sometimes I need more things and I do not have a lot of money.

3. If you have debt or arrears do you know how to manage them? (not including student loans)

NA

4. Do you feel confident managing your money?

Yes

5. Do you feel like you are getting enough help to manage your money?

Yes

6. Do you know what financial support you are entitled to?

No

H is on universal credit this was completed with his PA worker, because H could not understand the UC system.

Finance current situation

Working well: H is in receipt of Universal credit and he enjoys receiving his money. He has now worked out that the amount he receives and this money must last him for four weeks. Therefore he has gained good budgeting skills re managing this reasonably well. H has a bank account based in Bradford and a bank card which he is now able to use adequately. H is now able to do online banking which he has the skills to undertake now on his own.

H had received extra finance at the start of the pandemic re; a high spec ID, to enable him to continue with his college work and also have the necessary means to not to socially isolated. Senior management agreed that given H was not allowed to leave his home –due to Covid19, so therefore takeaway meals were provided to H on a daily basis, which H was so very grateful for, given it came from a popular well-known diner.

H received his Shared fund allowance and was very happy about this.

H has been in receipt of regular IM from the care leaver's service, until we had confirmation that H benefits had been processed.

Along with the above, H together with support provided by Yvonne, applied for his travel document –finance was provided by the service, along with money for H's provisional license.

Worries: H does not know how to fully access his Universal credit account and throughout the time of applying for this Yvonne has assisted H on navigating his UC online account. H still gets confused by this and believes that the money he is receiving is not enough and he often asks why (care leaving service) are not providing for him anymore. Yvonne has had discussions with H about this and now he is 18 years old leaving care are no longer financially responsible for him, that is why he is in receipt of Universal Credit from the government . However he will still receive finance for clothing, for setting up his home, top-ups etc.

There has been an occasion whereby H has gone to the cash point machine at ridiculous times at night i.e. 12:00 midnight to access cash from the cash point. On both these occasions H's card was taken by the machine, because he had forgotten the pin number to access his account. H has called rather distressed and upset that the machine has taken his card. H had no idea who contact or how to report that his card had been taken by the cashpoint machine. Yvonne has asked H why he was out so late at night within the BD7 area using a cash point machine, attached to the corner shop? H said he had to go and purchase something to eat. H thought this it was ok to leave his home and go and purchase something to eat at that time of the night and , given the Covid pandemic.

Yvonne has gone with H the concerns raise with the bank regarding notification that his bank card had been taken by the cash point machine.

H does not fully understand the implications of a Universal Credit/ housing benefit and for a significant period of time H was moving around to various towns and cities and his housing benefit had been paid to the property in Bradford where he resided. H felt this was ok even though he did not confirm he wasn't going to go back to that property but the landlord had agreed to temporarily keep this property open for H for a four week period, given H had left his personal belongings in his room. Just in case H changed his mind. We changed his circumstances on his universal credit's as he was no longer residing at the BD 7 accommodation. This was in agreement with H.

Next step: To continue to monitor H's finance and also Yvonne still has the log in details from initially setting up H's UC claim. H has given Yvonne permission

Page 21 of 30

to look at his account and together to work in partnership to check his journal and to-do jobs.

Voice of the young person: *H says everything is ok he can manage his money he doesn't have any problems, he has his bank card with him and he can check his bank statement as well as his UConline account.*

Activities questions

Completed 16 November 2020

1. Do you have access to sports activities?

No

I like playing cricket and going to the sports centre, but now I am living in Birmingham everything is closed.

2. Do you have access to other activities you would like to do?

No

I enjoy cricket, I use to play in Bradford.

3. Do you know where you can find out about activities you can do?

No

H has not really identified other activities, to which he can participate in, possible due to really not knowing what is available. However he did have a volunteer Steve Makarab, from our care leavers service in Bradford.

4. Do you feel like you are getting enough support to participate in the activities and sports you want to do?

No

H's volunteer was willing to him identify activities and sports, when he was living in Bradford.

Activities current situation

Working well: H is interested in a number of activities he loves cricket and used to play cricket when he was in Bradford. H is very passionate about cricket and all kinds of sports. H had a gym membership for Bradford, which he was very happy about, particularly with the exemption of no cost. H had a volunteer, with who he worked well with for a short period, but due to the pandemic sadly H was unable to continue receiving this support and he wanted to be venturing outdoors, which was not permitted.

H likes to watch Netflix and various movies and generally he likes to be out and about doing something.

H still asks about doing various activities however I don't feel he appreciates or understands the current situation with the pandemic around the UK and around the world i.e. therefore there are no social activities open for a H to undertake.

Worries: H is total all alone and living in a town he does not know. H needs

stability and a positive safe environment to explore activities and gain social acceptance from his peers i.e. possibly joining a local cricket group re; attachments to build his self-esteem up and confidence up desire and slowly gain his own friendship group amongst his own peers.

Next step: Yvonne to liaise with Birmingham care leavers re looking into what activities are based in Birmingham for H to participate in and possibly making a referral for a volunteer to support and befriend H.

Voice of the young person: *H wants to play cricket again and attend the gym.*

Relationships questions

Completed 16 November 2020

1. Do you have contact with family members who are important to you?

No

I keep going on Facebook and asking friends who are from my country

2. Do you have contact with people who are important to you?

Yes

My best friend lives Manchester and I still keep in touch with him.

3. Do you have an adult you can trust?

Yes

4. Do you have people you can go to for help?

Yes

5. Do you feel happy with your friendships?

Yes

6. Do you feel like you are getting enough support to meet your relationship needs?

Yes

7. Do you feel happy with the relationships that you have?

Yes

8. Do you feel safe in your relationships?

Yes

Relationships current situation

Working well: H has many Afghanistan friends in Bradford and other cities. He tells me they are good people that don't get him into trouble. I said that is good and that I am happy he has contact with his own community. H is very private about who they are and does not share this information easily and feels like I am intruding on his personal life and his right to privacy. H continues to tell me that he has had no phone contact with his family in Afghanistan and he doesn't know how they are. H informs me that the signal is very bad and he has been unable to get through to them.

H has not been able to contact any of his family, who were left behind Nangarhar

Page 25 of 30

in Afghanistan and he said he just wanted them to know that he is safe and well living a life in the UK. It would appear that this something really significant for H and constantly on his mind. H has had a difficult and long journey to England from Afghanistan. He has briefly shared with me about his journey and the huge effect on his emotional health. H was aware that there support counselling was available at Bevan house which he was able to access when he is feeling low. But given H has moved to Birmingham it is something which is very much needed for H

We spoke about the possibility of H benefiting from a volunteer to alleviate some of his isolation and also someone, who has experienced similar circumstances to work with H re social activities in the community. H loves cricket –he use to play for a local team in Bradford and will look to pursue this hobby again. He said he liked watching basketball along with movies. H does have a volunteer, but due to the pandemic, it has not been possible to meet up.

H said he was very pleased to find out Yvonne was his leaving care worker. He has shared with me his memories about coming to the United Kingdom and meeting me years ago when he was 13 or 14 years old when first arrived in the Country.

H has lots of friends in Bradford, Manchester, London, and now some in Birmingham. H is a popular young person, and has a good nature. He is very kind and loving towards anybody he comes in contact with.

Worries: H continues to tell me that he has had no phone contact with his family in Afghanistan and he doesn't know how they are. He loves his family still back home in Afghanistan; sadly his father was killed when H was a young child. His mother he believes is still alive. I have had discussions with H about contacting the British Red Cross to find out about his family. H says that his mother gave her blessing and asked for him to leave Afghanistan at the time when he was young. This was due to the Taliban army wanting H to be initiated within the army and H had been taken by the Taliban army, but he was unable to carry out the task which they asked H to undertake (this was to behead an individual). H said he could not do this and therefore his uncle and mother made the decision for H to leave the family home permanently and find a better life elsewhere in the world.

H is desperate for information about his family and to regain some attachment and contact with significant others.

I am worried about H's constant behavior of not being settled in the UK, moving

Page 26 of 30

around from different towns and cities H has not yet found a place where he can identify as his own. H is now in Birmingham and feels that this is where he wants to be and to form new friendship with friends who he doesn't really know. H has had a number of illnesses within the last few mths. What has been very noticeable re H's desire for attention, in whatever capacity i.e. calling the paramedics out, due feeling unwell / raised temperature. His fixation to be rather demanding at times. H does appear a little impatient and wants an answer immediately, but also H needs constants re reassurance / repetition over and over. H has tendencies to ignore calls / text messages which are very important. When confronted with why he did not answer his phone, H will imply he was unavailable to respond, due to resting or sleeping. This is concerning and not really acceptable at times, when professionals or. Possibly some immaturity on H's part re; game playing. It is important that H answers calls and responds to text messages

H's journey and transit to the UK and what H may have experienced and witnessed back home on his journey to the UK, post-traumatic stress disorder, lack of attachments, re; significant providers / care givers (parents). H's loss and separation from his family / friends and his home back in Afghanistan. A number of fatuities would impact on H's emotional welfare. Agencies involved to monitor H's emotional & physical demeanour.

Next step: Yvonne to contact Birmingham's leaving care in relation to support for H around safeguarding issues and adults who he can trust. H is extremely naive and open to predators who will take advantage of H's good nature i.e. criminality, drugs, sexual exploitation and befriend H. H's true friends are significant to him. However H does not see that he is a vulnerable young person starting out a new life in the UK, without looking at the risk he is placing himself in.

Voice of the person: *H says not to worry Yvonne I am fine I will try my best and I will look for my family very soon.*

Careers questions

Completed 25 November 2020

1. Are you studying, in training or working?

No

I will be going to college soon.

2. Do you feel like you have stability in terms of your education or job?

No

3. Do you feel like you have the qualifications you need?

No

4. Have you got work experience?

No

5. Do you know how to get careers advice?

No

No I will have find this out in Birmingham

6. Do you feel like you know how to meet your career goals?

No

7. Do you feel happy with what you are currently doing?

Yes

I have was sick and now I am getting a little better. I still need to rest.

8. Do you feel like you are getting enough help with your education, training or work?

No

I went to a LEAP drop-in with Yvonne in Bradford, but came to Birmingham to live

Careers current situation

Working well: H would love to, in his own words "*have my own garage*". His knowledge and skills in this area is limited but he would love to learn how to be a mechanic.

H has studied Motor Mechanics at Bradford College in the past and Yvonne had to support him to maintain his place as his attendance was below average. H said there were people who weren't nice to him on the course and this made him

feel too uncomfortable to attend regularly.

H said he would consider going back, he believes he has level 2 ESOL and would like to progress to the next level.

Worries: My concern is that H needs to be in training or attending a college to complete his ESOL and his interest is car mechanic. H will not gain the knowledge or understanding if he sits about all day doing nothing. This is not good practice that H has been out of education and the overwhelming factors will be his current universal credit, will impact on him not in training or college.

His benefits will be stopped and this will be detrimental to H. He has potential to succeed, but not if he chooses to do nothing to better himself and accept the support on offer from agencies working with him.

H is on a level 1 course in Mechanics at Bradford College with one day a week placement. He was also down for completing his maths and english. But H's overall attendance was 42%, extremely concerning. This had resulted in H's poor attendance at Bradford college; he had not pass the level 1 course for 2019-2020. H made several excuses has to why he was unable to attend, past bullying issues, feeling poorly and the need to rest.

H had been accepted onto the Progression to Learning & Work Entry level 3 & level 1 / IT course at Bradford college to start September 2020.

H decided to move to Inverness in Scotland, without any planning or notification to the college and he did not attend the course. Unfortunately I had to inform Bradford College that H was not going to be on role has a student, due to moving out of the area.

H returned back to Bradford We had a meeting with our in house training providers at-LEAP. H was asked would mind if I shared his number with Prospects / Connexions and he will be eligible to get the Nandos vouchers H agreed to resuming some form of his education and acknowledge how important it was to learn.

We discussed different education providers where he could progress with his ESOL and IT and then onto mechanics, which is H's dream job. H was happy to be referred to Aspire 2 work in Bradford. We discussed the location and he was aware of where he would need to travel to.

Discussed working alongside his training, H didn't seem too certain but he said he may consider part time work.

H is not in any education or training and appears to show not interest or desire to undertake his educationally needs to help him progress in life.

H universal credit could be affected, if he cannot evidence that he is involved with training providers. Failing this H will undoubtedly have to comply with the benefits.

H appears to have lost his aspiration for learning and I hope he regain this has H does have the potential succeed.

Next Step: To ascertain what opportunities are available for H in Birmingham and liaise with the connexion services to notify them of a Bradford care leaver now residing in there area.

Voice of the young person: *H says he needs time to settle, before looking in any training opportunities. He still wants to own his garage one day and believes he will achieve this.*



Report of the Strategic Director for Children's Services to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 18 January 2021

V

Subject:

Children's Rights and Advocacy Services

Summary statement:

Report overview regarding the independent advocacy service that enables children and young people to be supported and heard in matters that affect them.

Richard Fawcett
Assistant Director
Safeguarding and Review,
Commissioning and Provider Services

Portfolio:

Children and Families

Report Contact: Amandip Johal, Head of
Service for Safeguarding and Reviewing
and Quality Assurance
Phone: 01274 431620 / 07773 248040
E-mail: amandip.johal@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

1.1 National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) are commissioned to provide independent advocacy and support to children and young people for them to be heard and for them to understand and be empowered to exercise their rights.

1.2 The independent advocacy provided falls into three categories:

- Advice and guidance on rights
- Support with regular meetings
- Support to make a complaint

2. BACKGROUND

2.1.1 NYAS is commissioned to provide the following services:

- Independent advocacy to children and young people who are in the care of Bradford MD Council either on a Care Order (full or interim) or via Section 20 (voluntarily accommodated) of The Children Act 1989.
- Provide Independent Visitors for Children in Care. An Independent Visitor (IV) is an adult volunteer who befriends and develops a long-term friendship with a young person in care. This can involve helping young people develop new interests, skills and hobbies or going on outings such as to the cinema, bowling or just a walk in the park. The volunteers are called 'Independent Visitors' because they are a truly 'independent' person outside the care system giving the young person continuity, which is something not always possible with changing carers and social workers.
- Provide support to children over the age of 8 to participate in the Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC).
- Support to young people experiencing homelessness.

2.2 Return to care interviews after children have been missing are undertaken by Advocacy Focus.

2.3 The reporting period for this report is February 2020 to present and provides an update on the recommendations made in the report presented to the panel in 2019. The work completed in this area evidences improved oversight and progress against the areas that were identified for improvement.

Independent Visitors (IV)

2.4 The number of places commissioned by NYAS has increased from 30 to 40. It is recognised that this is still a small number of IV places available for our children in care. This will be reviewed further as part of the contract tender process in the new year.

- 2.5 Since February 2020, the service has received 27 new referrals for IVs with 11 matches have been made. There has been an impact from Covid, as some referrals have been paused until face to face meetings can take place. In total, 36 children are receiving a support from an IV with 34 waiting for a match.
- 2.6 Whilst NYAS has continued to recruit good volunteers there has been a decrease in volunteer application; this is attributed to Covid and less interest from students and graduates. A number of applications have also been put on hold due to illness and bereavement. To support the recruitment process, NYAS continue to promote the IV scheme through Bradford Council, volunteering sector and Bradford University.
- 2.7 Children and young people who are linked into the service continue to report that they find the service invaluable. This has continued during the lockdown with the service continuing to offer support remotely through video facilities with volunteers being creative with how they engage children and young people. For example, sending through crafts and games in the post which can then be completed together on the video call.
- 2.8 The challenges identified by the service relate to being able to respond to the high volume of referrals in light of Covid and continuing to build relationships and improve communications with frontline services to ensure that the IV continues to be updated about any changes in the child's life to ensure that involvement is effective and appropriate to meet the needs of the child or young person. This has been supported by ensuring that NYAS have the most up to date structure chart with details of managers. A clear escalation process has been agreed to support any challenges with communication.

Advocacy

- 2.9 The following table shows the referrals for this reporting period for advocacy which is either related to a specific issue or complaint.

Reporting period 2020 – 2021	2020/21			
	Feb - Apr	May - Jul	Aug - Oct	Nov - Jan
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of new referrals	33	21	21	
Number of individual YP represented	72	68	70	
Number of acknowledgements made to YP within 2 working days	33	21	21	
Number of YP met within 1 week	31	19	19	
Number of YP waiting for advocacy	0	0	0	
Number of ongoing cases	59	50	51	
Number of referrals closed	15	19	19	
Number of referrals where YP satisfied with service received - closed cases	14	9	9	
Number of referrals OOA	31	22	34	

Inappropriate referrals	2	1	2	
-------------------------	---	---	---	--

2.10 The following tables shows the breakdown of ethnicity, gender and placement type.

Gender	
Female	37
Male	37
Other	1

Ethnicity	
Asian UK	4
Pakistani	6
White UK	39
White other	3
White Asian	1
Polish	1
Black African	3
Black Other	3
Dual Parentage	3
Other ethnicity	5
Not known	3

Placement Type	
Foster care	24
Friends and Family	6
Residential	34
Semi Independent	8
Other	8

Age	
3 – 5	4
6 – 9	5
10 – 15	39
16 – 18	25
18 plus	2

2.11 There has been a reduction in referrals for Q2 and Q3; it is likely that this is related to the pandemic and this has been a theme nationally. NYAS have reported that cases are staying open for longer with the continuing themes being around placements, care planning and request for change in social worker. Further work is

required to ensure that children and young people are able to understand the decision making process so that they can understand what is happening and why. This will help to promote better working relationships as well and open communication.

- 2.12 The majority of referrals received continue to be from children and young people aged ages 10-15 years although it is noted that there has been an increase from 16 to 18yrs.
- 2.13 Advocates have continued to provide a service that children and young people are positive about. NYAS have used virtual platforms throughout the pandemic and have been creative in how they have obtained wishes and feelings. There continues to be a challenge with regards to responding to complaints within a reasonable timeframe; the process is being re-written and a new form being devised as part of the improvement work. It is envisaged that this work will be completed by Spring 2021.
- 2.14 There has been a focus a continued focus on improving relationships between NYAS and frontline services. Quarterly meetings are now taking place routinely with appropriate representation from across the service to share any service updates, including a colleague from children with disabilities team. There is also a clear resolution process in place for NYAS should they struggle with responses from social workers.

Child Protection Service

- 2.15 The following table shows the referrals for children to be supported to partake in their ICPC for this reporting period.

Reporting period	2020/21 ICPC				Total	
	Feb - Apr	May - Jul	Aug - Oct	Nov - Jan		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Number of new referrals	62	76	27		Total	165
Number of individual YP represented	54	70	18		Total	142
Number of acknowledgements made to YP within 2 working days	59	76	27		Total	162
Number of YP met within 1 week	54	70	18		Total	142
Number of YP waiting for advocacy	0	0	0			
Number of ongoing cases	27	55	10			
Number of referrals where YP satisfied with service received - closed cases	36	31	25		Total	72
Inappropriate referrals	2	4	0		Total	6

2.16 The following tables shows the breakdown of ethnicity, gender and placement type.

Gender	
Female	92
Male	73

Ethnicity	
Asian UK	33
Pakistani	4
White UK	81
White Eastern European	12
White Other	4
Polish	2
Black African	4
Dual Parentage	4
Not known	13

Placement Type	
Family	146
Extended Family	19

Age	
Under 8	8
8 - 9	29
10 – 15	112
16 plus	16

2.17 Out of the 165 children referred to the service, 142 children have been represented at an Initial Child Protection Conference.

2.18 There has been a significant drop in referrals for support at the Initial Child Protection Conference for Q3; it has been suggested that this may be related to issues of consent and parents not understanding the role of the advocate in the child protection process as a number of highlighted their concern regarding a number of professionals already being involved. This is being addressed through the revised screening process for child protection conferences.

2.19 Work has been completed with the child protection service to ensure that children

and young people are being informed about what has happened at conferences by sending a child friending outcome letter. This will help children and young people to understand the decision making process and be aware of what is happening.

2.20 Work continues to take place to look at effective child participation and attendance at conferences but this has been impacted by Covid and ensuring that we have the right platform to complete the meetings. LCS has now been updated to include participation codes so that we will be able to report in the future about how children and young people have engaged in their reviews.

Youth Homelessness

2.21 The following table shows the referrals for this reporting period from Youth Homelessness.

Reporting period	2020/21 YH					
	Feb - Apr	May - Jul	Aug - Oct	Nov - Jan		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Number of new referrals	11	16	11		Total	38
Number of individual YP represented	8	15			Total	
Number of acknowledgements made to YP within 2 working days	11	16	11		Total	38
Number of YP waiting for advocacy	0	0	0			
Number of ongoing cases	6	17	22			
Number of referrals closed	10	4	5		Total	19
Number of referrals where YP satisfied with service received - closed cases	6	1	2		Total	9
Inappropriate referrals	1	1	0		Total	2

2.22 The following tables shows the breakdown of ethnicity, gender and placement type.

Gender	
Female	21
Male	17

Ethnicity	
Asian UK	7
Pakistani	3
Arabic	1
White UK	22
White Eastern European	1
Black African	1
Not known	2

Other ethnicity	1
-----------------	---

Placement Type	
Semi independent	26
Hostel	3
Friends	5
NFA	2
Other	2

Age	
Under 8	8
8 - 9	29
10 – 15	112
16 plus	16

- 2.23 Positively we have had an increase in referrals to the service from young people experiencing homelessness; from 17 last year to 38 so far for this year. Young people continue to be positive about the service offered by NYAS.
- 2.24 One of the areas that needs to be addressed further is the timeframe for the decision making process when a young person is requesting to be accommodated under Section 20. The homelessness service is reviewing the process to ensure that the appropriate timescale is mapped out for decision making to be effective.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 None

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 N/A

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 N/A

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 N/A

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

- 7.1.1 It is critical that the feedback and issues raised by children are listened to and considered to ensure that the service is effective in supporting good outcomes.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

N/A

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

N/A

7.6 TRADE UNION

N/A

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

N/A

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

- 7.9.1 Challenging and strengthening services to improve outcomes for children and young people in Bradford.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

N/A

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

N/A

9. OPTIONS

9.1 N/A

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The panel are respectfully recommended to note the progress made in this area and support the ongoing work in this service particularly with regards to advocating the Independent Visitors Service.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12.1 None

Corporate Parenting Panel 2020/21 Forward Plan

Conservative	Labour	Lib Dem
Cllr Dale Smith	Cllr Carol Thirkill (Chair)	Cllr Susan Knox
	Cllr Adrian Farley (Dep Chair)	
	Cllr Angela Tait	
Alternates	Alternates	Alternates
Cllr Mike Pollard	Cllr Sarfraz Nazir	Cllr Brendan Stubbs
	Cllr Nussrat Mohammed	
	Cllr Mohammed Shafiq	

Non-voting Co-opted Members	
Inspector Kevin Taylor (awaiting replacement)	West Yorkshire Police, Partnerships
Sue Lowndes	Education and Learning Strategic Manager, Education
Jude MacDonald	Designated Nurse – Safeguarding Children and LAC, CCG Collaboration
The Chair of the Children in Care Council	

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Date and Venue	Type of Meeting / Venue	Agenda Items	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
29th June 2020	City Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of the Virtual School on education for CLA children who are not in education pre and post 16. This report to include a summary on education for CLA during the COVID crisis 	Jonathan Cooper	5th June	9th June	16th June	19th June
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reg 44 report directly to the Chair . Suzanne Lythgow to join the meeting for a report on Children's Homes during the COVID crisis 	Suzanne Lythgow	5th June	9th June	16th June	19th June
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on social work arrangements during the COVID crisis Progress in relation to the key issues raised in the Ofsted report and the Improvement Plan 	Irfan Alam	5th June	9th June	16th June	19th June
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on support for Care Leavers living independently during 	Kirsty Askew	5th June	9th June	16th June	19th June

		the COVID crisis, including and update on digital inclusion in this group					
Date and Venue	Type of Meeting / Venue	Agenda Items	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
20 th July 2020	Business Meeting Committee Room 1 City Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of Co opted Members 	Chair	1 st July 2020	2 nd July 2020	7 th July 2020	10 th July 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Adoption Agency: Annual report for Bradford focusing on the achievements and the challenges. 	Michelle Rawlings One Adoption West Yorkshire	1 st July 2020	2 nd July 2020	7 th July 2020	10 th July 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children Placed out of Bradford: Report on the numbers of children; services offered; challenges and sufficiency plans 	Mark Trinder (Deferred to Sept)	1 st July 2020	2 nd July 2020	7 th July 2020	10 th July 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizenship and Passports update with a focus on Brexit planning 	Rachel Curtis	1 st July 2020	2 nd July 2020	7 th July 2020	10 th July 2020
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
7 th September 2020	Meeting to be held remotely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wi Fi Access & Mobile Connectivity for YP 	Emma Collingwood	12 th August 2020	19 th August 2020	25 th August 2020	28 th August 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children Placed out of 	Mark Trinder (Deferred from	12 th August 2020	19 th August 2020	25 th August 2020	28 th August 2020

		Bradford: Report on the numbers of children; services offered; challenges and sufficiency plans	July 2020)				
		•		12 th August 2020	19 th August 2020	25 th August 2020	28 th August 2020
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
2nd November 2020	Meeting to be held remotely	• Head of QA and Safeguarding annual report to include IRO/CP/Audit	Amandip Johal	7 th October 2020	14 th October 2020	20 th October 2020	23 rd October 2020
		• Corporate Services : Corporate Parenting Report	Joanne Hyde	7 th October 2020	14 th October 2020	20 th October 2020	23 rd October 2020
		• Report on Emotional and Mental Wellbeing of Looked After Children	Sasha Bhat	7 th October 2020	14 th October 2020	20 th October 2020	23 rd October 2020
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
18th January 2021	Meeting to be held remotely	• Report from the Homelessness Review	Kirsty Askew	23 rd December 2020	30 th December 2020	5 th January 2021	8 th January 2021
		• Leaving Well App feedback on views	Emma Collingwood	23 rd December 2020	30 th December 2020	5 th January 2021	8 th January 2021

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Parenting Report: Place 	Jason Longhurst	23 rd December 2020	30 th December 2020	5 th January 2021	8 January 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's rights and advocacy services 	Amandip Johal	23 rd December 2020	30 th December 2020	5 th January 2021	8 th January 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficiency Strategy 	Irfan Alam/Mark Trinder	23 rd December 2020	30 th December 2020	5 th January 2021	8 th January 2021
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
8th March 2021	Meeting to be held remotely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanence 	Richard Fawcett	10 th February 2021	17 th February 2021	23 rd February 2021	26 th February 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post 16 Service 	Kirsty Askew	10 th February 2021	17 th February 2021	23 rd February 2021	26 th February 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Services for Children Looked After: CCG and health partners 	Ali Jan Haider	10 th February 2021	17 th February 2021	23 rd February 2021	26 th February 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed report on Mockingbird Programme and implementation in the Bradford District 	Mark Trinder	10 th February 2021	17 th February 2021	23 rd February 2021	26 th February 2020
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
5th April 2021	Meeting to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education report on 	Jonathan	10 th March	17 th March	23 rd March	26 th March

	held remotely	children not in mainstream education, not in education and post 16	Cooper	2021	2021	2021	2021
• Reg 44 report on children's homes		Suzanne Lythgow	10 th March 2021	17 th March 2021	23 rd March 2021	26 th March 2021	
• Corporate Parenting Report: Health and Wellbeing			10 th March 2021	17 th March 2021	23 rd March 2021	26 th March 2021	

Future Work Plan 21/22 Municipal Year

(1) Progress report on the Wi Fi access and mobile connectivity for Bradford Care Leavers - Emma Collingwod

(2) Viewpoint- what are young people telling us: Report and discussion – Amandip Johal (deferred from 18/1/21 Panel)