

Appendix A2 Transformation Funding Case Studies

1. Case Study 1: Re-grading of Social Workers and Occupational Therapists across Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care – Adult Social Care Transformation Programme and Children and Education 'Our Families' Programme

- 1.1. Bristol has historically had a stable social worker and occupational therapist workforce, however in recent years, we have seen a significant turnover and increased vacancy rates in the context of a serious national workforce sufficiency problem.
- 1.2. Many neighbouring local authorities in the region have increased the pay grading for these roles, leading to increased market competition for Bristol and an over-reliance on more costly agency arrangements to fill vacancies. Benchmarking data (see appendix) demonstrates that Bristol offers the lowest level of pay in comparison to neighbouring authorities, many of whom also offer additional recruitment and retention payments. Spend on agency staff is circa £2m in 24/25 compared with £1.5m in 22/23.
- 1.3. This position has been further evidenced by the December 2023 LGA peer review in Adults and the January 2023 ILACs report which both highlighted capacity issues.
- 1.4. In response, as part of their respective transformation programmes, both Adults and Childrens have been developing new Target Operating Models and workforce plans which include recruitment and retention strategies. This includes a commitment to review the pay and non-pay benefits for social workers and occupational therapists.
- 1.5. In March 2023, to resolve the long-standing issue of pay inequality compared with regional and national comparators for this workgroup (including nine occupational therapists in Housing services) Corporate Leadership Board agreed the re-grading of these roles, including a three-month backdated pay. The backdated pay of £886,873 was funded through the relevant programme funds. The outcomes being:

- 1.5.1. Improved morale for the workgroup who have waited two years for a re-evaluation, and a positive impact on longstanding recruitment and retention issues leading to a reduced dependence on agency staff for covering vacancies.
- 1.5.2. Tightening up the policy position to ensure equitable application of policy decisions.
- 1.5.3. Recognition of changes in the job paperwork and duties which had not been reviewed for a number of years.

2. Case Study 2: Help children to begin their transition to family-based care and to free up residential provision for those who do need this – Children and Education ‘Our Families’ Programme

- 2.1. Our ambition is that children who need our care experience the right sort of placement to meet their current and future needs, and specifically that they are not placed at a distance and in residential care if their needs are for family-based care or accommodation with support. We want to help children to begin their transition to family-based care and to free up residential provision for those who do need this.
- 2.2. In response, to review of all children in residential care, we procured through Children and Education transformation funds an accredited assessment tool that indicates the level of their current care and support needs and which provides a synopsis of measures that could be taken to step them down from high-cost residential care to sustainable family or fostering care. Identification of reunification or of foster carers, a careful match and transition plan, and a move out of residential care.
- 2.3. The outcomes being:
 - 2.3.1. Assessment of all of our children in residential care using the tool to identify where children may be ready to transition back to their own families, or into fostering or supported accommodation.

- 2.3.2. Developed improved relationships with independent fostering agencies by offering strong transitional support where they place our children to improve placing rates.
 - 2.3.3. Deliver best value in the way that we commission placements for children by ensuring that children receive the right support at the right time.
 - 2.3.4. Additional benefits will be in the mainstreaming of the approach into Bristol practice which will create sustainability. The use of the tool over the journey of a child provides a very compelling understanding of their needs and of their strengths, both of which mean that we can ensure they achieve the best outcomes possible for them individually. We will embed the tool and screen every child from the beginning of their time in care, supporting improved understanding of their needs. We also believe that the assessment will be additional information for a child's Education Health and Care reviews.
- 2.4. Our transformation savings assumption is that we achieve the step-down benefit for 6 full months of 2024/25 for 7 children, so that we should achieve £819,000 gross with delivery costs of £240,000 (funded through the transformation programme) to provide a net benefit in 2024/25 of £579,000. We are likely to move more than 7 children, but our benefit is being forecast for the full six months saving as the assessments and reviewing have already identified children for this work. Every month through to the end of the programme, children will be helped to step down, but the benefit for this financial year reduces as we work through the year.

3. Case Study 3: Tackling Youth Homelessness – Tackling Homelessness Programme

- 3.1. Bristol has a notably higher number of 16 and 17 year olds in local authority care than both the England and regional average. This number is pushed up significantly by young

people presenting as homeless and entering care aged 16 or 17. We have seen a 50% growth in care leavers from 21/22 to 23/24.

- 3.2. The high demand from young people requiring accommodation / accommodation support is not sufficiently resourced, so homelessness prevention work is not prioritised. Our accommodation provision is “nowhere near sufficient” to meet demand (independent report).
- 3.3. Our Youth Hub has insufficient focus on prevention of homelessness and lacks BCC management oversight. We can take more control of these operations and renew a preventative focus during the re-commissioning process.
- 3.4. The project will deliver the following:
 - 3.4.1. Commissioning accommodation from the Emergency Accommodation framework, plus floating support, to move 18 children out of ESA. The first 8-10 will be moved by October, the next 10 will be moved by April, delivering in-year (24/25) cost reduction of £353k, contributing to relieving pressure on Children Social Care. Full year effect of up to £1.5m to be confirmed and delivered in 25/26. This is currently a stretch target and will be baselined when we have started the commissioning work and have greater delivery confidence in the timeline and number of properties available.
 - 3.4.2. Work up options around working better together between children’s and housing services, including the option of joint commissioning – this will be a pre-cursor to inform work happening outside the programme at a later date which will look at joint commissioning across Children’s housing and Adult Social Care. Further savings would be generated to be confirmed as part of the full business case.
 - 3.4.3. Begin changes to ways of working that will allow a greater focus on prevention of homelessness – this will generate further savings to be detailed in full business case.

- 3.5. The desired outcomes being:
- 3.5.1. More young people are supported to stay at home with their families.
 - 3.5.2. Our 16-17 year old children in care and care leaver population is reduced.
 - 3.5.3. Ofsted will view our service as working well for children.
 - 3.5.4. Young people will be matched with safe and appropriate accommodation, in their home city, when they need it.
 - 3.5.5. Managers and practitioners will understand our performance due to having embedded and developed business intelligence relating to youth homelessness.
- 3.6. The goal is to have a well-functioning system of support and options for young people affected by housing instability, based on best practice knowledge, which incorporates early intervention and prevention, safe and sufficient accommodation provision for those who need it, effective and legally compliant joint working across housing, children's services and third sector partners, and clear data to tell us how we are doing, and what future demand on our services is likely to be.

4. Case Study 4: Private Rented Sector Affordability – Tackling Homelessness Programme

- 4.1. The demand for, and cost of, temporary accommodation continues to rise. Whilst the Local Housing Allowance rates have risen as of 1st April 2024, making private rented sector more affordable for people on benefits, the benefits cap has not gone up in line with it, continuing to force households into TA.
- 4.2. The cost of c.70% of our TA is sourced through the private rented sector, with prices increasing significantly year on year. The amount of money central government pay for TA through benefits has been frozen at 90% of 2011 LHA rates, meaning the net cost to the council continues to grow.

- 4.3. One of the primary routes out of TA is helping homeless households into private rented tenancies, however affordability, unmanaged debt and the benefit cap all pose significant hurdles to households in TA accessing a private rented tenancy.
- 4.4. This pilot looks to design and deliver services that support families in temporary accommodation (including ex-offenders, care leavers and refugees) out of homelessness for good by securing properties through the private sector.
- 4.5. The funding from the programme of £280k has procured a specialist partner BEAM to pilot the proposal. BEAM have been commissioned to secure 12-month private rented tenancies for 35 homeless households that enables Bristol City Council to 'discharge homelessness duty' to family in temporary accommodation, meaning subsidy loss ceases. The plan is to target households in hotels or in nightly emergency accommodation, both of which generate significant subsidy loss.
- 4.6. BEAM will provide personalised end to end support through a dedicated caseworker who enables people to overcome barriers and fulfil their potential through employment and housing. The support worker will hold one to one sessions with the person to understand individual needs and co-design an action plan, including assessing affordability, realism of expectations and getting back into employment and/or training.
- 4.7. BEAM caseworker and specialist work coaches support individuals to access skills and jobs.
- 4.8. Dedicated BEAM Private Rented Sector Team engage landlords and enable households to secure private rented sector accommodation including through an insurance-backed guarantor scheme.
- 4.9. Further 3 months of job sustainment support and 12 months support to tenants and landlords

4.10. We have negotiated with BEAM a 100% clawback clause on any outcomes not delivered within the contract, or we can extend the contract until all outcomes are delivered at no extra cost. This means there is no money at risk. Contract begins in October 2024.

4.11. The NET subsidy loss reduction would be £538k, delivered over 23 months.