

Cabinet

24th January 2017



Report Title: Young People's Housing and Independence Pathway Plan

Ward: All

Strategic Director: John Readman, Strategic Director for People &
Alison Comley, Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods

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Purpose of the report:

This report seeks approval for the young people's housing and independence plan which includes:

- Proposals for changing the way we work so we are better at helping young people and their families to prevent housing crises and/or enable young people to access the housing and support they need in a more planned way.
- Commissioning and procurement proposals to achieve 10% savings and secure the accommodation and support needed for young people at risk of homelessness as well as Bristol care leavers.

Recommendation for the Mayor's approval:

1. Approve the young people's housing and independence pathway plan summarised in this report.

Group 1 - Prevention and low support

2. To procure and enter into a contract with a strategic partner to establish and run a new Youth Housing Hub as detailed in row 1.1 of the table in paragraph 14 of this report costing no more than £300,000 per annum.
3. To procure and enter into new contracts for low support accommodation as detailed in row 1.4 of the table in paragraph 14 of this report costing no more than £550,000 per annum.



Group 2 - High and medium support

4. To procure and enter into contracts for external supported accommodation as detailed in row 2.2 of the table in paragraph 15 of this report.
5. To extend and vary the current contract for high support as detailed in row 2.3 of the table in paragraph 15 of this report at a cost of £785,000 per annum.
6. To procure and enter into new contracts for up to 75 units of high and medium supported accommodation as detailed in row 2.4 of the table in paragraph 15 of this report costing no more than £785,000 per annum.

Delegation of authority to award and extend contracts

7. Agree that the decision to award contracts detailed in the recommendations valued over £500K and any extensions provided for in the contracts is delegated to the Strategic Directors of Neighbourhoods and People in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members.

The proposal:

1. To meet our responsibilities to care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness, the council currently provides and funds a range of specialist young people's supported accommodation and other help for young people aged 16-21 years.

Key issues and challenges

2. **Range of accommodation and support** – Changes are needed to ensure that supply is better aligned to what Bristol young people need. This includes a need for:
 - More short-term, crisis/respite accommodation.
 - Better value specialist 'high support plus' provision for young people who present a high risk.
 - Alternative accommodation to replace the Foyer.
3. **Improving the pathway** – There is a need for better information about young people's housing options and for a more consistent and effective approach to preventing homelessness focused on helping young people to stay living at home, or leaving home or care in a planned way.
4. **Changing demand** – While there is increasing demand for some groups of young people (young parents, 16-17 year olds coming into care and, unaccompanied asylum seekers), overall the numbers of young people presenting to the council at risk of homelessness appear to have decreased in recent years. This change in demand means we are able to reduce the total number of units of supported accommodation we commission.
5. **Value for money** – We need to make sure services offer value for money for the public purse and balance economy (cost), efficiency (service productivity) and effectiveness (quality). Achieving value for money includes making sure that services achieve good outcomes for young people and are targeted at those who most need them. Also we need to ensure young people are housed in the lowest cost service suitable to meet their needs and that there is no delay moving them on to settled accommodation when they are ready.

6. **Budgets** - Funding for the commissioned services comes from Neighbourhoods (homelessness prevention) and People (children in care placements) with a combined budget in 2016/17 of £2,708,275. The proposals in this report will deliver 10% savings by 2019/20 from the 2016/17 combined budget (see Appendix 1). **In addition, there may be additional funding, depending on the proposals the Mayor takes to full council in respect of the budget. If approved, from February 2018 the funding will also include an element from Bristol Youth Links, which currently funds some homelessness prevention advice and assistance for young people.**

The proposed new positive pathway

7. Cabinet is asked to approve the draft young people’s housing and independence pathway plan (published here: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/housing/commissioning-homelessness-prevention-services>). The plan, developed during extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders, aims to:
- Prevent young people aged 16-21 and care leavers up to 25 from becoming homeless
 - Help young people to stay living at home and not experience housing crisis
 - Reduce the number of 16-17 year olds entering care
 - Commission a suitable range of value for money accommodation and support options
 - Reduce expenditure
- The proposed pathway operates over five areas as set out below.
8. Stage 1 – Minimise demand
Communicate clear messages about the reality of housing options especially that independent living is likely to mean sharing private rented housing. Have clear and accessible web-based information, using social media and encouraging schools and colleges to reinforce these messages.
9. Stage 2 – Reduce demand and crisis
Establish a Youth Housing Hub to coordinate prevention and early intervention focused on keeping young people in their families where possible and safe. Commission family-based emergency/respice accommodation while young people are helped to resolve difficulties with their family. Timely, joint planning of housing options for care leavers.
10. Stage 3 – A new Youth Housing Hub
A central co-located team lead by an external partner organisation (“the hub partner”) including council housing advisers and social workers as well as hub partner staff. The hub will coordinate or deliver the following services:
- Prevention – Information and guidance, work with families, peer education in schools, outreach support for young people at risk of homelessness.
 - Assessment – Triage and holistic assessments of all young people presenting at risk of homelessness, including home visits.
 - Advice on housing options – For young people, their families and workers.
 - Allocation of housing and support – Regular case review meetings, referrals to the right level of supported accommodation, including prioritisation. Joint planning for care leavers and offenders.
 - Achieving positive outcomes – Help to access education, training and employment, help to identify private rented accommodation and supporting young people to successfully share accommodation.
11. Stage 4 – Range of supported accommodation and flexible support
Make sure there is a suitable range of good quality specialist young people’s supported accommodation, from high support hostels to low support dispersed accommodation across the city.

Details of the current and proposed services are set out in the young people’s housing and independence pathway plan.

12. Stage 5 – Settled accommodation

The long-term objective is for young people to be economically active and living in safe, decent homes that they can afford. This is extremely challenging as there is so little affordable housing in Bristol. However, we will continue to work with partners to identify funding opportunities and settled accommodation options for young people.

Commissioning proposals

13. The commissioning and procurement proposals are grouped together as follows:

- Group 1 – Those services where we have a good understanding of need, capacity and how the market will respond. These are preventative services and low support accommodation.
- Group 2 – Those services where we need to better understand the capacity of the market to respond, including the need to identify alternative buildings for supported accommodation schemes. These are high and medium support services as well as specialist services.

All commissioning and procurement processes will include an assessment of social value.

14. The procurement proposals for Group 1 services are set out below.

Group 1 prevention and low support		
Description of contract / service	How we will buy	Rationale
1.1 Youth housing hub partner – new contract Establish and manage the Youth Housing Hub and co-located team. Assessment and support focused on helping the young person to live in their family network, or sustain their tenancy or other housing. (NB. This replaces the current young people’s floating support service.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 year contract with option to extend twice, each extension two years - Contract ceiling £300,000 p.a. - Establish number of potential bidders through publishing a PIN. If have multiple potential bidders, will have a competitive process to appoint preferred bidder 	Soft market testing allows us to gauge the level of interest in the market before finalising the procurement approach. It is intended if possible the procedure to select the preferred bidder will entail negotiation with the bidder to develop the service design with the council.
1.2 Short term supported lodgings – new pilot contract Recruit and support hosts to provide short-term respite and crisis accommodation to 5 young people aged 16-21 years. Focus on enabling young people to return to families where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 year pilot arrangement - Contract value £45,000 p.a. - Direct award to Caring in Bristol as a pilot or provided by in-house supported lodgings service 	Caring in Bristol already provide a similar service (Nightstop). During consultation, we invited providers to indicate if they are interested in providing this service and none did suggesting there isn’t another provider able to deliver this service locally for this price.
1.3 Low support accommodation – extend contracts to September 2017 Extend current contracts for 6 months (Apr-Sep 2017) with 10% reduction in contract price. There is no inflationary uplift in the current contract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exercise existing option to extend contract for 6 months with 10% reduction in cost - Contract value £287,550 for 6 months - Contractors are 1625ip and Knightstone HA 	Reduction possible because of reduced demand.
1.4 Low support accommodation – new contracts from October 2017 A total of up to 195 units of dispersed accommodation to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 year contracts with option to extend twice, each extension two years - Contract ceiling £550,000 p.a. 	This will be a fair and transparent process consistent with procurement rules.

include 30 for young parents. The provider will provide the accommodation at locations spread across the city. Contracts to include flexibility to change the number of units and/or contract price.	(15% reduction) - There are 2 options: we may procure under a framework established by another authority (see row 2.2 below), or the Council may carry out a procurement	
1.5 Floating support – end current contract The provision of outreach support will be included in the Youth Housing Hub partner contract.	- Exercise existing option to extend contract to 31.9.16 with 20% reduction and then discontinue service - Contract value £94,800 for 6 months	Reduction possible because of relatively low demand. There is no inflationary uplift in the current contract.

15. The table below sets out our procurement / supplier recommendations for Group 2 services.

Group 2 high and medium support		
Description of contract / service	How we will buy	Rationale
2.1 External supported accommodation – new ‘dynamic purchasing system’ A system from which the council will be able to purchase supported accommodation for young people, either by spot purchase or block contract. Mainly used for bespoke packages of self-contained accommodation and support for 16-17 year old children in care with high support needs. However, we aim to reduce the use of high cost spot-purchased ESA placements.	- Open procedure to establish a new ‘open’ framework (sub-regional with South Gloucestershire Council leading the procurement) to operate from June 2017. The framework will be a form of dynamic purchasing system from which we may purchase individual units or blocks of supported accommodation. If this framework is for any reason not suitable the council may carry out its own procurement.	This will enable better procurement practice. A competitive process will ensure it is a transparent and fair process and ensure value for money. Able to purchase individual places and blocks of supported accommodation.
2.2 High and medium support – extend contract to May 2018 Provision of support and housing management at St George’s House (25 beds) and the Foyer (51 beds) - high level support, including the provision of three crash pads. Service improvements will be required, particularly better help for young people to access ETE.	- Exercise existing option to extend contract with 1625ip, subject to satisfactory negotiation until 31 st May 2018 including service improvements. - Contract value £785,000 p.a. - No inflationary uplift in current contract.	This is an interim arrangement while we seek alternative accommodation to the Foyer. Need to extend for 14 months in order to secure buildings and undertake appropriate procurement process for support contract(s). Mitigation against the risk the market is unable to respond.
2.3 High and medium support – new contract(s) from June 2018 We will seek alternative accommodation to the Foyer to provide 50+ units across two or three schemes offering varying levels of support from high to medium support. Continue to commission support and housing management at St George’s House	- Procure and enter into new contracts for up to 75 units of high and medium support accommodation. - Contract ceiling £785,000 p.a. - Issue PIN notice and invite providers to make proposals for new schemes. Procurement approach to be determined once we have proposals.	Current accommodation does not provide the range of provision required to meet need, particularly for high risk young people, and medium support provision. This proposal enables we need to see how the market will respond then decide what and how we will procure based on cost, capacity and how best to meet need. This

Group 2 high and medium support		
Description of contract / service	How we will buy	Rationale
(in addition to the 50+ units above) from June 2018. Whether or not this is a discrete contract, or forms part of a larger contract will depend on the options for the 50+ units.	Ensuring there is diversity in the supplier maker will be a priority when appointing support provider(s) for this provision.	contract/contracts will not be awarded, or the contract ceiling may be reduced, depending on what is needed.

Next steps

What	When
Cabinet decision	24 th January 2017
Procurement process for Youth Housing Hub partner	Feb – Jun 2017
Procurement of low support accommodation	Feb – Jun 2017
Value for money review of Youth Projects	Jan - Mar 2017
Seek proposals for new high and medium support schemes	Feb – May 2017
New sub-regional ESA framework starts	Jun 2017
New group 1 services start	Oct 2017
New high and medium support schemes start	Jun 2018

Consultation and scrutiny input:

16. We consulted on a draft version of the plan for 12 weeks. The consultation report sets out how we got people's views and who responded. The report is published here: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/housing/commissioning-homelessness-prevention-services>.

17. In summary, stakeholders were positive about the pathway approach proposed, especially plans for the Youth Housing Hub. The key issues raised included:

- The importance of involving schools in communicating messages to young people about the reality of housing options. Young people thought this should be covered in PSHE lessons.
- The need for better web-based information about housing options and how to get help if needed.
- The importance of helping young people to develop independence skills (young people particularly wanted more help with learning how to manage their money).
- The need to develop an effective approach to working with adolescents and their families, including helping parents to access support with their own problems.
- The Youth Housing Hub was seen as an effective way to integrate prevention; it and should be a central, co-located team, ideally with the ability to reach to outer areas of Bristol.
- Some people argued that the age range should for the Youth Housing Hub and young people specialist accommodation should extend up to 25 years.
- There is a need for a higher support scheme able to meet the needs of high risk young people.

Other options considered:

18. **Do nothing** – Homelessness prevention contracts are coming to an end and could not be extended repeated. Doing nothing would not have enabled us to achieve any savings. It would have meant we lost the opportunity to develop a more joined up approach to prevention and to planning housing for care leavers and young offenders.

19. **Youth Housing Hub models** – We held workshops with stakeholders to consider the best model for the Youth Housing Hub. Other models proposed included a virtual hub (linking people working in different

organisations and council teams all working to shared objectives and consistent processes) and a hub run by the council. The conclusion was that a co-located central team, run by an external partner, would be the best way to achieve the culture change and consistent approach required as well as utilising the assets and capabilities of voluntary sector partners working with young people and families in Bristol.

20. **High support – smaller scheme at the Foyer** – We considered the option of reducing our use of the Foyer (e.g. from 50 to 30 units) and reduce it to a medium support scheme. The landlord of the property concluded this was not a viable option for them.

Risk management / assessment:

FIGURE 1							
The risks associated with the implementation of the (subject) decision :							
No.	RISK Threat to achievement of the key objectives of the report	INHERENT RISK (Before controls)		RISK CONTROL MEASURES Mitigation (ie controls) and Evaluation (ie effectiveness of mitigation).	CURRENT RISK (After controls)		RISK OWNER
		Impact	Probability		Impact	Probability	
1	Time and resources are invested in the new positive pathway approach and Youth Housing Hub but it fails to reduce homelessness or achieve other improvements for young people and families	High	Medium	Effective monitoring of the impact of the Hub and the pathway approach. Establish robust governance arrangements, with steering group reviewing performance and ensuring effectiveness of the Hub and pathway.	Med	Low	Bridget Atkins/Carmel Brogan
2	We have insufficient supply of supported accommodation to meet need	High	Low	Quarterly monitoring of throughput and average length of stay. Increase throughput targets if necessary.	Med	Low	Carmel Brogan
3	Throughput targets are not met in supported accommodation because of difficulties accessing settled accommodation, leading to insufficient vacancies to meet demand	Medium	Medium	Quarterly monitoring of throughput and barriers to move on. Seek initiatives from partners to increase availability of settled accommodation for young people.	Med	Low	Carmel Brogan / Nick Hooper
4	The provider market is unable to identify suitable accommodation to replace the Foyer	High	Medium	Look to provide the service in a number of readily available accommodation, e.g. dispersed 3 or 4 bed houses	Med	Med	Carmel Brogan
5	Demand for Youth Housing Hub services and/or supported accommodation reduces and we have over-supply	Medium	Low	Flexibility in contracts to reduce payment for hub and reduce number of units of accommodation (could be repurposed for adults if needed)	Low	Low	Carmel Brogan
7	Age range is too restrictive, it is unclear which 22-24 are eligible for services, including help from Youth Housing Hub	Medium	Low	Record how many 22-24 year olds turned away from Hub. Review demand for the service after 6-12 months and reconsider best age range.	Low	Low	Bridget Atkins/Carmel Brogan
8	BCC does not have sufficient commissioning resources to monitor contracts and ensure good performance	Medium	High	Streamline contract management processes.	Low	Med	Bridget Atkins/Carmel Brogan
9	Welfare benefit changes, including removal of automatic entitlement of housing costs for 18-21 year olds, makes supported accommodation unviable	High	Med	Respond to any central government consultations to ensure there are relevant exemptions. Flexibility and termination clause in contract if supported accommodation becomes unviable for some young people in our services.	Med	Low	Carmel Brogan

FIGURE 2**The risks associated with not implementing the (subject) decision:**

No.	RISK Threat to achievement of the key objectives of the report	INHERENT RISK (Before controls)		RISK CONTROL MEASURES Mitigation (ie controls) and Evaluation (ie effectiveness of	CURRENT RISK (After controls)		RISK OWNER
		Impact	Probability		Impact	Probability	
1	Number of 16-17 year olds entering care continue to rise leading to increased costs to the council	Medium	High	Children's social care, early help and the council's homelessness prevention team would need to review protocols around 16-17 year olds at risk of homelessness	High	Medium	Gillian Douglas & Angela Clarke
2	Fragmented approach to prevention continues and the number of young people becoming homeless increases	High	Low	As above, but relating to 16-21 year olds	Medium	Low	Michele Farmer & Gillian Douglas
3	Will not have a suitable range of accommodation to secure value for money by making sure young people are housed in the lowest cost provision able to meet their needs	Medium	Medium	Review each service individually and require changes to make sure we have a suitable range	Medium	Low	Carmel Brogan & Ann James
4	We will not make the required savings or achieve better value for money	High	High	Apply a standard 'salami slice' cut across all services	Low	Medium	Carmel Brogan & Ann James

Public sector equality duties:

Before making a decision, section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:

- i) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- ii) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- iii) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment (see background documents). Key actions identified to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in the pathway include:

- Procurement processes will require providers to have appropriate equality policies, including staff training on equalities.
- Providers will also need to demonstrate a good understanding of the relevant equality issues for their service and sound proposals to promote an inclusive service and to tackle discrimination and meet the different needs of different equality groups.
- Making sure all services collect and report on equality monitoring data, including outcomes.

- For dispersed low support accommodation, seek a geographical spread of accommodation.
- Review the age criteria for the Youth Housing Hub after 12 months, looking at demand for the service and the number of 22-24 year olds who are turned away by the service because they do not meet the age criteria.

Eco impact assessment

The significant impacts of this proposal are:

- The procurement of a new support hub Provision of accommodation generates impacts related to heat and power; waste and recycling; travel.
- (housing council staff but established and managed by a partner organisation) will consume heat and power during operation; will produce waste; and will generate travel impacts

The proposals include the following measures to mitigate the impact:

- Total provision of accommodation is reduced by 9% in comparison with existing arrangements
- The new support hub will be in a central location, which will reduce travel impacts from staff, visitors and service users
- The procurement process for the new support hub will take account of environmental impacts related to the operation of the building, specifically addressing energy, waste and travel

The net effects of the proposals: Neutral

Advice given by Steve Ransom, Environmental Programme Manager

Date 9/12/2016

Resource and legal implications:

Finance

a. Financial (revenue) implications:

Services identified in Group 1 currently have an annual expenditure of £1.1m, which is contained within the current general fund budget. The proposals will lead to a saving of £110k in 2017/18 which is part of the current budget proposals.

The current proposals are for a three year contract with two possible extensions of two years. This will commit the Council to costs of £0.9m per annum for this period of time.

Services identified in Group 2 currently have an annual expenditure of £1.9m which is currently part of the Council general fund budget. The current proposals seek to reduce this spend from 2018/19 in line with future budget proposals.

Within the Group 2 services, External Supported Accommodation currently has an expenditure budget of £580k, which is currently forecast to overspend by £137k. The proposals seeks to reduce the use of high cost support by re-commissioning additional units of lower support need which are cheaper.

Advice given by Michael Pilcher / Finance Business Partner

Date 28/11/2016

b. Financial (capital) implications:

Comments from the Corporate Capital Programme Board:

There are no capital implications arising from the recommendations.

Advice given by Chris Holme, Interim Head of Corporate Finance

Date 5 January 2017

c. Legal implications:

Prior to implementing the proposals contained in this report, the Council will need to ensure it complies with its public sector equalities duty and any duty to consult that arises. This report must include details of how each of these duties have or will be met.

Whenever the Council procures goods, works or services, it must do so in accordance with any obligations imposed by the Public Contracts Regulations 2016. There are a number of different procurements proposed in this report, provided the Council complies with the obligations imposed on each under these Regulations, the procurement of these services will be low risk.

Advice given by Sinead Willis, Solicitor

Date 25 November 2016

d. Land / property implications:

The land at the Foyer which is the subject of recommendations for high and medium supported accommodation in this report is owned freehold by the City Council and is leased for a term of 125 years from 1997 to Knighstone Housing Association. The tenant constructed the building. The lease provides (inter-alia) for the Council to benefit from nomination rights in respect of 75% of the accommodation provided within the building. These rights were negotiated at the commencement of the lease and were agreed in lieu of payment for land. If the Council now wishes to withdraw the service, it will forego a significant proportion of the original consideration having only benefitted from 20 out of the 125 years worth of nomination rights. Assuming the service is to be provided using a different financial model, the value of the remaining 102 years nomination rights at the current location should form part of the business case.

Advice given by Bob Baber, Asset Strategy Manager

Date 6 January 2017

e. Human resources implications:

The council has streamlined contract management processes to ensure that there are sufficient commissioning resources available to monitor the contract and performance of the Young People's Housing and Independence Pathway Plan effectively. Working alongside external partners, there are no HR implications for council staff, as a result of this proposal.

Advice given by Sandra Farquharson, HR Business Partner, Neighbourhoods

Date 09/12/16

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Funding and savings

Access to information (background papers): All published on this webpage <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/housing/commissioning-homelessness-prevention-services>

- Young people's housing and independence pathway plan
- Consultation report

- Needs analysis
- Feedback from young people report
- Equality impact assessment
- Summary of research and best practice