

Decision Pathway – Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 06 October 2020

TITLE	Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023		
Ward(s)	All		
Author: Gail Rogers	Job title: Principal Commissioning Manager		
Cabinet lead: Cllr Helen Godwin	Executive Director lead: Jacqui Jensen		
Proposal origin: BCC Staff			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member			
Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> For cabinet to approve the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023 (attached as Appendix A); which sets out, at a strategic level, the steps being taken to ensure sufficient accommodation is available to meet the needs of our children in care and care leavers. The 2020-2023 Sufficiency Strategy will replace the previous Strategy which ran until the end of March 2020, offering an opportunity to present refreshed data and new approaches to sufficiency. 			
Evidence Base:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Sufficiency Duty, under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989, requires Local Authorities to take steps to secure, as far as practicable, sufficient accommodation within their area to meet the needs of children in their care, and children whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation. This involves making sure there is a sufficient range and number of providers (including in-house services) capable of meeting the differing needs of children in care and care leavers. The authority requires a good understanding of the needs of children in care, in order to most effectively target resources to enable us to meet the sufficiency duty. The Sufficiency Strategy lays the foundations for this by setting out a high level summary of need of our children in care and care leavers, as well as outlining our current delivery arrangements and approaches to providing secure, safe and appropriate accommodation over the next three years. A number of market position statements, policies and a timeline are also being developed to sit under this strategy, which will provide further information on each area. The Sufficiency Strategy has been developed to support the Council to deliver its vision of “giving all children and young people the best start in life”. The Strategy provides an overview of various projects and work being undertaken across the council, to ensure that children and young people who need to be in our care can grow up in high quality provision that is well matched, effectively meets their immediate and long-term needs and provides them with stability and permanence at the earliest opportunity. 			
Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:			
That Cabinet			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023. 			
Corporate Strategy alignment:			
The following objective in the Corporate Strategy is relevant to this key decision:			

1. **Empowering and Caring** – Give our children the best start in life by protecting and developing children’s centre services, being great corporate parents and protecting children from exploitation or harm.

City Benefits:

The Sufficiency Strategy and the associated areas of work being undertaken across the council to meet sufficiency will benefit the city in the following ways:

1. Meet the needs of children in care and care leavers in line with the Children Act 1989 and the Equalities Act 2010.
2. Increase the availability of provisions which meet our high aspirations for all children and young people in our care, delivering in line with the assessed needs to achieve agreed outcomes.
3. Develop partnership working between Bristol City Council, Partner Organisations and Providers to meet the changing needs of the children/ young people in the care of the Local Authority.

Consultation Details:

The Strategy has been written in consultation with professionals from across Social Care, Education and Health. Providers have been consulted on our needs through our regular Provider Forum. In taking forward Bristol City Council’s aspirations, we will consult with children and young people on how best we should deliver services to achieve our priorities.

Background Documents: [Sufficiency Statutory guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children, 2010](#)

Revenue Cost	£0	Source of Revenue Funding	N/A
Capital Cost	£0	Source of Capital Funding	N/A
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

1. Finance Advice: This report seeks Cabinet approval of the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023, there are no financial implications in relation to the proposals contained in this report at this stage. As the strategy sets out the general intentions to meeting Bristol City Council’s sufficiency duty and direction of travel, any future commissioning activities involving spend that are undertaken as a result of the proposed sufficiency strategy will therefore require to go through new decision pathway for sign off of spend.

Finance Business Partner: Christie Fasunloye 01/09/2020

2. Legal Advice: Section 22G Children Act 1989 imposes a duty on the local authority to take steps that secure, so far as reasonably practicable, accommodation for looked after children that is within the authority’s area where that would be consistent with their welfare. The local authority must have regard to the benefit of having a number and a range of accommodation providers in their area that is, in their opinion, sufficient to secure that outcome. This strategy is designed to set out how the authority will comply with this duty.

The Public Sector Equality duty requires Cabinet to consider the need to promote equality for persons, including children, with “protected characteristics” and to have due regard to the need to i) eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; ii) advance equality of opportunity; and iii) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. The Equalities Impact Checks are designed to help assess whether there are any barriers in place that may prevent people with a protected characteristic using a service or benefiting from a policy. The decision maker must take into consideration the information in the assessments when reaching its decision.

Legal Team Leader: Sarah Sharland Team Leader Litigation Regulatory and Community Team 17th August 2020

3. Implications on IT: No anticipated impact to IT Services

IT Team Leader: Simon Oliver 17/08/20

4. HR Advice: The report seeks cabinet approval of the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023, there are no HR implications in relation to this proposal as it is set out.

HR Partner: Lorna Laing 19/08/20		
EDM Sign-off	Jacqui Jensen	19/08/2020
Cabinet Member sign-off	ClIr Helen Godwin	24/08/2020
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	07/09/2020

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO