

Report to: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date of meeting: 20 January 2023

By: Director of Children's Services

Title: Briefing note on Lansdowne Secure Children's Home

Purpose: To provide an update on the temporary closure and forward plan of Lansdowne Secure Children's Home

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to discuss and consider the content of the briefing

1 Background and supporting information

1.1 Since opening in May 2013, Lansdowne Secure Children's Home has provided vital care and support to a significant number of vulnerable children from across the UK. The original seven bed secure home was built with a £9 million grant from the Department of Education (DfE) and was further extended in 2021, through another £9million DfE grant to provide an additional 5 beds. The home is a regional and national resource with other local authorities paying for placements.

1.2 With the exception of a period in 2020-21 the home has consistently been judged 'Good' by Ofsted.

1.3 Like many sectors we have been experiencing significant difficulties recruiting and retaining staff, including managers, for some time and have therefore only been able to utilise a small proportion of the places in the unit. The absence of a registered manager from the end of January 2023 means that the county council has no choice but to temporarily close the home. Children's Services are therefore going to pause the service delivery at Lansdowne, review and redesign the staffing structure and develop an enhanced recruitment strategy so that we are able to deliver a resilient, viable and sustainable service in the future. A staff consultation is currently underway regarding temporary redeployment positions within Children's Services until the home reopens in the autumn of 2023.

1.4 The temporary closure has been discussed with the Department for Education, Ofsted and Trade Unions, who will be updated regularly regarding progress. Regular updates will be provided to the Corporate Parenting Panel.

2 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to discuss and consider this update.

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Director of Children's Services

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None