

Report to: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date of meeting: 24 April 2024

By: Director of Children's Services

Title: Accommodation pathways for care experienced young people.

Purpose: To update the panel on the accommodation options for Care Leavers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to comment on and note the update.

1. Background

1.1. Part of the service's corporate parenting responsibilities is to ensure appropriate accommodation pathways for our care experienced young people and those at risk of homelessness.

1.2 In East Sussex this responsibility is met through effective joint working between Children's Services, East Sussex Housing Partnership Board and Public Health.

1.3 A joint protocol for care experienced young people and 16 and 17 year olds who are at risk of homelessness or maybe homeless is in place between Children and Housing services.

1.4 Public Health and Children's Services jointly fund posts to support our young people to access accommodation pathways, they work in partnership with local housing authorities, housing providers, adult social care, health and criminal justices services and the voluntary sector.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The young person's housing and accommodation pathway consists of several steps. Early intervention includes working with schools, Public Health and Children's Services to minimize demand and reduce the risks of homelessness and housing crisis through multi-agency support with families and young people.

2.2 Integrated Service gateways have been developed, supporting young people in temporary and emergency accommodation delivering a range of services including housing, employment, mental health and benefits. Placement support plans and pathway plans provide a structure for integrated support towards independent living.

2.3 Options for young people on the housing and accommodation pathway include staying put (with foster carers) supported lodgings and accommodation, shared student style accommodation and social housing. Young people are supported in time with 'moving on' to private and social rentals. There is a council tax relief scheme in place across East Sussex for care experienced young people and our young people receive a setting up allowance.

2.4 There are a number of key challenges across the housing sector including a high number of households living in temporary accommodation, an increasingly unaffordable private rented sector and a shortage of supported move on options for people with additional needs. A significant proportion of the activity supporting individuals who have additional or multiple needs is grant funding, with indications that funding will end in March 2025.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 Through refreshed partnership arrangements with multi-agency partners, it is intended that the East Sussex Housing Strategy will work to address the key challenges existing across the system, enhancing cross sector working and aims to deliver a reduced reliance on temporary accommodation and support sustainable housing and accommodation options.

3.2 Addressing the needs of care experienced young people and those at risk of homelessness are part of the joined-up approach being taken through the East Sussex Housing Board, the joint Housing and Children's Services Action Plan, the Joint Protocol and young people's housing and accommodation pathway.

3.3 The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to comment on and note the update.

ALISON JEFFERY
Director of Children's Services

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None