

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

27 FEBRUARY 2018

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

REMODELLING CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL SERVICES PROJECT

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the work that has been undertaken as part of the Remodelling Children's Residential Services project and to seek approval to implement a proposed new model for Children's Residential Services.

2.0 Connection to Corporate Plan

- 2.1 This report links to the following improvement priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- Helping people to be more self-reliant;
- Smarter use of resources.

Plus the following document:

- Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Children's Social Care Services currently provides residential placements for looked after children through two homes located within the County Borough. These are:

- Sunnybank – a four bed home for children aged 11-16;
- Newbridge House – a transition unit for young people aged 15-17. This comprises of four residential bedrooms and two bedsits that act as a step-down before move-on from the property.

- 3.2 Both of the homes have been at 100% occupancy throughout 2017. The average placement at Sunnybank lasts over a year, and placements at Newbridge House vary from a few days to two years.

- 3.3 The most recent Rota Visit undertaken by Elected Members (which took place in January 2017) provided mixed feedback on the Residential homes, and can be summarised as follows:

- Sunnybank – The premises were clean and tidy and had a pleasant atmosphere, they appeared to be in a good state of repair and visitors were not advised of any issues. There were four service users present and the Member visiting was able to speak with one of them separately; the young person was very complimentary, happy and contented. The children are doing well in their education and plenty of activities are available.

- Newbridge House – The unit needs modernising and redecoration is a priority at this time. The television in one room was extremely dated and needs replacing. The garden needs to be created into a relaxing environment as, at present, it is bare and uninviting. The entrance to the home was not well signposted.

3.4 Feedback from staff during engagement sessions identified a number of issues with the existing service model and the way homes are structured currently, including:

- A lack of control over resident ‘mix’ due to age restrictions of each home and lack of placement options;
- No alternatives to residential placements for those with complex needs;
- Insufficient move-on facilities resulting in longer residential placements than is necessary;
- Young people who are not ready for transition being placed in Newbridge House, as there are no other options available;
- No emergency beds – existing homes cannot be used for emergency placements as this is not in the Statements of Purpose;
- Layout of the homes not encouraging a positive, psychologically informed environment;
- Staff only able to provide minimal outreach support;
- Reservations regarding services’ ability to achieve certain outcomes meaning a high level of Out Of County and Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements;
- Children being sent far away from their home area.

3.5 Analysis of care leaver data demonstrated the need for a model which maximises the number of stable and sustainable accommodation options for young people leaving care. The data below shows the accommodation situation of care leavers that were in contact with the Just Ask Plus team in December 2017:

Placement / accommodation type	Age			
	18	19	20	21
Adult placement			3	1
Family	6	8	7	3
Independent	8	13	25	11
No contact		1		
No Fixed Abode	2	10	1	
Prison		1	3	
Private arrangement with previous Foster Carers				1
Supported living	6	4	2	
Temporary accommodation			1	
When I'm ready	2	3		
Grand Total	24	40	42	16

3.6 The Directorate also provides an internal supported lodgings service to young people in Bridgend. This acts as an option for people who are ready to be more independent, but are not yet ready to live completely independently. The Supporting People Programme Grant currently funds an internal Supported Lodging Service

which is being reviewed in line with Supporting People Grant conditions, to assess service delivery, eligibility and value-for-money in accordance with Welsh Government guidance. Currently £69,000 is funded which is subject to review on the criteria above.

3.7 The Council currently spends a significant amount of money on high-cost out of county residential placements for young people – with the average out of county placement costing in the region of £160,000 per annum. In respect of numbers of placements, on average, more than 10 young people have been placed out of county at any one time over the last few years. There will always be a requirement to make out of county placements – as this is the best placement option due to factors associated with risk and personal circumstance – and current forecasts estimate that circa 4 out of county placements need to be made for these reasons. This suggests that a number of individuals could have remained in-county, if there was a more effective service model in place.

3.8 In light of these issues, the Remodelling Children’s Residential Services project was formed as part of the Remodelling Children’s Services Programme. The remit of the project was to review current residential placements (to include Residential homes, Supported Lodgings and out-of-county placements) and to develop a proposed model for internal residential placements.

3.9 A significant amount of engagement has taken place to inform the proposed model including:

- Research into innovation and best practice across the UK;
- Reviewing of feedback from CSSIW reports for the residential homes;
- A multi-agency workshop involving colleagues from Children’s Services, ABMU, Police, Education and other key stakeholders;
- Engagement with current and former residents of the residential homes;
- In-depth engagement with residential staff members;
- Targeted engagement with all pertinent stakeholders on the final proposed model.

3.10 Engagement with current and former residents of the residential homes was also undertaken to inform the development of the proposed new model. A summary of the feedback received from these young people is detailed below:

Aspects of the respondent’s experience in the home they found positive	Aspects of the respondent’s experience in the home they would change if they could
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff members • The support/advice/guidance they received • The independence they had • The facilities • The free time/activities available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to WIFI • Better computers • Would like more independent flats/step-down options • Would like more move-on support/support post 18 • Access to individual bathroom facilities as opposed to shared • More free time and freedom.

- 3.11 In November 2017, a report was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OVSC) outlining the proposed model, and requesting feedback as part of the engagement to help inform the proposed new model in moving forward. OVSC requested further detail in respect of the proposed model, and requested for another report to be submitted to allow pre-decision scrutiny, prior to the final model being presented to Cabinet in February 2018.
- 3.12 In January 2018, a more detailed report was submitted to OVSC alongside a presentation (attached as **Appendix B** for reference), which provided further detail on the proposed model. OVSC were requested to provide views on the proposed new model for residential placements and to note that a report would be presented to Cabinet in February 2018, requesting approval to implement the proposed new model for residential placements and associated changes in allowances for carers.
- 3.13 OVSC commended the report for its detail and focus. Members fed back that they would like consideration to be given to: joint regional training, foster carer contracts and career development and contingency planning, all of which will be factored into the implementation planning process by the project team pending Cabinet approval of the proposed new model.

4.0 Current Situation

- 4.1 A diagram of the 'ideal model' on which the proposal is based has been attached as **Appendix A** for reference. The aim of the model is to create a wider variety of internal placement options that are flexible enough to meet the increasingly complex needs of the children and young people becoming looked after. Creating more placement options will enable the Council to choose the right placement for each individual and to achieve the best possible evidence-based outcomes for each child. It will also reduce the pressure on placements currently being experienced across services and minimise the number of placement breakdowns occurring.
- 4.2 The model will also create more placement options locally within the Bridgend Area for the children and young people who are best placed closer to home. The project team have ensured the model will create the option of bringing back young people currently placed out of county, as well as preventing future young people from being placed out of county, wherever possible and appropriate.
- 4.3 The proposed model will increase the number of available placements through the implementation of a number of key service elements. This is demonstrated in the chart below:

	Emergency residential	Residential - Sunnybank	Residential - Newbridge	Transitional carers	Supported lodgings	Preparation for independence/ Supported Living	Total
Current services	0	4	4	0	8	2	18
Proposed model	2	4	4	6+	10+	4-6	30+

- 4.4 As the scope of this project covers many service areas, there will be a phased approach to implementing the model. This will reduce the need for significant

additional resources at any one time but still enable the team to begin achieving the desired aims and outcomes of the project, including the return of young people placed out-of-county in line with their care plans.

- 4.5 A full implementation plan has been developed, with the aim of the model being fully implemented by the end of 2018/19. This approach also means that cost reductions will begin to be realised during the implementation phase, and will continue to be realised once implementation is complete.

Key elements of the proposed new model

4.6 Residential Units

4.6.1 *The Hub*

The aim of the Hub will be to provide support in a time-effective way in order to facilitate move-on to one of the other placement options within the model. It is proposed that the Hub will:

- Be based at Newbridge House initially – with alternative longer-term options for the Hub being considered in the future, if deemed more appropriate;
- Consist of four short term/assessment beds and two emergency only beds which can be accessed for a maximum of 72 working hours;
- Be open to children and young people aged 11-17, giving residential managers the flexibility to ensure the 'mix' of young people is right, as opposed to being age restricted;
- Have therapeutic staff based at the Hub;
- Increase the amount of outreach support provided to children and young people, families and carers – with staff members available 24/7 to provide advice and support; this will minimise the chance of placement breakdowns.

There is an intention to employ two 'Residential Educational Outreach Workers' who will provide structured support to the young people located at the Hub, with the aim of getting them out and engaged within their community. Further details of all the costs of additional staff and training have been included within the model and are detailed within the financial implications section of this report.

4.6.2 *Medium-term Unit*

It is proposed that a medium-term unit is developed, that will be:

- Based at Sunnybank;
- A four bed home for those who need a higher level of intensive support before moving on to one of the other placement options within the model;
- Open to children and young people aged 11-17, giving residential managers the flexibility to ensure the 'mix' of young people is right as opposed to age restricted.

It is proposed that the young people based at this Unit would have access to the Hub, including the therapeutic interventions and Residential Educational Outreach Workers.

4.6.3 Residential Unit Staffing

- It is not envisaged that this model will result in a significant change in the staffing levels required to deliver the services, thereby reducing the potential risk of redundancies.
- The Residential managers have undertaken a full workforce planning exercise to inform the staffing requirements for both residential units under the proposed model. Some additional residential staff members will be required to deliver the model, for example, additional Residential Workers and the proposed Residential Educational Outreach Workers.
- Existing staff members may require a minor change to their role requirements to enable them to deliver the model effectively. The impacted job roles have been submitted to HR for pre-emptive benchmarking to inform the cost-savings analysis, and the proposed changes to job descriptions should not impact on the pay scales for existing residential staff roles.

4.6.4 Potential for income generation

- The Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru (4Cs) are currently implementing systems and processes to support Local Authorities to sell available placements to other Local Authorities at a pre-defined rate that is more affordable than current out of county placement options.
- The Directorate is engaged in this work as, although we will not be expected to provide placements to other Local Authorities if we are at full capacity, it could be an option to generate income if the proposed model creates space in our residential homes in the future.

4.7 Supported Lodgings

- 4.7.1 Supported Lodgings is an in-house placement provision for young people who are not yet ready for independent living. It does not require the level of regulation that a fostering placement requires, but still gives the young person a more structured, family type environment prior to their transition into independence.
- 4.7.2 A joint service review of Supported Lodgings services recently took place involving Children's Services, Supporting People and Housing Services. As part of this exercise, an external organisation was commissioned to review BCBC's Supported Lodgings provision. This impartial report highlighted operational difficulties which resulted in relatively low referral numbers, meaning value for money was not being demonstrated.
- 4.7.3 Following the recommendations of the report, Supporting People and Housing have established an external Supported Lodgings project, with the purpose of providing accommodation to young people who are 16+ and are not of looked after status, to assist in the prevention of homelessness. This project runs alongside BCBC's internal Supported Lodgings provision, where internal processes and procedures have been reviewed that will support and enable an increase in the number of young people accessing Supported Lodgings to ensure it is achieving best value for money. As a result of this work, the number of Supported Lodgings hosts has increased and it is proposed that, once the Hub is in place, Hub staff will provide extra support to the BCBC's Supported Lodgings hosts.

4.8 Supported Living

- 4.8.1 The Directorate would benefit from an increased amount of move-on accommodation for young looked after people residing in placements before they turn 18 years of age. This would reduce delays in transfers out of residential placements and reduce the pressure on residential placements that is currently being experienced. It would also help in preventing young looked after people from presenting as homeless on their 18th birthday in order to access housing.
- 4.8.2 Children's Social Care is working closely with colleagues in Supporting People and Housing in order to better align our Supported Living services for both young looked after children, as well as those who are not looked after, with the intention of Supported Living services being available from the age of 16.
- 4.8.3 Placements will provide structured support for young looked after people who are not yet ready for fully independent living, preparing them for a move-on into the community.

4.9 Therapeutic services

- 4.9.1 The number of children requiring therapeutic support is increasing, and as a result the Directorate is spending an increasing amount on spot-purchasing therapeutic interventions for children. The total of this spend came to approximately £180,000 in the 2016/17 financial year. Demand for these services is not decreasing and consequently it is anticipated that spend will be very similar at year end 2017/18.
- 4.9.2 Initial scoping has taken place to consider alternative ways in which such support can be provided in the future. A consideration is that the Directorate recruit an internal therapeutic staffing function to consist of a Clinical Psychologist and a Senior Practitioner Social Worker. In the future, this team could then expand to include Placement Support Workers, and/or a Therapist Worker with a play therapy background.

4.10 Transitional Carers

- 4.10.1 It is proposed that four to six Transitional Carers are recruited, who will provide a respite or emergency function if they do not have a placement. Three current foster carers have been identified as suitable for up-skilling to this level to support the new model, and it proposed that three new sets of fostering households are recruited.
- 4.10.2 The Transitional Carers would act as a step-down for young people coming out of the residential units before being placed in a long-term family or independent placement. They will be therapeutically trained and therefore able to address issues that occur as a result of a transition into a different environment, increasing the chances that the long-term placement will be successful and reducing multiple placement breakdowns and reliance on out-of-county placements.
- 4.10.3 The Transitional Carers would take a maximum of one transitional placement at any time (not including other placements outside of this service) and will provide intensive support for up to 24 weeks. They will work closely with the Therapeutic Team staff, who will advise on the best way to support the young people to maximise the benefits and success of future placements.

4.10.4 It is envisaged that two out of the six carers would be without placements at any one time, enabling them to provide support to the other four Transitional Carers, provide respite for foster carers that need a break to prevent a crisis from occurring, and to provide emergency family placements if needed. This will be monitored closely and will be subject to review, as the model evolves.

4.11 Training

4.11.1 The consultation has identified that there are currently multiple approaches to the therapeutic and behavioural support models used across the Directorate. The Directorate will benefit from a consistent model used across all services. This would aid young people transitioning between placements by providing consistency of support, and would ensure the best possible outcomes are being achieved for each young person.

4.11.2 It is proposed that, once a therapeutic staffing team has been employed, the Directorate develops its own internal core training programme for front-line staff across the directorate. This will be a rolling 16-week programme and will bring transitional carers, residential staff and social workers together to help them form relationships and inform each other's learning. Specialists will be brought in to deliver this rolling programme as required, but the majority will be delivered by internal staff resulting in overall cost reduction.

4.11.3 The aim of the 16 week training programme is not to train staff and transitional carers to directly deliver therapy to the children and young people they support. Instead, it will up-skill them all in the same basic therapeutic principles and intervention methods that can form a foundation for their approach to supporting children and young people on a day-to-day basis. This will assist staff and transitional carers in supporting children and young people that present with more complex needs and will reinforce the work undertaken by the therapeutic staff in between sessions.

4.11.4 The first 16 week training programme will be directly for transitional carers and key staff members that will be involved in the delivery of the training programme moving forward. The feedback and analysis of this initial programme will then be used to inform the content of a rolling training programme to be delivered to all staff.

4.11.5 The Fostering Remodelling Project, which is currently in the 'project feasibility' stage, will be exploring the possibility of rolling the programme out to Foster Carers as part of their core training.

5.0 Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules. Any future services requiring commissioning as a result of this proposal will be undertaken in-line with Contract Procedure Rules requirements.

6.0 Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 When targeted consultation has been completed and the model has been finalised, and officers are in a better position to know which service users and staff could be

affected by the proposed model, an EIA screening (and a full EIA if necessary) will be undertaken, to assess the potential impact on service users and staff.

6.2 Appropriate consultation will be arranged ensuring that relevant policies are applied throughout the process.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 Fundamental assumptions have been made in developing the business justification for making the proposed changes to the model – which officers forecast will result in the cost reductions as set out below.

7.1.1 Overall assumptions:

- It is a like-for-like cost comparison between the existing and proposed service models, and the costs are based on the principle that everything remains 'as is' in terms of current levels of service provision and demand.
- The costings assume the timescales in the implementation plan and in the plan to return young people from Out-Of-County placements (as set out in paragraph 7.1.9) are met.
- All children and their placements are continually reviewed and monitored through the care planning process and this report assumes that those plans are achieved but emerging issues could have an impact on those timescales.
- The key work that will be undertaken each year is detailed below:

Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person A already returned from Out-of-County placement • Implementation of the training programme, upskilling of all staff and rolling training programme commences • Residential unit staffing transitions to new model in the summer • Therapeutic staff employed at the beginning of the financial year • On-going campaign to recruit Supported Lodgings hosts and align the Children's Directorate's provision with Housing's commissioned service • Transitional carers recruited; two in post by Oct 2018 and other four by Jan 2019 • Person B to return from Out-Of-County by September 2018 • Model fully implemented by the end of this year
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Total current' cost reduction as Person A will have turned 18 years of age during 2018/19 • Persons C and D to return from Out-of-County by June 2019
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full year effect cost reductions realised as this is the first full year with all four young people who were Out-of-County returned to in-house support

7.1.2 Overall costs

	2018-19			2019-20			2020-21		
	Current	Proposed	Increase / (Decrease)	Current	Proposed	Increase / (Decrease)	Current	Proposed	Increase / (Decrease)
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Newbridge House	430,690	489,126	58,436	430,690	508,657	77,967	430,690	508,657	77,967
Sunnybank	462,034	461,990	-44	462,034	461,975	-59	462,034	461,975	-59
Therapeutic Staff Costs	113,613	96,374	-17,239	113,613	96,374	-17,239	113,613	96,374	-17,239
Training Costs	0	53,800	53,800	0	30,800	30,800	0	30,800	30,800
Supported Lodgings	69,000	69,000	0	69,000	69,000	0	69,000	69,000	0
Transitional Carer Costs	57,000	101,250	44,250	57,000	204,000	147,000	57,000	204,000	147,000
Supporting Staff Costs	0	41,472	41,472	0	55,296	55,296	0	55,296	55,296
High Cost / OOC Placements	665,418	474,730	-190,688	538,200	89,700	-448,500	538,200	0	-538,200
TOTAL COSTS	1,797,755	1,787,742	-10,013	1,670,537	1,515,802	-154,735	1,670,537	1,426,102	-244,435

7.1.3 Assumptions – residential units:

- For comparison purposes, it has been assumed that the current expenditure on Newbridge and Sunnybank will remain the same for the next three years
- Pay bands used for costing are for the 2017-18 financial year – inflation has not been included for subsequent years
- It is assumed that Supporting People will not part fund any of the residential worker posts – however a bid will be submitted requesting Supporting People grant funding from 2018-19 onwards

7.1.4 Assumptions – therapeutic staff:

- The 'current cost' of therapy includes only part of the total current expenditure on therapy. The costs included are for: Assessments, including PAMS Assessments and Independent Social Worker Assessments; Consultation; Assessment Report; Professional time; and Clinical Psychology
- Proposed costings are based on recruiting a Clinical Psychologist and Senior Social Worker from April 2018.
- The two posts recruited will be subject to job evaluation so the costs are estimated on 2 x Grade 12 posts.

7.1.4 Assumptions – training:

- Includes the initial cost of upskilling staff, plus £10,000 every subsequent year as contingency in case any trained staff leave, plus £400 a week for implementation of the 16 week training programme from March 2018
- Does not include core training costs currently covered by SCDWP
- Assumes 16 week rolling training programme will run 52 weeks of the year – e.g. four programmes per year.

7.1.5 Assumptions – Supported Lodgings:

- Based on the principle that the £69,000 funding per annum from Supporting People and core budget will continue for the next three years.

7.1.7 Assumptions – Transitional Carers:

- The 'current' Transitional Carer costs are calculated at £19,000 per annum per carer, which is the current average foster carer cost
- The 'projected' cost for each carer is made up of allowances which total around 34,000 per annum per Transitional Carer
- Transitional Carers will receive an enhanced retainer which will be paid to the carer on a weekly basis whether or not they have a placement. Then, basic allowance plus fee will only be paid on top when the carer has a child in a transitional placement.
- Costs are based on the assumption that all six carers will have a transitional placement continually throughout the three years.
- It is assumed three of the six Transitional Carers recruited will be internal foster carers currently and the other three will be externally recruited
- The costs for replacing the internal foster carers when they transition to Transitional Carers have not been included, as this falls under the remit of the fostering remodelling project
- Costed based on two Transitional Carers commencing in post at the beginning of October 2018 and the other four being in post from January 2019.

7.1.8 Assumptions – supporting staff:

- Includes the cost 2 x FTE Outdoor Pursuits workers on Residential Worker pay scale
- It has been assumed that these posts will be funded by Children’s Social Care without input from other directorates – however discussions are on-going in respect of funding these roles.

7.1.9 Assumptions – High-cost/Out of County (OOC) placements

- The cost reductions estimated from implementing this model are reliant on bringing young people back to Bridgend who have been placed out-of-county
- Individuals returning because they are due to transition into Adult Social Care services (i.e. turn 18 years of age) have not been included in this analysis or in the cost reductions identified below
- The plan for returning those appropriate individuals in current high-cost/OOC placements, with relevant timescales, as shown below:

Individual	Cost of current placement	Planned return date	Plan
A	£3,262 per week	Return Nov 2017	Has already returned due to the work undertaken by the project – into an independent fostering placement at £672.56 per week
B	£3,450 per week	Return Sept 2018	Will be referred into the new residential transition carer placement move by Sept 2018
C	£3,450 per week	Return June 2019	Currently in therapeutic residential placement identified as directed by court, will aim to return June 2019
D	£3,450 per week	Return June 2019	Will be referred into the new residential transition carer placement move June 2019

7.1.10 Assumptions – Supported Living:

- Costs for Supported Living have not been included as the service has not yet been developed and therefore costs are unknown and have not been included in the above analysis.
- None of the cost reductions detailed above are predicated on the Supported Living element of the service being in place. However, facilitating move-on from the residential homes is an integral element of the model, and will support long-term efficiency and effectiveness of the model as a whole.

7.2 A comparison of the average placement costs is detailed below:

Placement type	Average cost per placement per annum
Out-of-county	£160,000
Residential placement (new model)	£100,000
Transitional Carer placement (new model)	£34,000
Supported Lodgings (new model)	£9,000
Supported Living (new model)	TBC

7.3 This remodelling work will contribute towards the MTFS budget reductions that have been applied to Children's Social Care over the past three years, resulting in current projected overspends:

MTFS	TOTAL
CH25 Reduction in Safeguarding LAC	£617k
CH22 Remodelling Children's Residential Care	£400k

7.4 As highlighted in paragraph 7.1.2, it is anticipated that implementing the proposed new model and having flexible in-county provision will result in recurrent revenue savings of £244,435 per annum (assuming all other things remain equal), as well as enabling a reduction in the dependence on high-cost placements in future years.

7.5 A Capital Bid of £600,000 has been made in respect of the development of the Children's Residential and Placement Hub, which has been included in the Capital Programme going to Council for approval on 28th February 2018.

7.6 It is also anticipated that there may be potential for income generation from neighbouring local authorities in the future.

7.7 In implementing the new model, it is anticipated that there may be potential for funding from the Supporting People funding. However, any bids for funding will be made in-line with the Supporting People planning and governance processes and grant conditions, and in the knowledge that Supporting People funding could reduce over time, dependent on the grant allocation received from Welsh Government.

8.0 Recommendation

8.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- Note the information contained in this report;
- Provide views on the proposed new model for residential placements;
- Approve the implementation of the proposed new model for residential placements and associated changes in allowances for carers.

Susan Cooper

Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing

February 2018

9.0 Contact Officers

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10.0 Background documents

None

Placement options under the new model

