

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

12 January 2006

HOUSING ISSUES FOR CARE LEAVERS

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to advise Members of discussions between the Leaving Care Team and the Strategic Housing Service, Middlesbrough Council, and the intention to bring a full report on housing issues for young people leaving care to the Board, in March 2006.

BACKGROUND AND EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

2. Young people leaving care need suitable housing and support to learn independent living skills and become respected members of their local communities. It is important that the housing arrangements are part of their Pathway Plan, with a timetable for action, and systems in place that can clearly achieve the intended outcomes, within a fixed timeframe.
3. Although there are a number of potential routes to accessing suitable housing, young people have, in the main, approached the Council to provide accommodation. However, since November 2004, all council housing stock has been transferred to a newly formed Registered Social Landlord (RSL),

Erimus Housing, which is responsible for the Council's statutory duties in relation to homelessness and vulnerable households.

4. Erimus Housing has introduced a new Choice Based Lettings policy, which replaces the previous points system for allocating properties. A number of issues have been raised around the ability of young people to access suitable accommodation under the new system.
5. The Leaving Care Team appointed an accommodation officer, who has been developing a supported lodging scheme and exploring existing and potential future options for accommodation for service users. The officer has raised the issue of future potential problems for young people leaving care when accessing the choice based lettings system.

OPTION APPRAISAL/RISK ASSESSMENT

6. A more detailed report will follow, that will explore the issues around the new choice based lettings policy being implemented by Erimus Housing. The report will also set out other options available for accessing suitable housing for young people leaving care.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no immediate financial or legal implications arising from this report. A more detailed report will follow.

RECOMMENDATION

8. The Corporate Parenting Board recommends that the Executive note the information relating to housing issues for care leavers.

REASON

9. This report informs Members of the presentation of a future report to the Corporate Parenting Board.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING – JENNI COOKE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no background papers used in the preparation of this report:

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