

# Sufficiency Action Plan

## Highlight Report

### January 2022



## 1.0 Our Response

The Corporate Parenting Strategy for Children and Young People in Middlesbrough was presented to and signed off by Corporate Parenting Board in December 2020.

The strategy sets out our vision and action plan for how the Council and our partners will support children and young people who are in our care, and our care leavers, to achieve the best possible outcomes in their lives. Transforming our approach to corporate parenting.

Our Sufficiency Action Plan was developed in consultation and is built around the priorities set out in our Corporate Parenting Strategy. The action plan sets out actions we feel need to be undertaken in order to better meet our needs.

Our Sufficiency Action Plan will be reviewed and updated as actions are completed or as new work is identified in the event of any changes to our sufficiency needs over the 3-year cycle of our plan.

The overall responsible Council officer for the Sufficiency Action Plan for Children and Young People is the Director of Children's Services (DCS). For each of the six priority themes, senior Council officers have been delegated by the DCS as the accountable lead for maintaining an overview of the priorities set out in the action plan.

### **Themes and Responsible Officers**

Theme		Lead Accountable Officer
1	Strengthening Commissioning For Children & Young People	Head of Service Futures for Families Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
2	Increasing Placements Close to where Children & Young People Live and Learn	Head of Service Future for Families Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
3	Growing Early Intervention & Prevention	Head of Prevention Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
4	Improving Placements & Support for Care Leavers	Head of Service Children Looked After Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
5	Enhancing Learning Outcomes for Children & Young People	Virtual Head Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
6	Building Our Fostering Capacity and Adoption Outcomes	Head of Service Future for Families Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager

## 2.0 Progress against Each Theme

The Commissioning Action Plan has been reviewed and updated in November 2021.

### **Theme 1 - Strengthening Commissioning for Children and Young People**

- Work continues on the implementation of Controcc (a financial system linked directly to the children's care system LCS in order to move away from direct invoicing and Council made payment runs) for Children's and due to some practice changes that may be required the full implementation date may need to be extended but this will be approved via the Change Control process in place.
- A Market Engagement Plan is being drafted and will be presented for formal endorsement by Children's DMT in February 2022.

### **Theme 2 – Increasing Placements Close to where Children and Young People live and learn**

- Internal occupancy is on the increase with 23 young people being placed across our internal residential provision
- Regional work on the future procurement of a regional framework continues and is expected to be in place by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022.
- Continue to work with the region in order to identify any opportunities for collaboration and still awaiting set up of a regional commissioning hub which should be imminent.

### **Theme 3 – Growing Early Intervention & Prevention**

- PAUSE, a service working with women who have had more than two children removed in order to work with them on themselves and avoid further pregnancies or removal of children, has managed to continue to deliver services through COVID which has been really positive. This contract has also been extended by a further 6 months.

### **Theme 4 – Improving Placements & Support for Care Leavers**

- In order to further enhance our confidence in the unregulated settings we are carrying out our own contract management visits on all placements in order to ensure value for money and high quality service deliver.
- In addition we have also introduced our own version of 'Reg 44' visits via the National Youth Advocacy Service, this will again evidence high delivery of care as well as views of the young people in placement.

### **Theme 5 – Enhancing Learning Outcomes for Children & Young People**

- Work continues on understanding how Boarding Schools can offer placement opportunities for our children and young people.

### **Theme 6 – Building Our Fostering Capacity and Adoption Outcomes**

- Work on the business case and new service delivery model continues.
- In-house fostering placements have overtaken the number of external IFA placements which is really positive (169 internal vs 157 external).
- Middlesbrough Council is currently running another significant recruitment campaign in order to further increase our carer numbers and further drive the in-house placement numbers.

### 3.0 Impact/Performance/Data

- Weekly external residential placement monitoring continues and we have seen a big swing in in-house placements following the opening of Rosecroft and Daniel Court. As at 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022 we had 68 placements of which 23 (34%) were internal, 45 (66%) were in external.
- In-house fostering placements have overtaken external IFA placements and as at 04.01.22 there were 326 fostering placements of which 169 (52%) in house and 157 (48%) external

### 5.0 Risks

- COVID impacting on staffing levels but this is being monitored and in the event that issues are identified we will work closely with providers and the service area to provide as much support and resilience as possible.

### 6.0 Next Steps

- Establish monthly Action Plan Meetings on a monthly basis for 2022
- Continue to ensure tasks are driven forward
- Ensure any change controls are secured where any changes to deadlines are identified.



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