

APPENDIX 2(b) – Savings Proposals requiring Member Decision and are a Cost Reduction



CYP08

1 Proposal Overview

Directorate	CYP
Director	Lucie Heyes/Sara Rahman
GF/ HRA	General fund
Service area	Across 3 divisions Children's Social Care (CSC), Families Quality Commissioning (FQC) and Education
Cabinet Portfolio	Cllr Barnham
Ward/s affected	All wards

Savings Title	COST REDUCTION - Placement Sufficiency Strategy and more prevention for adolescents on the edge of care.	
Description of the saving	<p>1. (a) Creation of internal residential care placement provision for children in care and care leavers (in addition to existing programmes underway at Northover and Amersham).</p> <p>(b) Increasing the capacity for in-house Fostering service through the Fostering Hub innovation.</p> <p>(c) Continuing to strengthen our systems and support for Kinship carers for more CYP to live with extended family. <i>E.g. Special Guardianship Orders doubled between 2022/23 – 2023/24.</i></p> <p>(d) Cumulative impact of all activity under the Sufficiency Strategy is aimed at contributing to the overall reduction of reliance on high cost externally commissioned placements.</p> <p>2. Implementation of the next phase of development of the Integrated Adolescent Service (IAS), realigning the Safe Space Service and expand the eligibility criteria, to provide a broader range of intensive and responsive preventative services for older CYP on the edge of coming into care. Simultaneously reducing reliance on spot purchasing external intensive support services for adolescents and their families. This should also see an impact on the 16 plus cohort, preventing them from coming into care where costs for this cohort are significantly higher.</p> <p>3. Since 2019 whilst demand for CSC services has gone up, through investing in prevention services CSC & FQC has halved the proportion of CYP entering care, cost avoidance = £8 -12m in 2023/24 if calculated as a FYE. The spend reduction will continue with a target to reduce the number of CYP entering care in 2025/26 & 2026/27 by a further 20 CYP.</p>	
Year Saving starts and type	One off Y/N	On-going Y/N
2024/25		
2025/26		Yes 2025/26
2026/27		Yes 2026/27
All Service areas affected	Children's Social Care – Corporate Parenting & Care Resources Families Quality Commissioning – Integrated Adolescent Service Education – Children with Complex Needs & Short Breaks Service	
Legal or Statutory	Children's residential homes are regulated by Ofsted. Lewisham will be required to register its provisions, complying with all the associated requirements.	

considerations	
Change requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The repurposing of existing assets, to be children's homes and semi-independent units for our care population. Fostering Hub project already underway. Review of the Kinship team to ensure there is sufficient capacity to support more kinship arrangements (some additional DfE funding might be available). 2. Re-alignment of staffing across CSC and FQC to create an IAS – Family Help Service in line with the wider Pathfinder programme, to avoid the need to externally commission services. 3. As above (2)

2 Cost Savings Information			
Service Area budget Gross £k	£66,053k	Target saving imposed to Directorate £k	£6,600k
Net Saving Proposed – by year (insert the net amount to be saved (after any implementation costs) in the relevant year and to note that on-going savings are cumulative and recur each year) (add to guidance note)			
2024/25 Net £k	£0	2025/26 Net £k	Sufficiency Strategy £600k IAS development – the ongoing strengthening of preventative work in the IAS would see a reduction on the spend for young people aged 16 to 18, further prevention of them coming into the care of the local authority. Currently we are spending approximately £8m on children aged 17-18, as these children go in care leaver stage, and assuming a cost reduction of a third, preventing any new CLAs by a third would see a cost reduction of in cost of £900k (£700k relates to a third of the cost of those going on to age 18) Reduction of projected care entries by 10 CYP £1,000k (potential for a total cost reduction of £1,800k – not assumed at present, but will be monitored) £1,900
2026/27 Net £k	Sufficiency Strategy £600k IAS development – the ongoing strengthening of preventative work in the IAS would see a reduction on the spend for young people aged 16 to 18, further prevention of them coming into the care of the local authority.		

	<p>Currently we are spending approximately £8m on children aged 17-18, as these children go in care leaver stage, and assuming a cost reduction of a third, preventing any new CLAs by a third would see a cost reduction of £2,000k. (£1,900k relates to a third of the current cost of the children who are 17 and will become 18 during 2026/27.</p> <p>Reduction of projected care entries by 10 CYP £1,000k (potential for a total additional cost reduction £1,700k)</p> <p>£3,000</p>		
Do the proposed savings impact on any of the below:			
General Fund	Y	HRA	N
DSG	N	Health	N
Other			
If yes, please describe the impact against each	Note: Social Care Grant is considered part of GF		

3 Risk and Impact	
Risk	Mitigation
Rebuilding work on 3 children's homes is delayed and/or costs increased.	Planning is still in the very early stages and this risk will need to be considered when finalising the delivery plan
Fostering Hub is unable to attract more foster carers to Lewisham.	Indication to date is that additional foster carers are likely to be recruited, but will need to be monitored
Inability to recruit suitable staff to the IAS Service, leading to over-reliance on agency SW.	As Lewisham is generating a national profile as a Pathfinder Authority, it is likely that staff will be attracted to work in Lewisham.
What is the likely impact of the proposed Saving on:	
Service Users	<p>More older children will be supported to remain living within their family.</p> <p>A small number of care experienced children and young adults will be able to stay living in their local community remaining better connected to their network and experiencing fewer placement moves and higher quality day to day care and support.</p>
Staff	Full implications still be worked through - the actions above will increase the workforce and reduce external spend on care and accommodation.
Other Council Services	None anticipated
Partners	Full implications still be worked through

Sections 4 – 7 to be fully complete by 11 September 2024

4 Delivery Plan			
Milestones	Key Steps	Lead Officer	Timescales
Initiation	1 (a) Amersham & Northover – contracts issued, building work near completion. X3 Children’s Homes M&C report scheduled	Lucie Heyes	Scheduled to go live in October 2024
	1 (b) Fostering Hub recruited to. 1 (c) Review underway		June 2024 August 2024
	2 IAS Family Help service scope being agreed	Sara Rahman	August/September 2024
Planning	1 (a) X3 Children’s Homes 1 (b) Fostering Hub 1 (c) Kinship Service	Lucie Heyes	Throughout 2023-24 Q2-3 2024/5 Q2 2024/5
Implementation	1(a) CYP moving into Northover & Amersham. X3 Children’s Homes 1(b) Fostering Hub 1(c) Kinship Service	Lucie Heyes	Nov 2024 Date TBC 2025 Q4 2024/5 Q3-4 2024/25
Review	TBC		

5 Decision Route		
Key Decision Y/N	Public Consultation Y/N	Staff Consultation Y/N
Yes	No	Not at present, but if restructure undertaken then a staffing consultation will be required
Member (re Residential Homes). Planned for M&C in September 2024		

6 Implications		
Legal	Legal implications of opening Local Authority Childrens Homes to be explored as part of the transformation project	
Equalities	<i>Implications for service users against each protected characteristic High, Medium, Low, Neutral. Please provide a response even where the response is Neutral.</i>	
	Age	Medium - Positive
	Disability	Medium – Positive
	Ethnicity	Neutral
	Gender	Neutral
	Gender reassignment	Neutral
	Marriage and civil partnerships	Neutral

	Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral
	Religion and belief	Neutral
	Sexual orientation	Neutral
	Socio-economic inequality	Medium - Positive
	Is a full EAA required? Y/N	<p>No. At present no negative consequences are anticipated because of this proposal. Actions contained within this strategy should lead to fewer children requiring an intensive social care intervention and coming into care. This includes children with a disability. As the percentage of children from lower socio-economic groups who are children in need is higher than average, the preventative approach being delivered locally should impact positively on this group.</p> <p>An EAA will be required and will be completed as part of the children's home development plan</p>

7 Corporate Strategy	
	<i>How does the proposal align with the Council's Corporate Strategy? Please provide a response even where the response is Neutral.</i>
Open Lewisham	Approximately 10% of our children in care and 29% of our care leavers are children who arrived unaccompanied to seek asylum in the UK (UASC), as their corporate parents we seek to provide them with the best quality care experience we can deliver to enable them to be secure and safe in Lewisham as a Borough of Sanctuary.
Tackling the Housing crisis	N/A
Giving children and young people the best start in life	<p>Children often have better outcomes when they remain in their family when it is safe to do so and there is sufficient support.</p> <p>A small number of care experienced children are extremely challenging to place and require solo placements with high staffing ratio. Homes located in Lewisham working as part of an extended Corporate Parenting service will receive higher quality day to day care and support, to provide a better care experience. This initiative also supports the Council's motion to treat Care Leaver status as a protected characteristic.</p>
Building an inclusive local economy	N/A
Delivering and defending: health, social care & support	The Family First Pathfinder (FFP) programme reform follows a comprehensive independent review of the children's social care system and is part of a national programme of testing the implementation of the associated recommendations to improve social care for vulnerable families. The development of the IAS Family Help Service is part of the Lewisham FFP programme.
Making Lewisham greener	N/A
Building safer communities	Care experienced CYP and young adults are some of the most vulnerable in society, by keeping our children and young people close in their community we are better able to help them achieve better outcomes and keep them safe.

Good governance and operational effectiveness

The development of the in-house IAS service is more operationally effective and efficient way of supporting CYP than reliance on commissioned services.