

Equality Impact and Needs Assessment Form

A) General Information

Name of service, function, policy (or other) being assessed

Supported accommodation for care leavers – Development of a local framework

Directorate or organisation responsible (and service, if it is a policy)

Children and Families

Date of assessment

26th October 2020

Names and/or job titles of people carrying out the assessment

Christa Jackson - Senior Commissioning Officer

Accountable person

Chris Baird, Director for Children and Families

B) Describe in summary the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal, including desired outcomes:

To commission and launch a new local framework for the arranging and purchase of support and accommodation for care leavers and some looked after children who are 16+. The services purchased via the framework will support young people to secure accommodation and develop their skills, resilience, opportunities for training and employment, engagement with relevant services and participation in their communities and to enable them to move towards independent living.

There are currently limited options for accommodating care leavers and 16 and 17 year old looked after children in Herefordshire. The proposed new model will form part of

Herefordshire's growing offer of accommodation and support to young people and ensure flexible responses to people accessing services via multiple routes. It provides an opportunity for improving outcomes for young people and value for money to the council.

The new framework will complement newly commissioned accommodation and support services for care leavers and vulnerable young people and support the vision and principles of the looked after children and complex needs placement sufficiency strategy 2019-2024. The placements will be led by the needs of the young people to achieve positive outcomes. The local framework will support the strategy to address the sufficiency, quality and sustainability of appropriate placement provision as well as value for money in Herefordshire.

C) Context - describe, in summary;

<p>The number of people and/or providers that may be affected by the proposal.</p>	<p>Out of county spot purchase agreements currently total 19, for the provision of accommodation and support, these placements are covered by 15 individual providers.</p> <p>Spot purchase agreements in Herefordshire currently account for 11 placements in county with four separate providers.</p> <p>The local framework will create an opportunity for collaborative working between providers and the council to effectively develop a portfolio of appropriate and safe accommodation in Herefordshire. The framework will ensure that only providers who meet all the criteria set will access and remain on the framework. Those accepted will be in a position to apply through a mini competition to offer their service(s) of accommodation and/or support. Any provider failing to consistently bid for work will be removed from the framework, allowing the opportunity for new providers to join.</p>
<p>What are the values of the contract(s) affected by the proposal? (If appropriate).</p>	<p>The proposed framework would enable providers to apply under one or more of three categories; accommodation and support, support only or accommodation only.</p> <p>An open bidding process, which will require bidders to demonstrate their capacity and availability, their prices and compliance with quality standards and other requirements would result in award of a specific contract to purchase an individual service or placement.</p>
<p>What are the geographical locations</p>	<p>Herefordshire</p>

of those that might be affected by the proposal?	
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D) Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the proposal?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Care leavers and young people in careb. Herefordshire Council's Children and Families Directoratec. Wider community |
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E) What are the anticipated impacts of the proposal?

Positive impacts

There are currently limited options for accommodating care leavers and 16 and 17 year old looked after children in Herefordshire. There is a reliance on out of county specialist placements, spot purchased at significant cost, and of varying quality. The framework will focus on providers able to offer services in Herefordshire to support young people's continued contact with social and family networks and community participation.

An enhanced local offer of appropriate accommodation will allow vulnerable young people to remain close to their local connections and ensure they receive the support and opportunities to successfully transition into adulthood, whilst providing a cost effective service in county.

The local framework will create an opportunity for collaborative working between providers and the council to effectively develop a portfolio of appropriate and safe accommodation in Herefordshire.

The new framework will complement newly commissioned accommodation and support services for care leavers and vulnerable young people and support the vision and principles of the looked after children and complex needs placement sufficiency strategy 2019-2024.

The placements will be led by the needs of the young people to achieve positive outcomes. The local framework will support the strategy to continue growing Herefordshire's offer of accommodation to young people and achieving cost efficiencies for the council.

Negative impacts

If there are insufficient providers on the framework to meet need or they do not bid for services via it, professionals will lose confidence in it and be obliged to purchase outside the framework, so rendering it ineffective. An initial soft launch will take place in April 2021, the framework will operate in simple form and in parallel with existing placement and purchasing arrangements for three months. From July it will then operate more fully as the only route for purchasing accommodation and support for young people. It is envisaged that the framework will not increase the need for additional resources to award off the framework as the framework is an additional resource for Placements Team to utilise as an option after exhausting block contracts and prior to spot purchasing. It is accepted that some reliance on spot-purchasing individual placements will continue for some years.

Frameworks can be unresponsive if they are not able to allow for change, there may be new suppliers or new solutions within the market that were not available when the framework was procured. The framework will run for four years but with options to review after years two, three and four to mitigate this risk and be responsive to new opportunities in the market.

The number and frequency of placements offered through the framework may be too few to provide economic incentive for some providers to join it. There is an option to pre-limit the number of providers on the framework at any time to help ensure sufficient opportunity for them.

F) With regard to the stakeholders identified and the diversity groups set out below;

	<i>Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact?</i>	<i>Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?</i>	<i>Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason?</i>	<i>Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified adverse impact.</i>
Age	Yes	Yes – the framework will meet the specific accommodation and support needs of care leavers and looked after children and is therefore restricted to 16-25 year olds by exception.	Yes. The framework will support the council’s statutory duties to care leavers and vulnerable young people. For young people to thrive they require good quality accommodation and support, the support includes access to employment, training and education. Care leavers disproportionately experience homelessness, loneliness, unemployment and poverty. There has been an identified current and future gap in provision available locally for this cohort. As at 9 th October 2020. There were 39 out of county placements.	The service will support care leavers and young people in care. Providers will need to demonstrate they can offer services in Herefordshire.
Disability	Yes. Mental Health This service will meet the needs of specific user groups, which may include positive inclusion of those	No	Yes. The service will support young people with varying mental health needs to include; substance misuse, mental health needs, antisocial or	Providers will have to satisfy and follow the governments best practice guidance for supported housing and the council’s standards for quality, health and safety,

	with mental health needs.		challenging behaviour, offending history and vulnerability to criminal or sexual exploitation.	<p>safeguarding and other requirements as set out in the service specification. Provision will be made to ensure that quality standards can be adopted in line with new and changing legislation in this currently unregulated area.</p> <p>The framework will allow for selective matching of a provider where it is in the best interest of the young person.</p> <p>Providers will be expected to identify and work with key partner agencies, as set out in the service specification and to work within a multi-disciplinary team to support complex or high risk cases.</p>
Disability	Yes- Physical.	No	Yes - The service will benefit young people with physical disabilities providing support and accommodation tailored to their individual needs.	It is anticipated that over time the framework will assist in increasing the availability and improve the quality of support and accessible accommodation locally.
Pregnancy / maternity	Yes	No	Yes- The service will offer the opportunity to increase local accommodation options for young people who are	The framework will allow for suitable local accommodation and support to be sourced and matched to the specific

			pregnant or who have a dependent child/children and require accommodation with support to work towards independent living.	individual support needs of the young person and any dependants.
Gender	No	No. The services offered through the framework are available to care leavers and some looked after children who are 16+.		
Race	No the services offered through the framework are available to care leavers and some looked after children who are 16+			
Religion/ Belief / Non Belief	No the services offered through the framework are available to care leavers and some looked after children who are 16+			
Sexual Orientation	No the services offered through the framework are available to care leavers and some looked after children who are 16+			
Marital Status	No the services offered through the framework are available to care leavers and some looked after children who are 16+			
Gender Reassignment	No the services offered through the framework are available to care leavers and some looked after children who are 16+			

G) Consultation

Please summarise the consultation(s) undertaken with stakeholders regarding this proposal

There has been extensive engagement around accommodation needs over several years through the corporate parenting panel and one to one and group discussions with care leavers were undertaken in 2019.

Learning from other projects, this includes a recent tender evaluation process for housing related support services for young people. The care leavers actively evaluated and scored two questions and the information from this has extended our knowledge and understanding of the support needs of young people and how to deliver it successfully. There has been extensive consultation with a wide range of providers in the markets for accommodation and support of young people. This included a market engagement exercise in 2019 over the proposal to establish a framework.

The children and young people scrutiny committee was part of the process of consulting in developing proposals for a framework. The views and advice of the committee have been taken into account in finalising the detailed proposals for the framework.

Key stakeholders within the children and families, and economy and place directorates have been consulted with to review the potential impact and ensure all options and the impact have been given due consideration.

H) Additional information and / or research

Include here any references or other sources of data that you have used to inform this assessment.

Are there any gaps in your evidence or conclusions that make it difficult for you to quantify the potential adverse impact(s) of this proposal? If yes, please list them here

If you have identified gaps in your evidence or conclusions, how will you explore the proposal in greater depth? Or, if no further action is required, please explain why.

Information and research used:

- Children's services data to inform joint forecasting
- The looked after children and complex needs placement sufficiency strategy 2019-2024
- The Department of Education statistical data: looked after children
- Public procurement legislation
- Social value
- Herefordshire's County Plan 2020/24
- The Children and Young Peoples Plan 2019-2013
- The Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality duty)