

**Meeting:** Children and Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Board

**Date:** 19 May 2025

**Wards affected:** all

**Report Title:** Update on how we deliver housing to Care Experienced Young People

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** N/A as update report

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 This report has been prepared to provide members of the Children and Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Board with an update on how we deliver Housing to Care Experienced Young People as well as families that have been found intentionally homeless.

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1 As above this report has been requested to provide an update on how we deliver Housing to Care Experienced Young People.

## 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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1. That members of the Children and young peoples overview and Scrutiny Board note the contents of this update report.

# Supporting Information

## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 As of the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025, Torbay support 128 former relevant care experienced young people aged 19-21, of whom 85% are assessed as living in suitable accommodation. The service actively support 134 care experienced young people aged 18-25 with a further cohort supported on duty.

There remain 9 young people from across the service living in temporary accommodation (a reduction from 15 as of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024) there is 1 currently in HMP.

- 1.2 Accommodation services to young people that are at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness is ordinarily provided via commissioned contracts with Young Devon, Live West (Foyer) and the Young Parents Project (Coverdale). There are different levels of support provided in the accommodation units depending on the individual young peoples' needs. Ideally, young people should only be in these units for approximately one year and then move on to mainstream accommodation provided by social or private landlords. However, the current demand on housing in Torbay is hindering move on and resulting in some young people having to be placed in inappropriate accommodation in the meantime whilst waiting for a commissioned unit to become available.
- 1.3 Another significant issue with housing is families that have been found intentionally homeless. This is becoming an increasing more costly matter due to the number of families coupled with the cost of spot purchasing short-term accommodation as well as having very limited options to move these families on to. This financial year to date Children's Social Care have supported 40 children/19 families.
- 1.4 Although a much lesser problem now with agreed processes in place between Children's Social Care and Housing, supporting care experienced young people who have been found intentionally homeless has also had an impact on the Children's Social Care budget historically.

## 2. Options under consideration

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- 2.1 Work is currently in progress, with support from the Council's Procurement team, to initiate a procurement exercise for 16+ Accommodation and as such a number of options have been considered. An overview of this activity is provided below.
- **Market Engagement Event:** A Market engagement event is being planned with the procurement team – this will be held at around the same time as the proposed tender publish date (late June).
  - **SHAP bid:** Previous bidding process has taken place, led by Housing however this has not progressed in a timely manner due to challenges with sourcing premises and obtaining the relevant planning consents. Until there is understanding on the SHAP model, and what proportion of can be allocated to Torbay children's services, it is difficult for colleagues to identify what is needed from this procurement at this time. However, a recent meeting with

Housing appeared to suggest that 15 units will potentially be available for care experienced young people although no timeline has been defined to have these units on line.

- **Needs Analysis:** This has been completed for cared for young people as well as young people 16 plus and care experienced. The data has indicated that the last two years patterns and trends have been consistent, therefore this can be used to support in the projections for the next 3-5 years.
- **Contract Lots:** It was discussed that the required Lots and service specifications cannot be precisely identified until the SHAP bid is understood. However, there is now enough data available to finalise the contract/procurement specification going forward.

### 3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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3.1 The costs for the current financial year (24/25) are detailed as follows:

Total for commissioned accommodation services for young people age 16/17 and care experience 18 plus = **£947, 885.62**

Total for commissioned accommodation services for young parents aged 16 to 25 = **£117, 714.56**

Total spot purchase of accommodation for care experienced young people 18 plus where their Housing Duty has been discharged = **£3900**

Total spot purchase of accommodation for families where their Housing Duty has been discharged = **£272, 648.75**

**Therefore, TOTAL spend for last financial year = £1, 324, 148.93**

3.2 The projected costs for the next financial year (25/26) are as follows:

Total for commissioned accommodation services for young people age 16/17 and care experience

18 plus = **£1, 039, 598.21 (based on a 2% agreed uplift on the 2024/25 contract along with Young Devon delivering a full compliment of hosts).**

Total for commissioned accommodation services for young parents aged 16 to 25 = **£120, 068.85 (based on a 2% agreed uplift on the 2024/25 contract).**

Total spot purchase of accommodation for care experienced young people 18 plus where their Housing Duty has been discharged = **£4000 (based on the 2% uplift).**

Total spot purchase of accommodation for families where their Housing Duty has been discharged = **£305, 000.00 (based on the trend of the increases over this financial year and the previous two financial years).**

**Therefore, projected TOTAL spend for the next financial year = £1, 468, 637.06**

## 4. Legal Implications

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4.1 The legislative framework for the care system includes several key pieces of legislation:

- The **Children Act 1989** sets out local authority duties towards looked after children and care leavers, including sections 22A-F and 23-24 4.
- The **Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000** outlines the rights and entitlements for young people leaving care 4.
- The **Children and Families Act 2014** introduced additional rights around court proceedings and the "Staying Put" arrangement 4.
- The **Children and Social Work Act 2017** enhanced corporate parenting duties and provided additional support for young care leavers 4.

These laws ensure that care experienced young people have access to suitable accommodation and support as they transition to adulthood

## 5. Engagement and Consultation

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5.1 N/A at this stage.

## 6. Procurement Implications

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6.1 As previously outlined, Children's Services are collaborating with the Council's procurement team to explore options for post-16 accommodation. Should any additional options be considered, the procurement team will be fully engaged in the process.

## 7. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

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7.1 N/A

## 8. Associated Risks

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8.1 The risks of the above are as follows:

- **Financial Impact:** Supporting care experienced young people who have been found intentionally homeless has had an impact on the Children's Social Care budget, and as detailed above this is projected to continue into the 25/26 FY.
- **Limited Options:** There are limited options to move families who have been found intentionally homeless, resulting in increased costs for spot purchasing short-term accommodation. This is having a significant financial impact on the Children's Service s17 budget.

