

Business Planning: Business Case proposal

Project Title: Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young
People: Support Costs

Committee: Children and Young People

2021/22 Savings: -£300,000

Brief Description of proposal: A grant now covers more of the costs of meeting the accommodation and support needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking young people and care leavers. Therefore, it is possible to make a saving in the contribution to these costs that the Council has historically made from core budgets of £300,000 per annum without negatively affecting the level of support we currently provide.

Date of version: 23 Nov 2020 BP Reference: A/R.6.210

Business Leads / Sponsors: Lou Williams, Service Director Children's and Safeguarding

1. Please describe what the proposed outcomes are

During 2020/21, the Government increased the weekly amount it provides to local authorities to support unaccompanied asylum seeking young people and, importantly, the costs of supporting young people after they have left care. These changes are summarised below:

The Under 18 Grant was originally a tiered allowance based on arrival in UK and age:

- Before 1st July 2016 - Under 16 = £95 per day, 16-17 = £71 per day
- After 1st July 2016 - Under 16 = £114 per day, 16-17 = £91 per day

This has now been consolidated and the rate for all young people under 18 as of the 1 April 2019 is £114 per day.

The Over 18 Grant was also a tiered allowance and there was previously no allowance payable for the first 25 young adults for which a claim was being made:

- Before 1st July 2016 - Over 18 (25+) = £150 per week (£21.37 per day)
- After 1st July 2016 - Over 18 = £200 per week (£28.49 per day)

This has now been consolidated and the new rate for all young people from 1 April 2020 is £34.29 per day.

Importantly, this allowance is paid to all eligible young adults for which a claim is made.

Also during the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years, the service has worked closely with colleagues in Commissioning to ensure that placement costs are kept at a minimum, without compromising quality, and that young people move from their 'care' placement promptly at the age of 18 to appropriately supported housing provision.

This means that the Grant now covers more of the costs of meeting the accommodation and support needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking young people and care leavers. Therefore, it is possible to make a saving in the contribution to these costs that the Council has historically made from core budgets of £300,000 per annum whilst still providing the same level of support we currently provide.

There is no change in the outcomes for this group of young people. The savings are possible without adverse effect because the level of government funding has increased and now meets a higher proportion of costs.

2. What are the next steps/ actions the Council should take to pursue it? Please include timescales.

As there are no changes to service delivery, no other actions are required.

3. Could this have any effects on people with Protected Characteristics?

No negative impacts have been identified - there is no change to the level of service being provided.

In general, nationally we are aware of the multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage faced by unaccompanied minors and people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). The challenges faced by people with NRPF status exacerbated by COVID-19 have led to much lobbying of central government. There has been data shared about the destitution and poverty experienced by people with NRPF status. Therefore, we cannot assume that to continue to fund services in the same way will produce positive outcomes and would recommend that a policy review could be completed in the future to ensure that the council's policies affecting this cohort are improved where possible.

4. What financial and non-financial benefits are there and how will you measure the performance of these? Are there any dis-benefits? These MUST include how this will benefit the wider internal and external system.

Financial Benefits

- Immediate saving of £300,000 per annum from 2021/22.

Non-Financial Benefits

- Service delivery will remain the same.

5. Are there any identified risks which may impact on the potential delivery of this? What is the risk if we do not act?

No risks identified – the Government funding has already been agreed.

6. Scope - What is within scope? What is outside of scope?

The Over 18 and Under 18 Grants from Government are within scope.

Business Planning: Business Case proposal

Project Title: Special Guardianship Order and Adoption Allowances

Committee: Children and Young People

2021/22 Savings: -£500,000

Brief Description of proposal: The continuing implementation of Family Safeguarding in the Children's and Safeguarding service means that we expect to see a further small reduction in the number of care proceedings and overall number of children in care over the next financial year. This reduction in the number of children coming into care means that there are fewer children progressing to adoption or to permanent arrangements with relatives under Special Guardianship Orders, and in turn means fewer carers who require and/or are entitled to receiving financial support allowances.

Date of version: 23 Nov 2020

BP Reference: A/R.6.211

Business Leads / Sponsors:

Lou Williams, Service Director Children's and Safeguarding

1. Please describe what the proposed outcomes are

Children do best when enabled to remain safely with their families. Supporting more parents to make the changes they need to make in order to enable them to provide good, caring and stable homes for their children is therefore in the best long term interests of those children.

For children who need to come into care, we will continue to seek permanent family arrangements wherever possible, including through adoptive and special guardianship orders, and continue to provide the appropriate level of financial support to those arrangements. This forms part of Cambridgeshire's organisational objective to prioritise the "best start for Cambridgeshire's children".

As Members will be aware, numbers of children in care have been reducing since the summer of 2019.

This has been accompanied by a reduction in the number of children involved in active care proceedings, with fewer than half the number of care proceedings taking place now as compared to the peak in activity.

This decline in proceedings brings the authority much more closely in line with the average of our statistical neighbours, when measured by the rate of care applications per 10,000. In 2017 and 2018, there were 12 care applications per 10,000 population of children and young people. This has reduced to 8 per 10,000, very much in line with the statistical neighbour average of 8.5 per 10,000 in the year ending March 2020.

The continuing implementation of Family Safeguarding in the Children and Safeguarding service means that we expect to see a further small reduction in the number of care proceedings and overall number of children in care over the next financial year. This is because the model is associated with enabling more families to address the issues that they are facing on a sustainable basis, reducing the numbers of children who need to come into care as a consequence. As shown, we have seen a significant reduction in care proceedings and expect this to continue as a result of Family Safeguarding. COVID-19 is less likely to impact on this area.

This reduction in the number of children coming into care means that there are fewer children progressing to adoption or to permanent arrangements with relatives under Special Guardianship Orders. This in turn means that there are fewer carers who require and/or are entitled to receiving financial support in the form of adoption and Special Guardianship Order allowances.

2. What evidence has been used to support this work, how does this link to any existing strategies/policies?

Demand modelling of likely numbers of allowances required in the 2021/22 financial year and beyond.

3. Has an options and feasibility study been undertaken? Please explain what options have been considered.

This is a direct saving from a statutory function within the Council and will not require further feasibility work.

4. What are the next steps / actions the Council should take to pursue it?

This is a saving from modelled reductions and associated improvements with the Family Safeguarding model that has already been implemented. Continuation of this model will deliver the savings.

5. Could this have any effects on people with Protected Characteristics?

No - this saving is from a reduction in those eligible for allowances but as a result of numbers of children in care reducing, not because eligibility criteria has changed. The service do record demographic data for all children and families and ensure that we understand or investigate areas of over and under-representation.

Less children in care usually means families are getting their needs met, preventing the need of more costly interventions further upstream. This will positively impact those with and without protected characteristics.

6. What financial and non-financial benefits are there and how will you measure the performance of these? Are there any dis-benefits? These MUST include how this will benefit the wider internal and external system.

Financial Benefits

- Immediate saving of £500,000 per annum from 2021/22.

Non-Financial Benefits

- Enabling more children to remain safely with their families is associated with better long term outcomes.

7. Are there any identified risks which may impact on the potential delivery of this? What is the risk if we do not act?

Risk	Mitigation	RAG (should the risk occur)	Overall Responsibility
Changes in court behaviour in relation to Special Guardianship Orders	Continued advocacy for the child and liaison with the courts	Amber	Lou Williams

8. Scope - What is within scope? What is outside of scope?

These are savings associated with allowances for Special Guardianship Orders and Adoption allowances only.

Business Planning: Business Case proposal

Project Title: Clinical Services; Children and Young People

Committee: Children and Young People

2021/22 Savings: -£250,000

Brief Description of proposal: A new shared service will launch in the early part of 2021, and will consist of an increased offer to children in care and foster carers, compared with that which was provided by the previously commissioned service.

This increased investment notwithstanding, it is also possible to deliver a saving of £250,000 against the previous level of expenditure in this area.

Date of version: 23 Nov 2020

BP Reference: A/R.6.212

Business Leads / Sponsors:

Lou Williams, Service Director Children's and Safeguarding

1. Please describe what the proposed outcomes are

Children in care do best when they experience consistent relationships with the key people in their lives – including their carers and their social workers – and most will thrive as a result of that consistent support.

Most children in care achieve the best outcomes when they are able to live in stable, loving families. Foster carers therefore play a vital role in supporting children and young people as they cope not only with the usual challenges of growing up, but with the additional challenges resulting from being in care and from their childhood experiences before they came into the care system. It is essential that foster carers have access to training and consultation from suitably qualified clinicians in order to provide them with the tools and strategies to help guide the children and young people for whom they are providing care.

Many children and young people in care have suffered adverse childhood experiences alongside having to manage the impact for them of not being able to live within their birth families. This means that many will require additional specialist support at times during their lives. Sometimes, this will be best provided through

Child and Adolescent Mental Health and similar services. There will also be occasions when it will be important for children and young people, as well as those who care for them, to have direct access to specialist clinical support, as provided by our clinical specialist staff.

Cambridgeshire has historically invested a considerable amount of funding into the clinician service as part of their organisational objective to prioritise the “best start for Cambridgeshire's children”. Prior to the implementation of the Family Safeguarding model, clinical staff were attached to each of the 32 social work units.

Family Safeguarding operates very differently, with adult facing practitioners seconded to the smaller number of social work teams which replaced the former units. These practitioners support adults to address issues such as mental ill health, substance and alcohol misuse and domestic abuse. Social work teams now also have dedicated non-case-holding team managers.

Adult practitioners support change among parents; team managers now provide case and group supervision in the teams. Taking these issues together means that there is no longer a role for clinical staff in the Family Safeguarding service.

Where clinical staff remain essential is within the corporate parenting service. We are currently developing proposals for a shared clinical service that will provide support to foster carers and individual children and young people in care across both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This service will be provided in-house, replacing the former position when each council commissioned these services from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust.

This new shared service is currently being consulted on and will launch in the early part of 2021. It will consist of an increased offer to children in care and foster carers, compared with that which was provided by the previously commissioned service. This is because we have been able to invest some of the resource that would previously have provided clinical support to the social work units into support for children in care.

This increased investment notwithstanding, it is also possible to deliver a saving of £250,000 against the previous level of expenditure in this area.

Briefly, key areas of priority activities proposed for the new clinical service in Corporate Parenting will include providing:

- A joint service that works with children and young people in care, foster carers and children and young people on the edge of care in both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough authorities;
- A model of practice where clinicians work within an integrative clinical model, where systemic practice is a part, rather than the predominant element of the work;
- A service that works with all children and young people in care, regardless of the stage of their care experience;

- A service that continues to work closely with foster carers, providing training and support, including providing direct advice and support to our foster carers in developing strategies that enable children in their care to settle, reducing the risk of placement breakdown.

The development of Family Safeguarding provides a really exciting and positive opportunity to provide a much more resilient service to support good outcomes for children in care and in respect to placement stability in particular.

We have increased capacity compared with that which was previously available to support the clinical needs of children in care. We are also seeing a continuing reduction in numbers of children in care, meaning that we are confident that the service will be able to meet demand and provide a responsive service.

There are no health and safety concerns associated with this initiative. Providing a bespoke mental and emotional health service to young people in care will have a positive impact for those young people, some of whom will have protected characteristics.

2. What evidence has been used to support this work, how does this link to any existing strategies/policies?

We are developing the existing service, building on its strengths, while increasing capacity and growing provision so that it includes a broader range of clinical specialisms, able to meet a broader range of needs among our children and young people in care.

The approach supports our strategy to ensure that as many of our children and young people in care are living with local foster families as possible. Reducing the number of placement moves enables children and young people in care to achieve the best outcomes, as they experience the least disruption. The Council also benefits financially because local, in-house foster placements are a lower cost compared to other placements for children in care.

Our foster carers are clear that they would want to see an improved training and support offer; these clinical staff will deliver both individual support to carers as well as specialist training on areas such as meeting the needs of children who have disorganised attachment styles.

Our social work staff are also clear that being able to access this specialist support at the right time is essential in preventing unplanned placement endings.

3. Has an options and feasibility study been undertaken? Please explain what options have been considered.

There has been a great deal of careful thought and consideration given to operating this service.

One key area for consideration was the question of whether to continue to commission the service, or whether we should deliver the service in-house.

While commissioning the service has some benefits, these were outweighed by the benefits of providing the service directly.

The principle benefits of direct provision included the flexibility this provides us in the management of the service; making changes to the approach to the work in response to need can be managed without needing to consider whether there is an impact on the service specification or contract, for example. Directly providing the service also means that there is a saving on employment costs, since there is no management fee to pay.

The new service is beginning from a position where we will need to recruit a number of practitioners. While this will affect capacity initially, it does provide the opportunity to recruit a service with a wide ranging skills mix. This is in the long term best interests of our children and young people in care.

4. What are the next steps/ actions the Council should take to pursue it?

Eligible staff from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust are in the process of transfer to Cambridgeshire County Council under TUPE.

Once this is complete, we will consult on the proposals for the new service with staff and others, particularly in relation to skills mix.

High Level Timetable

Task	Start Date	End Date	Overall Responsibility
TUPE transfer	September 2020	November 2020	Lou Williams
Consultation	November 2020	December 2020	Lou Williams
Recruitment	January 2021	March 2021	Lou Williams

5. Could this have any effects on people with Protected Characteristics?

Providing a bespoke mental and emotional health service to young people in care will have a positive impact for those young people, some of whom will have protected characteristics.

It is noted that the TUPE process and moving the service in house will affect staff with protected characteristics, often who are disproportionately affected by unemployment. CCC HR policies and procedures will have been followed within this process, and are recommended for ongoing review to ensure they adhere to best practice standards.

6. What financial and non-financial benefits are there and how will you measure the performance of these? Are there any dis-benefits? These MUST include how this will benefit the wider internal and external system.

Financial Benefits

- Immediate saving of £250,000 per annum from 2021/22
- Reductions in unplanned placement moves will reduce placement costs
- Enhanced use of in-house fostering will reduce spend on Independent Fostering Agency placements.

Non-Financial Benefits

- Children who remain in the same fostering household throughout their care journey tend to achieve the best outcomes.
- Where placement changes are required, clinical input into the matching process makes it more likely that the new placement is one that is able to provide the stability that all children need.

7. Are there any identified risks which may impact on the potential delivery of this? What is the risk if we do not act?

Risk	Mitigation	RAG (should the risk occur)	Overall Responsibility
Recruitment Challenges	Focused recruitment campaign	Amber	Lou Williams

8. Scope - What is within scope? What is outside of scope?

This is a very tightly defined project concerned with the development of clinical services for children in care only.

Provision will, however, be required to fund the family Group Conferencing Service from 2022/23. This is because family group conferencing can be funded through the grant from the Department for Education to deliver Family Safeguarding but this funding will be exhausted by that date.

Business Planning Business Case proposal

Project Title: Transport Savings – Children in Care

Committee:	Children and Young People
2021-22 Savings:	-£300,000
Brief Description of proposal:	This proposal is a recognition of savings already achieved through the improvement of processes around the procurement of Home to School Transport for Children in Care.
Date of version: 23 Nov 2020	BP Reference: A/R.6.268
Business Leads / Sponsors:	Hazel Belchamber, Head of Service 0-19 Place Planning and Organisation

1. Please describe what the proposed outcomes are

Work has been undertaken to review and improve the processes around the procurement and route planning of transport for Children in Care. This has yielded savings in the current year which will continue into 2021/22 and this Business Planning proposal is a recognition of this fact.

This work has been formed by the review and modelling of existing reduction in spend.

Our priority outcomes include providing stable placements for children in care and ensuring their needs are met. This proposal supports this outcome whilst achieving best value for money.

The review has already been completed and the improved processes implemented. This business case is to record the financial benefits that will be achieved through sustaining these improvements into 2021/22.

2. Could this have any effects on people with Protected Characteristics?

The improvements have been made to the procurement process rather than the service delivery. Service users will continue to receive the same level of service.

Children in Care disproportionately live in poverty. Reducing carbon emissions will contribute to improved health and greener communities for children with and without protected characteristics.

It is recommended that future re-routing is monitored and considered with this cohort in mind to ensure that any disproportionate negative changes are mitigated.

3. What financial and non-financial benefits are there and how will you measure the performance of these? Are there any dis-benefits? These MUST include how this will benefit the wider internal and external system.

Financial Benefits

- Immediate saving of £300,000 per annum from 2021/22

Non-Financial Benefits

- Improved route planning will reduce the number of vehicles on the road, resulting in reduced carbon emissions which supports our corporate priority of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and reducing our carbon footprint.

4. Are there any identified risks which may impact on the potential delivery of this? What is the risk if we do not act?

No risks have been identified in relation to delivery.

5. Scope: What is within scope? What is outside of scope?

Included in the scope was improvement of processes around the procurement of Home to School Transport for Children in Care.