



Corporate Parenting Board

Date: Wednesday, 9 September 2020
Time: 3.00 pm
Venue: A link to the meeting can be found on the front page of the agenda

Membership: (Quorum 3)

Richard Biggs, Ryan Holloway, Stella Jones, Andrew Kerby, Cathy Lugg, Andrew Parry, Kate Wheller and Pauline Batstone

Membership is subject to confirmation by Full Council on 3 September 2020

Chief Executive: Matt Prosser, South Walks House, South Walks Road, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ (Sat Nav DT1 1EE)

For more information about this agenda please contact Liz Eaton, Democratic Services Officer Tel: 01305 225113 - liz.eaton@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk



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<https://youtu.be/qkhWrGZkkpl>

Public Participation

To receive questions or statements on the business of the committee from town and parish councils and members of the public.

Public speaking has been suspended for virtual committee meetings during the Covid-19 crisis and public participation will be dealt with through written submissions only.

Members of the public who live, work or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area, may submit up to two questions or a statement of up to a maximum of 450 words. All submissions must be sent electronically to e.a.eaton@dorsetcc.gov.uk by the

deadline set out below. When submitting a question please indicate who the question is for and include your name, address and contact details. Questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda.

Questions will be read out by an officer of the council and a response given by the appropriate Portfolio Holder or officer at the meeting. All questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting. **The deadline for submission of the full text of a question or statement is 8.30am on Friday, 4 September 2020.**

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A G E N D A

Page No.

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

To elect a Chairman for the year 2020/2021.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

To appoint a Vice-Chairman for the year 2020/2021.

3 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

4 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To receive any Declarations of Interest.

5 TERMS OF REFERENCE

To note the Terms of Reference:

The Corporate Parenting Board (the Board) will assist Dorset County Council and its partners to understand and fully comply with legal duties and responsibilities across all services, as they discharge those duties to looked after children and care leavers. This will continue as a key responsibility of Dorset Council from 1st April 2019.

The Corporate Parenting Board will promote member and workforce engagement, commitment and understanding of the Corporate Parenting principles introduced by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Ensuring the local authority is 'an active, strong and committed corporate parent – in line with the corporate parenting principles'.

The Corporate Parenting Board will hold to account the council and its partners for their role in the delivery of services and statutory responsibilities to looked after children and care leavers as recommended in statutory Corporate Parenting guidance.

The Board will have access to good qualitative and quantitative management information from the council and its partners, in order to monitor performance effectively against outcomes and track delivery of promises and commitments as stated to the Children in Care Council.

The Board will ensure the voice of children and young people influence decision making and service development and delivery.

Board Management

The Corporate Parenting Board will meet a minimum of seven times a year. Corporate Parenting Board meetings will be attended by members of the Children in Care Council and their representatives, with support from the Children's Participation Service.

The Board will have regular membership from:

- (i) Seven elected members of the Council on a politically proportionate basis.
- (ii) Children in Care Council (CiCC) representatives.
- (iii) Although not a full member of the board. The Lead Member for Children's Service is invited to attend all meetings.

The Board will have regular representation from the Children's Services Directorate in the form of:

- (i) The Executive Director, People (children's) (or the officer for the time-being with such responsibilities).
- (ii) The Head of Care and Protection (or the officer for the time-being with such responsibilities).
- (iii) The Lead Officer for Looked After Children.
- (iv) The Corporate Parenting Officer.

The Board will request regular representation from:

- (i) Relevant Partners
- (ii) The Virtual School Head
- (iii) Children's Rights, Advocacy and Participation Services
- (iv) Children's Health and Mental Health Services
- (v) The Police and Youth Offending Service
- (i) Foster Carers representative (or other parent forum)

Also in non-regular attendance – sufficiently senior representatives from Children's Services Directorate and other directorates and agencies to attend for specific issues in order to offer advice and assistance as requested by the Board.

6 MINUTES

7 - 18

To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2020.

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive any questions or statements on the business of the Board from town and Parish Councils and members of the public.

The deadline for submission of the full text of a question or statement is 8.30 am on Friday, 4 September 2020.

Details of the Council's procedure rules can be found at: [Public](#)

[Participation at Committees.](#)

IMPACT OF COVID-19:

- 8 CARE LEAVERS UPDATE - 3:15 PM 19 - 82**

To receive a report by the Executive Director of People – Children.

- 9 CORPORATE PARENTING DATA SET - 3:30 PM 83 - 94**

To receive a report by the Executive Director of People – Children.

STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION:

- 10 SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY 3:45 PM 95 - 112**

To receive a report from the Executive Director of People – Children.

- 11 CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY - 4:00 PM 113 - 132**

To receive a report by the Executive Director of People – Children.

- 12 EXEMPT BUSINESS**

To consider passing the following resolution:

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for items 13, 14 and 15 in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of Paragraphs 1 and 2 of schedule 12A to the local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

- 13 ANNUAL REPORT FROM VIRTUAL SCHOOL - 4:15 PM 133 - 172**

To receive the annual report from the Virtual School Head.

- 14 UNREGISTERED/UNREGULATED PLACEMENT PROVISION - 4:30 PM 173 - 178**

To receive the attached report from the Executive Director of People – Children.

- 15 CLICC UPDATE AND CHALLENGE CARDS - 4:40 PM 179 - 220**

To receive an oral update from Participation People and make comment on the CLiCC Challenge and Feedback Cards.



DORSET COUNCIL - CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2020

Present: Cllrs Toni Coombs (Chairman), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chairman), Ryan Holloway, Stella Jones, Andrew Kerby, Cathy Lugg and Andrew Parry

Apologies: Penny Earney (Designated Nurse for looked After Children), Jan Hill (Foster Carer), Elaine Okopski (Dorset Parent Carer Council)

Also present: Cllr Pauline Batstone, Chairman of the Council

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Paula Bates (Residential Services Manager), Paul Beecroft (Communications Team), Antonia Dixey (CEO Participation People), Jane Edwards (Operational Manager (C&S 13-25)), Lynn Giles (Children's Services Manager, Dorset Advocacy and Independent Visitors Service), Ann Haigh (Participation Worker, Participation People), Mark Blackman (Corporate Director - Education and Learning), Madeleine Hall (Corporate Parenting Officer), Tanya Hamilton-Fletcher (Service Manager Care & Support), Theresa Leavy (Interim Executive Director of People - Children), Stuart Riddle (Senior Manager), Ian Smith (Head of LAC), Kevin Stenlake (IRO Manager for Looked After Children), Liz Plastow (Head of Safeguarding), Kaye Wright (Personal Advisor (C&S 13-25)) and Liz Eaton (Democratic Services Officer)

68. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2012 were confirmed and signed.

69. Declaration of Interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made at the meeting.

70. Public Participation

There were no public questions or statements received at the meeting.

71. Urgent Items

The Chairman referred to an email from Penny Earney, Designated Nurse for Looked After Children which the Clerk had emailed to all members of the Board.

72. **Corporate Parenting Board Data Set - Verbal Update**

The Interim Executive Director of People – Children introduced the item and explained the blue lines, in the data set that had been circulated to the Board, showed the current rate for January 2020. The greyed area on the first page of graphs on the data set showed where Dorset's good and outstanding statistical neighbours who were Wiltshire, East Sussex and Suffolk were.

More children were becoming looked after than leaving with the largest cohort of children coming into care being aged 0-4 years. During the coming months the focus was to ensure the Authority was faster and better at rehabilitating young people into homes. Historically the age range was 12-15 years, this change had taken place over the last 4 or 5 months due to social workers being able to check on children earlier. During the coming months the focus was to ensure the Authority was faster and better at rehabilitating young people into homes.

Members asked if children were coming into care from birth and if the Board could be assured other age ranges were not being ignored. The Interim Executive Director of People – Children confirmed that officers were working with people in baby units although there was still a very active age range and officers would continue to make the right decision for young people.

Regarding where children were living it was noted that the Authority would want children to be living much nearer to home too many were placed 20 miles or more outside of the authority boundary. The Authority was still taking too long in achieving permanency for young people.

Attention was drawn to the number of children who had moved schools as a result of becoming a looked after child and that Fixed Term Exclusions were reducing in number. Dorset reported on missing and absent episodes whereas some authorities reported solely on missing and not absent episodes – further exploration was required on this.

The Chairman felt it was important that children were placed where they could maintain local connections, if those connections were broken and support was taken away from the child further risks and problems would occur, she asked what the strategy was to ensure children were brought closer to their families.

The Interim Executive Director of People – Children confirmed this was one of the biggest concerns, children were having to move schools, get medical appointments and it took staff longer in travelling time to visit the children. We would like to get to the point where children were placed within the Dorset boundary. Unfortunately, there was not enough provision to have all children placed in Dorset.

One member commented that 20 miles from the Dorset boundary was a long way for a child to be placed, but presumably there were some children the Authority would like to get away from the border. The Interim Executive Director of People – Children felt the biggest solution was to support children to live at home with their family by supporting families to care for their children

and where a child became a looked after child to support them within a Dorset foster carer setting. Officers had been working on Life-long links, staff had been trained on mapping important links for children even if they were placed outside of Dorset.

One member wanted to know the reasons for children leaving home as it was understood return to home interviews were carried out. The Interim Executive Director of People – Children confirmed that a return to home interview was always offered although they were not always delivered. Quite often it would relate to a feeling of constraint regarding the arrangements around them. If the interviews were about the care they were receiving, officers would look into this.

One member commented that although we know the figures for children in care why are they concentrated in certain areas. The Interim Executive Director of People – Children confirmed they were looking at where the Authority's adopters were living, at present there were none from the Weymouth and Chesil area and officers proposed to activate those communities.

The Children's Services Manager for Dorset Advocacy and Independent Visitors Service (DAIVS) confirmed they were seeing several children who were placed 20 miles or more from the Dorset boundary, the majority were happy where they had been placed as they had been there for quite a long time. The Interim Executive Director of People – Children mentioned they would not be looking at returning those children to Dorset, the Police would look at where they were and if it was right for them to stay where they were then they would. Permanency Plans had been checked to ensure they were secure.

One member asked what the aspirational target would be between now and where it was hoped Dorset would be in about one to three years' time. The Interim Executive Director of People – Children referred to the Data Set and would take the grey banding as the target as officers could assess ('time' removed) when they thought they would be at that grey target. The grey banding denoting best practice nationally. Some of the Education and Health looked after children were not where the Authority would want them to be. The Virtual School were working to support looked after children in local schools. There had been robust conversations with health colleagues to ensure health checks were completed in a timely manner. This was all costly and significant amounts were being spent at the present time.

The Chairman mentioned that as we move forward with the data, the direction of travel would see a difference between the red and blue lines and the direction of travel in future reports would be useful. The Interim Executive Director of People – Children felt it would be useful to bring audit reports to future meetings of the Board.

Noted

73. **Placement Sufficiency**

The Corporate Parenting Board considered a report by the Executive Director of People – Children on Placement Sufficiency.

Officers informed the Board that in 2019 a strategy for placement sufficiency was agreed which enabled a change to the Authority's commissioning approach by becoming more active and bringing more providers into Dorset to ensure that provision was closer to home.

Officers wanted to unlock the fostering provision in Dorset as there were a lot of children who were not in the care of Dorset Council. There was less appetite for block contract arrangements with fostering providers than with residential providers. Officers were exploring the options with these providers to look at first refusal on these places, and possibly the development of specialist schemes.

The Authority was involved in the Better Lives programme whereby it might be better to build a children's home, or housing for foster carers to enable them to have larger accommodation.

One member asked about the additional support for foster carers to enable them to be able to cope with difficult children. Officers confirmed that meetings had been held with foster carers who had come up with some sensible and practical suggestions relating to, for example, delegated authority which has not been in place routinely, short breaks, and the early sharing of information. Officers have been looking at how family support workers can work with foster carers and support them in real time. Martin Hill, Foster Carer thought respite within the foster carers' family was a good idea as his children were grown up and helped with foster children at no extra cost to the Authority. The Chairman thought that was very important because if they were living with their own family they would probably stay with a relative from time to time.

The Chief Executive of Participation People commented that young people have told them that when respite was talked about, they were really talking about troublesome children. Challenging placements can be even more challenging for children when they are shipped off to respite and the family goes on holiday this was something discussed at Children and Leavers in Care Council (CLiCC) regularly. CLiCC have offered training for anyone who would like it.

The Interim Executive Director of People – Children mentioned that sometimes when a child was placed with a family, they may have predetermined arrangements. The Authority wanted foster families to become families, the Authority was the wealthiest parent in the county if children could not have a holiday with their foster parent, they could still have a holiday or break, she welcomed the Chief Executive of Participation People's offer of training.

One member thought there should be a policy on how Dorset children were treated to include a package of support they should be entitled to. If carers were having a holiday the children should have one too. He and officers would discuss this with the Children in Care Council to see if a paper could be drafted relating to holidays.

One member suggested free parking for foster carers during holiday periods to enable them to use Dorset Council facilities for example West Moors Country Park. The Corporate Parenting Officer would investigate the possibility of this suggestion. He also mentioned that a large number of Dorset Council employees were probably not aware that they were Corporate Parents which should be included as part of the interview process. The Chief Executive of Participation People mentioned when CLiCC were away on their residential they would be making a video to share with new employees on what it was like growing up in care in Dorset to include a call to action "Have you considered ...".

The Chairman felt if this was being taken to staff there would need to be an incentive in supporting staff in the package of benefits.

The Interim Executive Director of People – Children asked for a report to be brought back to a future meeting about the fostering service. Some local authorities gave staff additional leave to acknowledge the extra meetings they would have to attend. Staff should be encouraged to become foster carers.

One member suggested looking at providing bigger housing for foster parents. The Chairman thought that had been taken on board.

Resolved

1. That the Lead Member for Children, Education and Early Help and the Head of LAC discuss with CLiCC how foster children were treated to include a package of support they should be entitled to as well as holiday arrangements and report back to the Corporate Parenting Board on their discussions with CLiCC.
2. That the Corporate Parenting Officer investigate whether free car parking at Dorset Council facilities could be provided to foster carers during the holiday periods.

74. Ofsted Annual Report - Briefing Report for Information Only

The Corporate Parenting Board considered a report by the Executive Director of People – Children on the Ofsted Annual Report.

Officers informed the Board the general theme was that Ofsted were seeing improvements up and down the country and were hopeful for the future with more partnerships working and increased input nationally and financially.

The Interim Executive Director of People – Children mentioned this was reflective of Dorset's experience there was still a significant challenge for all local authorities. There was concern relating to unregulated provision, an area Dorset was experiencing difficulties with.

One member asked how Dorset would ensure they worked with partners and who were the partners. Officers confirmed they would ensure they engaged with partners much harder and work harder across the board. It was also for members to work together and understand what the partnership could offer by working together. The partners were Health, Police, Safeguarding Board, Care Leavers etc. Health colleagues attended Board meetings, but Police did not at present and it might be a good idea to invite a wider group of people to attend.

It was asked what vehicle would be used to ensure the Police, Youth Offending, Health etc attended. Officers confirmed a key document would be the Corporate Parenting Board Strategy Document which would give direction to engage with our partners.

Resolved

That the Corporate Parenting Board Strategy Document should include engagement and attendance by partner organisations.

75. Exempt Item

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following item(s) in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

76. Placements Provision

The Corporate Parenting Board considered a report by the Executive Director of People – Children on Placements Provision.

Officers informed the Board they were having difficulties in finding placements for a small cohort of children who it was difficult to find placements and residential accommodation for. The agencies were controlling, and financial costs had doubled. Officers met every day to ensure placements were available for these children, there were a few children for whom officers could not find secure placements. Some children who would have been fostered, officers were having difficulty in finding placements for.

The Interim Executive Director of People – Children considered it was important the Board were aware of the present situation as it was a particular challenge and necessary to continue to have this discussed at Board meetings.

One member was concerned and felt the private sector had the Authority over a barrel. He understood there was a project team looking at residential homes in Dorset and asked for an update from them.

The Interim Executive Director of People – Children confirmed officers were working at pace to build the right provision and had to do this pragmatically, a

Cabinet report was being drafted and she hoped to bring the report to the next meeting of the Board.

One member voiced their concern that in the meantime these youngsters had nowhere to go and less chance of being fostered and asked if officers were looking outside of the county for these children. The Interim Executive Director of People – Children confirmed they were actually looking outside of the country. This was not peculiar to Dorset as those children that were coming into care now were younger and those that were leaving the system were older than previously. It was, of course, important to ensure placements were registered and correct.

One member asked for confirmation that currently there were no new unregistered placements. Officers confirmed that was the case.

The Chairman asked for this to be a standing agenda item for the next 6 months.

Resolved

That the Corporate Parenting Board have Placement Provision as a standing agenda item for the next 6 months.

77. Unregistered Placement Position and Case Studies

The Corporate Parenting Board considered a report by the Interim Executive Director of People – Children on Unregistered Placements.

Officers confirmed the position regarding the number of children in unregistered placements. The Authority was in the process of getting one home registered. The Authority was taking over the lease of the other home, a house, which was in another county, this was progressing well. It was hoped to use a provider to assist but unfortunately that arrangement had not worked out. The Authority would now register the property in its name and employ the staff.

The Chairman referred to paragraph 12.5 of the report and asked what the situation was regarding the transfer of the lease, noting this was with Property Services to sign off, she asked for assurance there were no delays in completion of the transfer of leasehold. Officers confirmed they had negotiated a price, and everything was progressing well, and this would be a residential home for those children already in the house at the present time.

Case studies: Officers mentioned one child had been in the accommodation since August and had problems with the agency staff but despite that had settled well and was attending school and would be staying in Dorset. They were visited weekly by either their Social Worker or the Residential Services Manager and were keen to get involved in Participation, which was all very positive as they had gone through a very unsettling time.

The other child had been in unregistered accommodation nearly 2 years as previous attempts to find somewhere had failed. They now attend education

5 days a week. The young person had settled where they were and as the Authority did not want to unsettle them would be employing agency staff as Dorset staff.

One officer mentioned it was very unusual for the local authority to create a children's home in another authority but on this occasion, it was the right decision.

The Interim Executive Director of People – Children explained the situation regarding the accommodation and why they were unregistered. She had spoken with Ofsted who were aware of the current situation. The young people were living on their own and had become more settled living that way. It was hoped the accommodation would be available as care leaver move-on accommodation.

One of the CLiCC representatives asked if supported housing was the same as the "Lily Project" but care housing. The Interim Executive Director of People confirmed it would be similar as sometimes it could be quite daunting for a young care leaver to go out on their own and having a training flat where they could try independent accommodation might give them the confidence they would need. This had yet to be decided upon.

Noted

78. Response to Outstanding Challenge Cards

Challenge No 1 – Transport: Officers informed the Board there had been a transport review and officers had been working with SEND colleagues and SEND cohort as that was first part of the transport improvement review. The second part of the challenge was to review the general transport across the county. The Corporate Parenting Officer was to meet with the Chief Executive of Participation People and the transport review project team. She would be revisiting this with a colleague in March, and nothing would be arranged until March/April of this year. The Corporate Parenting Officer would bring an update to the care leavers session. It was noted this was complicated and important that it was kept on the tracker.

Noted

Challenge No 3 - Foster Care Training: There had been a total of 142 trained and the Chief Executive of Participation People confirmed Dorset was being held to account and suggested the two CLiCC representatives attending the meeting have a conversation about Foster Carer Training and submit a report to the next formal meeting of the Board. This would then tie into the Satisfaction Survey.

A meeting had been arranged to take place on 8 April 2020 between officers and young people to discuss how young people can influence the training.

Resolved

That the two CLiCC representatives submit a report on Foster Carer Training to the next formal meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board on the 23 April 2020.

Challenge No 4 - Access to Records: The Challenge was how could young people under the age of 18 have access to their records. Officers confirmed that young people under the age of 18 could request access to their records. Social Care colleagues would ensure the young person was ready and providing it was safe to do so after a conversation with the family the usual application would have to go to the Data Protection Team to process.

The Chairman asked what role the IRO's would have. It was confirmed the IRO's would support and assist young people. Guidance for social workers would be co-produced with the help of young people.

The Chief Executive of Participation People asked for the process to be youth proofed and user friendly.

The Chief Executive of People – Children confirmed officers would want to ensure it was the right time for that young person to access their records and ensure they were helped in reading them as they could be upsetting.

One of the CLiCC representatives asked what the application was they would have to make if a young person wanted to see part of their records and would they be available to under 18-year olds. Would every social worker do life stories. Officers explained how young people could access their records or part of their records and if under 18 that would also be possible. Regarding life stories they would have to be completed at the right time and were more of a day to day issue rather than historical. Records could be very business focussed whereas the life account would be written to the young person and about them and their family.

Noted

Challenge No 2 - ID Cards: Officers confirmed the ID cards had been completed. CLiCC representatives confirmed they would be well received.

Noted

Challenge No 5 - Communications between School and Social Workers: The Virtual School Head had attended the IRO team meetings and emphasised the importance of communication between school and social workers or the Virtual School. The Virtual School Head had set a question for CLiCC asking for them to be more specific about what was not being communicated at school. The CLiCC representatives would ask young people at school.

Resolved

That the CLiCC representatives ask young people at school what was not being communicated at school.

Challenge No 6 - Delegated Powers: The Corporate Parenting Officer confirmed that the delegated powers authority should be discussed at the Placement Planning meeting and team managers were responsible for supervising the process. IRO's would be asking about delegated powers authority at review meetings. Officers were also reviewing how this could be monitored electronically through the IRO monitoring form.

Noted

79. CLiCC Update and Challenge Cards

New Challenge Card 1: "We feel that younger children receive more support for mental health issues than older young people. Do you agree that as we grow older and have take on more responsibilities, the level of support should also grow? How can you make sure older children in care/care leavers get all the support they need with mental health concerns?"

The Designated Nurse for Looked After Children had responded to this challenge which was read out by the Head of Safeguarding, Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group.

The Children's Services Manager, DAIVS suggested young people read Making Mental Health Available to Young People issue 8 February 2020 which was very helpful.

The Chairman was concerned about care leavers and 18 plus year olds as their emotional health was completely different from the emotional health support that young people received. Young people needed emotional support what were the Health Services doing about the transition gap.

The Head of Safeguarding, Dorset Clinical Commissioning confirmed this was about improvement they had won funding for and making that transition. This was a national one year project for care leavers and the health services would be reporting the outcome of the project to the Board.

The Interim Executive Director of People – Children asked if Dorset Council staff were involved in the project and that she would welcome a data set relating to CAMHS at the next formal meeting of the Board on 23 April 2020.

Resolved

That Health Services provide a data set relating to CAMHS to the next formal meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board on 23 April 2020.

New Challenge Card 2: "Whilst care leavers get 1 to 1 time with our PA's, it's only to go to the Job Centre or to work our finances out etc. What we need is the chance to have 1 to 1 time where we could just go for a walk or a coffee, something like that, to talk about how things are going, as well as time to do the other things that need to be done. How can you make this happen?"

Officers confirmed the restructuring did include more time with young people and the Personal Advisers who were highly motivated group wanted to see care leavers more. They did, however, have a very large caseload (33) so it was a massive job. They had to see care leavers who were in real crisis and unfortunately that meant those who were fine did not get seen very often. It was hoped for the future that a social setting may be arranged with several care leavers but unfortunately it would be hard for PA's to spend individual time with them. Drop-ins and meetings with care leavers more socially might be a way forward.

One member thought this was an area where caseload management ought to be looked at as some young people would require a higher level of intensity and informal settings could sometimes be the most productive.

Noted

The Corporate Parenting Officer asked for items to be put on the tracker.

One member asked that case loading for PA's and time spent with young people be put in the tracker.

Resolved

That the Corporate Parenting Officer place case loading for PA's and time spent with young people on the tracker.

Duration of meeting: 3.00 - 5.20 pm

Chairman

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Committee Title Corporate Parenting Board
Date 9 September 2020
Report Title Care Leavers Update report

Choose an item.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr A Parry, Children, Education and Early Help

Local Councillor(s):

Executive Director: Theresa Leavy, Interim Lead for Children's Services

Report Author: Kirsten Hallett
Title: Care Leavers
Tel: 01305 228221
Email: kirsten.hallett@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Recommendation: For all board members to note content of the report for information only.

Reason for Recommendation:

1. Executive Summary

Corporate parents must ensure that all eligible looked after young people and care leavers over 16 have a Pathway Plan, that the local authority is in touch with care leavers and that they receive the help and support to which they are entitled.

2. Financial Implications

N/a

3. Climate implications

N/a

4. Other Implications

N/A

5. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Medium

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

This report identifies how the team delivering services to eligible looked after young people and care leavers works from the same basic principles in terms of equality and equal opportunity. Whilst each young person is unique with individual needs, the overarching legislative framework and DCC policy ensures all young people are given the same opportunities.

7. Appendices

N/a

8. Background Papers

N/a

9. Care Leavers Services

9.1 Context:

- (i) Young people cease to be looked after at the age of 18, although some looked after children may choose to leave care before this. However, the local authority continues to have responsibilities towards them until at least the age of 25. These duties and responsibilities vary according to the circumstances of the young person and their length of time in care prior to the age of 16. Within three months of their sixteenth birthday (or three months of becoming looked after if they are aged 16–18), each child must have a pathway plan, setting out how they will be supported in their transition to adulthood and based on a needs assessment and their care plan. The pathway plan should also include other plans, health, education and employment, as well as the transition plan for children who are disabled who are subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- (ii) This report will focus entirely on care leavers, that is young people aged 16 and over who have left care with a legal status of Relevant or Former Relevant.

- (iii) We currently have 262 young people receiving an active leaving care services, and we know that this number will significantly increase by end of August 2021 with 91, 16/17-year olds already present in our resident care group. In addition we have 121, 21-25 year olds for whom we have a duty to keep in touch with annually and whom can return to receive an active service should they need support.
- (iv) We therefore have a total of 474 eligible and former relevant care leavers for whom we offer a level of leaving care service

9.2 In Touch:

- (i) We are in touch with most of our care leavers (98%) and during the COVID19 lockdown period were in touch with our care leavers weekly. Of the 262 relevant and former relevant care leavers, we are in contact with 257 (98%)
- (ii) Of the 5 young people we are not in contact with, one care leaver has elected not to have contact with us, 2 care leavers have no right to remain living in the UK (appeal rights exhausted) and have not responded to attempts to contact them and 2 are living with family and don't want us to contact them.
- (iii) The team tries to locate young people with whom we have lost contact by various means. Sometimes parents will pass messages on from us or we locate them through social media or by speaking to other young people

9.3 Accommodation:

- (i) Most of our young people (83%) remained in care until their 18th birthday. However, we know not as many of our young people are benefiting from Staying Put arrangements as we would like. We are looking at how we are supporting foster carers to continue to provide a safe and stable home for our young people after they turn 18 and into adulthood.
- (ii) Whilst most of our care leavers are in suitable accommodation (94%) we know we need to do more to ensure all our care leavers have safe and stable accommodation that meets their needs.
- (iii) Accommodation is generally regarded as suitable if it provides safe, secure and affordable housing for young people and will usually exclude emergency accommodation used in a crisis. Accommodation that clearly exposes the young person to risk of harm or social exclusion by reason of its location or other factors is coded as unsuitable.

- (iv) Our DC in-house supported lodgings scheme currently houses 16 care leavers. We have 25 supported lodgings providers offering a total of 26 placements. 7 of these placements are currently on hold due to personal circumstances of providers.

Recruitment is difficult as young people are staying in the family home for longer due to increases in rent costs and a lack of affordable housing in the rental sector meaning they can't afford to live away from home. The supported lodgings team continues to work with the DC media team to look at innovative ways of advertising, including the use of social media.

- (v) We currently have 20 staying put arrangements, mainly with family and friends carers. This number is set to increase and likely to include a growing number of staying put arrangements with IFA (Independent Fostering Agency) carers.

We have received an increase of Government grant funding for staying put. This increase will address the projected shortfall which is mainly due to the increase in IFA staying put arrangements given that they cost significantly more than in house staying put arrangements.

- (vi) A total of 110 care leavers live in independent rented properties. This is a mix of private and local authority housing. However, affordability is a key issue as benefit housing element rates have not kept pace with rent costs which landlords can charge in the current private rental market. Supply and demand has driven costs up. Letting agent's fees are also prohibitive. An additional risk is that the private rental sector has no security of tenure and landlords are at liberty to end tenancies when they want their properties back.
- (vii) To date we have no local authority housing allocation from our Dorset housing providers and we need to drive this work forward to secure affordable long term housing for care leavers.
- (viii) Work is ongoing with Adult services to reconfigure the former young people's supported accommodation contract. This is a former Supporting People budget which could be combined with existing spend on care leaver accommodation to increase purchasing power. There is now a sub-regional framework for supported accommodation for care leavers.

9.3(a) Unsuitable Accommodation:

- (i) 16 out of 262 care leavers are living in unsuitable accommodation. 2 in custody, 2 residence not known, 8 in emergency and B&B accommodation placed through Homelessness legislation, 4 are in unstable accommodation staying with friends.
- (ii) Short term use of bed and breakfast provided by the Housing Department to exercise their duties under the Homelessness legislation to avoid homelessness is generally considered suitable.
- (iii) For the 8 care leavers who have been placed in emergency accommodation, including B&B, under the Homelessness legislation, PA's work closely with the Housing officer and care leaver to help them move on as quickly as possible into secure affordable and suitable housing.
- (iv) One of the major challenges due to COVID19 has been a delay for move on within both the private rented and home choice housing sectors.
- (v) Limited private rented properties were advertised during this time and there were also COVID19 restrictions in place which prevented moving.
- (vi) The home choice bidding system was closed temporarily due to COVID19, preventing any bids on local housing association properties until this re-opened mid July 2020.
- (vii) The impact of these delays and other emergency measures taken during COVID19 includes a current processing time of up to 16 weeks for housing register applications meaning that new applicants are unable to access the home choice system until their applications are completed.
- (viii) The impact of COVID19 delay will begin to reduce as colleagues in our Housing Departments are able to catch up with volume of work and demands, and the private housing sector become more confident to advertise properties once again.

9.4 Pathway Plans.

- (i) The statutory requirement is that the Pathway Plan should be reviewed at least every 6 months. Personal Advisers work with a

significant caseload of up to 30 care leavers and have found it difficult to keep on top of Pathway Plan reviews. Plans are a significant piece of work and are not always prioritised, particularly when there are conflicting pressures on time.

- (ii) It is the intention of the team to review the pathway plan document which is a significant document to be more succinct, clearer and therefore more relevant for our care leavers
- (iii) It is also anticipated that caseloads for PA's will reduce following the successful recruitment of an additional 3.5 FTE PA's which in turn will increase capacity to complete reviews on time.

9.5 Education Training and Employment:

- (i) Despite being in touch with most care leavers, we are not supporting enough of our young people to be in education, employment or training, with 49% of care leavers accessing education, employment or training.
- (ii) This is area where we need to strengthen practice and we will be working with our partners to improve our offer for young people leaving our care. It is accepted that the number of care leavers who are NEET is high.
- (iii) This reflects a diverse group of young people whose needs are complex due to a number of factors including disability, mental health, use of substances which disrupt opportunities in terms of education, employment or training and coming late into care due to family breakdown having already disengaged from formal education.
- (iv) There are achievements to celebrate. We currently have 31 care leavers at University and we currently have 2 dedicated PA's working with care leavers who are studying at University to ensure that our under graduates maintain their places in their education settings.
- (v) We have recently successfully recruited additional PA's to the team and once in post, we will be able to increase our capacity to support care leavers at University, strengthen practice and improve our NEET offer to care leavers.

- (vi) All looked after young people and care leavers who apply for DC apprenticeships are guaranteed an interview, and the team have very recently collaborated with DC Highways and supported 3 care leavers to achieve an interview for a Highways apprenticeship.

9.6 COVID-19:

- (i) In response to the DfE Social Care Guidance, our Personal Adviser's are continuing to provide a good level of support to our care leavers through the current pandemic crisis:
- (ii) All leaving care PA's are actively working from home and have been visiting care leavers in the community observing social distancing guidelines.
- (iii) In the first weeks of the crisis, PA's were in contact with every care leaver on their caseload at least weekly, using a variety of contact methods including WhatsApp, Facetime, Skype, Messenger and phone call.
- (iv) Every care leaver was sent a weekly text from us via GOV.UK Notify reminding them to keep in touch, let us know if they become unwell or need us to help them in any way. The messages varied week to week from text to infographic to try and reach as many care leavers as possible.
- (v) We have a spreadsheet with details of care leavers who are reporting they are feeling unwell or who are socially isolating due to their own or a members of the household being vulnerable. These care leavers received a phone call asking what the PA can do to support them eg shopping, medicine, but also to ensure they get medical advice if they need it.
- (vi) We secured 10 reconditioned mobile smart phones from our IT department for vulnerable care leavers to enable them to keep in touch with us and family. PA's also purchased sim cards and bundles to ensure that care leavers can keep in touch with the people who are important to them.

- (vii) We purchased and distributed 30 new smart mobile phones which were supplied to care leavers with DC Daisy Sim cards providing them with free calls and texts with up to 10GB of data per month. The cost of these Sim cards to the team are low (£3 per card) and this is something the team aspire to include in our finance policy so that every care leaver can benefit from the means to keep in touch with us, family and friends.
- (viii) DC IT provided 60 reconditioned laptops which PA's distributed to care leavers to avoid isolation during COVID19 lockdown.
- (ix) 34 Laptops and 62 routers were provided on loan to care leavers procured from the DfE offer of IT equipment to enable care leavers to access education
- (x) Every PA has an AllPay card which they can use to purchase emergency/essential goods, but also purchases to help care leavers who are socially isolated. Whilst the large supermarkets were fully booked in terms of delivery slots, PA's are using Snappy Shopper and other App's to arrange for food and essential's to be delivered to care leavers who can't get out.
- (xi) The PA's know the care leavers they are most concerned about, perhaps due to poor mental health, and are ensuring regular contact with them but also signposting them to reputable online support such as Kooth.
- (xii) Friends of Dorset Care Leavers organised weekly activities through the Zoom App including quizzes, bingo, competitions, challenges, a book club and a Netflix watch party. The charity has also provided "summer essentials packs", rainbow craft packs, face coverings, premium memberships to the Breethe App, These have proved extremely popular with care leavers. Now that we can meet in small groups of up to 6 households, the charity have a social distanced paddle boarding event taking place in early September
- (xiii) A Web page entitled "Coronavirus information station for Dorset care experienced children and young people" has been produced by the

team with the support of Louise Drury and Claire Ryan East. This has links to useful information about Covid-19.

- (xiv) The PA's have ensured that care leavers at University have somewhere to stay if they want or need to leave their Uni accommodation. Our facilities colleagues were approached to see if property owned by DC could be used for 2 care leavers, but they made their own arrangements, so this wasn't required. Useful contacts were made though.
- (xv) Equilibrium approached us and have offered an online listening ear support for care leavers via Messaging.
- (xvi) Examples of practical support provided – PA's have purchased additional data to enable a care leaver to access Smart TV, provided online grocery deliveries to care leavers who were shielding, other PA's have purchased access to the internet and paid for phone top ups. Most of these purchases are low cost at £10-£15 but make a huge difference to the lives of care leavers. Boredom has been an issue and purchases have been made via Amazon, delivered direct to the care leaver for activity and craft materials. We've paid £20 for a Play Station controller which provides contact with the outside world.
- (xvii) There have in fact been some positive lessons learned from the COVID19 experience. We have learned as a team that engaging with care leavers through social media appears to resonate with their lived experiences and is a successful way of engaging with care leavers.

9.7 New Belongings:

- (i) We are partners with Coram Voice, together with 7 other Local Authorities, to deliver the New Belongings programme. This has been developed from the successful Bright Spots programme and included undertaking the "*Your Life Beyond Care*" survey, developed with care experienced young people, which measures the subjective wellbeing of young care leavers.
- (ii) We are awaiting the results of the "*Your Life beyond Care*" survey, which are anticipated to be received towards the end of August.

- (iii) We have undertaken a detailed self-assessment of our services with our partner agencies as part of New Belongings to identify priorities for action.
- (iv) Our New Belongings action plan is to be drafted at the next New Belongings meeting on 23rd September, coproduced with our care leavers.
- (v) Through New Belongings, managers and PA's have opportunities to come together with other Local Authority managers and PA's to benefit from peer and practice learning.

9.8 Staff Team and Recruitment:

- (i) The recent reorganisation in Dorset has taken place and the Care Leavers Team now sits under Adolescent Services, managed by Simon Fraiz-Brown
- (ii) The Care Leavers team consists of 2 Team Managers, a Supported Lodgings Team (comprising of 1 supported lodgings Co-ordinator and 1 supported lodgings officer), and we have recently recruited 3.5 FTE PA's to increase our team of PA's from 9 FTE to 12.5 FTE. This equates to 17 part time and full time PA's in the team.
- (iii) There are currently the following vacancies within the team: Care Leavers Team Manager, Supported Lodgings officer, Homelessness Prevention worker
- (iv) No member of the team has been unwell due to COVID19, however if an allocated PA does become unwell and unable to keep in contact with their care leavers, the TM would ask the duty PA to step in.

9.9 Challenges:

- (i) Universal credit comes at a cost to the local authority in that no payment is made for the first week of the claim. This results in our having to pay rent and living costs for care leavers who are entitled to welfare benefits. The delay in payment of up to 6 weeks is also unhelpful as we have to subsidise rent and living costs until Universal credit starts to be paid. As payment is made direct to the care leaver, there is little chance of reimbursement from them once the back payment is made into their bank accounts.

- (ii) The number of care leavers suffering significant mental health problems, but lack of access to services at the point they are ready to access them continues to be an issue. We estimated when Ofsted asked the question that approximately 30% of our care leavers had a mental health problem which had an impact on their day to day lives.
- (iii) Use of substances, cannabis, legal highs and alcohol is prevalent in care leavers and almost accepted by them and their peers as a normal activity. Although there are services available to help care leavers reduce their reliance on substances, most do not view their use of substances as problematic and do not want to stop.
- (iv) MOSAIC reports have improved, and we are also awaiting the publication of a new Care Leavers Report which aims to provide a clear and succinct overview of our activity. There is however some data we are unable to record or retrieve. For example, we can only establish how many care leavers have mental health issues by asking the relevant 16+ workers.
- (v) A nationwide shortage of local authority housing means that private tenancies are often the best chance of securing housing for care leavers. This is an expensive prospect as private landlords often use letting agents who charge administrative fees and the cost of reference checks, along with one month's rent and one month's rent in advance

10 Our Successes:

- (i) 9 care leavers have just graduated from their studies at University. Their success was celebrated at a virtual Graduation Party on Thursday 20th August.
- (ii) 2 care leavers were recognised for their entries into the Coram Voice #Voices2020 competition. Their work won 1st prize and a commendation for sharing their thoughts and feelings during COVID19
- (iii) We have in July set up a fortnightly virtual "drop in" on Microsoft Teams, where we are joined by our link workers/SPOC from health, education, housing and benefits. This format enables care leavers to virtually join the meeting and to talk on a one to one basis with specialists in different areas to resolve any issues they may have. Each drop in has been attended by care leavers, and we intend to

continue these sessions as part of our local offer beyond COVID19 restrictions.

- (iv) We are considering how best to promote and advertise these sessions which we anticipate will provide a clear pathway of engagement for our older care leavers to meet the extended duty to care leavers up to the age of 25 years.

10.1 Areas of focus for the next 6 months:

There are several areas of work acknowledged for the service:

- (i) Successful recruitment of a Team Manager, Supported Lodgings officer, Homelessness Prevention worker
- (ii) Personal adviser caseloads have been high and it is anticipated that caseloads will reduce once the recent PA appointments start with the team.
- (iii) Once the new PA's are in post it is anticipated that every eligible care leaver (aged 16-18) will become allocated a PA who will give advice and guidance to the SW / young person, attend the final 2 LAC reviews and use the transfer checklist to keep track of essential tasks before the young person is 18 and transfers to the PA.
- (iv) This will be monitored through the step up, step down and step across procedure of locality line of sight meetings to support a smooth and well managed transition to Leaving Care services. The allocated social worker will attend the Locality Line of Sight meeting when the child is between the age of 15 ½ years and 16 years.
- (v) The Care Leavers Team are supporting the Virtual School with the organisation of the Dorset Council Star Awards for Children in Care and Care Leavers which is taking place virtually on 10th October 2020. Nominations are currently being received from Social Workers and PA's
- (vi) New Belongings action plan is to be created at the New Belongings meeting on 23rd September.
- (vii) The Care Leavers finance policy has been drafted and work is to be done to seek approval of the budget and then publishing this policy. The experience of COVID19 has provided us with opportunities we would aspire to extend to all care leavers for example the provision

of a phone and Daisy Sim card so that every care leaver can benefit from the means to keep in touch with us, family and friends.

- (viii) Continued work on improving our Local offer Pathway plan review document to be revised to provide a more meaningful review process for care leavers. Currently MOSAIC provides a combined needs assessment and pathway plan document which should be completed within 3 months of the eligible care leavers 16th birthday and replaces the care plan. MOSAIC does not have a separate review pathway plan document
- (ix) The Care Leavers accommodation project in Weymouth area could see the creation of up to an additional 12 bedded provision for care leavers

Data taken from MOSAIC reports 21.08.2020 (not comparable with CIN census)

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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The Baker & Dixon Leaving Care Services Self-Assessment Framework (January 2020)

What is the Baker Dixon self-assessment?

It's a tool to help you review your services for care leavers across your organisation. It was originally developed to evaluate the previous New Belongings Programme¹. It has been updated to include new legal duties or policies that local authorities should have in place.

What will it show?

The framework is based on the New Belongings 10 'gold standard' areas which reflect young people's pathways to adulthood (Stein, 2012²). In each of the 10 areas there are a number of statements relating to what might be expected in a 'gold standard' service to care leavers.

Completing the self-assessment can highlight strengths (areas of good practice) that are making an impact on the lives of care leavers within your system, in your structures and with staff. It can also show gaps, or areas to develop or change (priorities for action).

Department of Education (as part of their role on the New Belongings advisory group) commented on the self-assessment:

"It is comprehensive and covers all the main things that you would expect an excellent leaving care service to provide" (Nov, 2019)

How do we complete it and score it fairly?

It is the responsibility of each local authority taking part in New Belongings to decide *how* the self-assessment is completed and *who* will be involved in this (discussed and agreed at their New Belongings visit 2).

- Coram Voice suggests that as part of the completion of the self-assessment local authorities hold **a discussion group** during which the self-assessment is reviewed.
- It would be beneficial if participants have each (or as a team) completed a copy of the self-assessment prior to the discussion group.
- Representatives from a range of roles (e.g. senior management team, corporate parenting panel members, front line service staff etc.) and partner organisation should all be invited to take part in the group discussion.
- At the meeting each area can be debated and each person or group provide evidence to support their scoring.

Some form of moderation will be needed to bring all the answers and evidence together for consideration, deliberation and agreement so you can submit one completed version that you have agreed together to Coram Voice (deadline to submit tbc likely May 2020).

¹ The self-assessment was created by Dr. Claire Baker and Jo Dixon in 2015 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-belongings-programme-evaluation>

² Stein, M. (2012) Young People Leaving Care: Supporting pathways to adulthood, Jessica Kingsley, London

The process of completing the self-assessment (having the discussion and debate) is just as important as the results

What about young peoples' involvement?

You can invite young people individually or as part of groups to complete this version of the self-assessment. However, please note the tool was designed as a self-assessment for services and therefore has only been tested for use by staff. As part of New Belongings visit 2 young people will get the opportunity to discuss what they feel about services in relation to the 10 'gold standard' areas that the Baker and Dixon is based on and their feedback will be recorded.

What happens once we've filled it in?

- The completed self-assessment will form part of the evidence (along with the results of the *Your Life Beyond Care* survey) to help inform your New Belongings action plan.
- Coram Voice will analyse your self-assessment and return results to you (visit 3 will review findings from both the survey and self-assessment).
- Your self-assessment will also be used to inform the evaluation of the New Belongings programme by Coram.

How does this relate to our Ofsted self-evaluation?

“Each year, Ofsted asks LAs to share a self-evaluation of social work practice. The voluntary self-evaluation plays an important role helping Ofsted to understand how LAs are working - including the extent to which leaders and managers have a grip on practice. LAs participating in New Belongings should be able to draw on their work on the project to provide up-to-date, robust evidence of progress and management oversight for their annual self-evaluation and engagement meeting”

(Matthew Brazier, Her Majesty's Inspector, Specialist Adviser (Looked After Children), member of New Belongings advisory group, Nov 2019)

How do we rate our services using the self-assessment framework?

A range of rating scales were tested with experts in social care when designing the framework, but there was little consensus on a preferred scale. We have opted for a scale that indicates the extent to which you agree that your service has in place the relevant approaches and provision listed across the 10 gold standard areas.

How you rate your service will depend on **how confident you are that your local authority has the relevant approaches and provision in place and the strength of evidence to support your response**. When completing the framework use this guide:

- **Agree** – there is strong evidence to suggest this is in place
- **Mostly agree** – although not implemented across the board, there is some evidence to suggest this is in place
- **Mostly disagree** – there may be some work in this area but insufficient or limited evidence to show this

- **Disagree** – there is little or no evidence that this is in place

The comment boxes will expand, so please provide as much information as you would like

This is your self-assessment so use the tool in the most useful way for your local authority.

Name of Local authority:

Date self-assessment completed:

Name: Dorset Council	Date: 5th June 2020
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Describe how the self-assessment was completed

<p>The self-assessment was completed across a period of four weeks by ten specialist, virtual working groups, each of which focussed on a set of questions.</p>
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Who was involved in completing the self-assessment? (number of people, types of roles of people involved etc.)

<p>Operational manager for the Care & Support team 13-25. Service Manager, Care & Support, including Looked after Children Placement Team Manager Team Managers, Leaving Care Service Manager – Adolescent Services Principal Housing Officer Housing Officer Business Manager Team Lead for LAC Nurse service</p>

LAC Nurses
Independent Reviewing Officer Manager
Corporate Parenting Officer
Director, Participation People
Personal Advisers, Leaving Care Team (C&S 13-25)
Assurance Officer – Complaints
Commissioning Manager
Friends of Dorset Care Leavers
Virtual School
SEN – Senior Adviser Education & Learning
Ansbury
L & D consultant
Jobcentre Plus
DWP
Head of Revenues
Head of LAC
Residential Services Manager
Operational Manager, CwaD
YOS Manager

Any questions and to send your completed self-assessment contact newbelongings@coramvoice.org.uk

1. Gold Standard Area: Listening and responding to care leavers' views (as individuals and collectively)

Thinking about leaving care support <u>at present</u>, please indicate how far you agree with the following statements: please tick ✓ or X	Agree at present 4	Mostly agree 3	Mostly disagree 2	Disagree at present 1	How do we know this? Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)	Ideas for improvement / future actions
a. Strategic leaders are committed to improving leaving care services in line with the Children and Social Work Act (2017) corporate parenting principles ³	X				Updated Corporate Parenting strategy Council tax exemption now in place Care Leaver Housing Pathway Increase in staffing in Leaving Care Service in new structure Apprenticeship offer now in place with wider Council for Care Leaver	This is a strengthening area with future work planned and commitment from strategic leaders QARO service (Quality Assurance Reviewing Officer) to start reviewing of Pathway Planning similar to LAC reviewing process as the LAC numbers decrease.
b. Care leavers actively shape services and influence how support is delivered.		x			Care Leavers support other care leavers to answer annual service satisfaction survey; analysing results and feeding back to decision makers including service leads. CiC council/Care Leavers Forum attend each Corporate Parenting Board and present challenge cards to which the LA responds.	Co-production needs further development to shape future service design.

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683698/Applying_corporate_parenting_principles_to_looked-after_children_and_care_leavers.pdf

c. We regularly get feedback from care leavers about the support they receive.		X			<p>See above for representation at Corporate Parenting Board for reactive feedback</p> <p>Individual feedback received direct to PAs</p> <p>Annual Survey of children in care and care leavers. Needs strengthening in respect of seeking care leavers views as currently has wide age span of respondents</p> <p>Six monthly feedback from Care Leavers on delivery of service by PAs</p>	
e. Elected members often meet, listen to and work alongside care leavers.		X			<p>Elected members attend 'what it's like to be in care' led by care leavers.</p> <p>Care Leaver Forum video now being shown at all corporate induction/welcome days to showcase the service offered through their eyes.</p> <p>Elected members invited to 'socials' or 'activity days' co-facilitated by care leavers, supporting children in care to have fun and take part in short consultations. Members invited to Young Inspector presentations.</p>	

e. Our care leaver forum (or other representative group) has had an impact on our services.		X			<p>Care Leavers facilitate workshops with other young people in our Care; trained, accredited and supported as Young Facilitators.</p> <p>Care Leavers routinely involved in Tier 6 (corporate director and above) level recruitment and selection decisions across Dorset Council.</p> <p>Care Leaver Forum Yearbook - https://bit.ly/DCCLiCCYearbook19 and #YouthVoice MAGAZINE (editions 1 and 2) published, printed and posted to all Care Leavers. All available on D4U.</p> <p>Care Leaver Forum has 6-8 regular members who attend monthly meetings (including 1 out of area). 5 others who feed in indirectly through #YouthVoice and Insight Officer social media and SMS conversations and attend socials and activity days. 12 Young Facilitators (Care Leavers) trained and supported to lead workshops with professionals and other children in care. This project was a finalist for CYPNow Awards 2018.</p> <p>Care Leaver Forum, in consultation with other young people in care co-produced a Youth Proof Charter - to guide how professionals communicate</p>	<p>Local charity – Friends of Dorset Care Leavers has an increasing reach to local care experienced population.</p> <p>Care Leavers not currently involved post advert, induction or appraisals. Expand and strengthen here.</p> <p>Feedback on how young people's views, lived experiences and perceptions of how decision makers have taken on board young people's views doesn't routinely get fed back to young people in care. Area for improvement.</p> <p>Co-produce redesign of Pathway Plan.</p>
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					with young people / care leavers. Review of Pathway plan also co-produced with care leavers and promises made on it's redesign through Mosaic.	
<div>Page 40</div> <p>f. Our local authority celebrates care leavers' achievements.</p>		X			<p>Annual awards ceremony for Care Leavers and Children in Care.</p> <p>PA in service celebrate individual successes.</p> <p>Care Leaver Forum members work is AQA accredited, level 3.</p> <p>Care Leaver Chair won a Diana Award and Wessex FM of the Year Award, nominated by #YouthVoice and Insight Officer.</p> <p>Care Leaver Forum all written to by our CEO to thank them for their contributions.</p> <p>Care Leaver Forum all offered CV and interview practice by our CEO.</p>	
<p>g. Where complaints identify failings or gaps in services, we change the way we work</p>		X			<p>Learning from complaints informs service delivery and improvement across Children's Services through quarterly reporting on all complaints and regular line of sight to Executive Director.</p> <p>Care Leavers review this report and offer feedback through CPB.</p>	

Page 41	h. Care leavers are involved in the recruitment, selection and training of staff and carers.			X		Not currently taking place uniformly across Children's Services and needs re-establishing as usual practice	Specific training day "what it is like to be children in care"
	i. Care leavers are involved in developing our local offer for care leavers annually.			X		Local Offer needs review. Care Leavers Forum were involved in the initial development of the Local Offer	
	j. We regularly get feedback from care leavers to check how satisfied they are with the degree to which how they are involved in service improvement			X		Care Leavers routinely involved in youth led inspections of services they access including: Primary Care, Ansbury, Virtual Schools, Drug and Alcohol misuse service and sexual health services (2017 – 2020). Reports and action plans from services made public on D4U. CLF take part in 6 month review of #YouthVoice offer and to what extent they have influenced change. See contract monitoring of Participation Service for detail.	Area for development in terms of widening the group of care leaver participants.

2. Gold Standard Area: Relationships – having people to count on for emotional support

<p>Thinking about leaving care support at present, please indicate how far you agree with the following statements: please tick ✓ or X</p>	<p>Agree at present 4</p>	<p>Mostly agree 3</p>	<p>Mostly disagree 2</p>	<p>Disagree at present 1</p>	<p>How do we know this? Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)</p>	<p>Ideas for improvement / future actions</p>
<p>a. Care leavers are supported to maintain relationships that are important to them (e.g. with parents, siblings, friends, former carers).</p>		<p>x</p>			<p>We are responsive in our service to requests for funding to maintain relationships and take the young person's lead. This has been a particular focus during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Help practically as needed – money for bus fares, rail fare.</p> <p>We are not proactive in offering a set package for financial support and this is not written down, so consistency across the team could be an issue</p> <p>We provide mobile phones and laptops, internet and data packages</p> <p>Good at encouraging care leavers to maintain their relationships</p> <p>Specified in the pathway plan and relationships</p>	<p>Need to specify our offer on local offer</p> <p>Consistency across the team to be achieved, currently financial support is dependent upon the individual worker and it is hard to know if everyone is getting the same offer.</p> <p>Finance policy to be published which would offer clarity on what care leavers entitlements are available</p> <p>Equitable support for care leavers living locally and outside of Dorset – suggestion of number of contact visits to be funded vs a specific total of financial support for contact visits</p> <p>Bespoke packages, flexible for times of crisis</p> <p>If in pathway plan care leaver will feel more invested in the offer/plan</p>

						Life long links approach to be rolled out & incorporated in care planning.
b. All care leavers have a named allocated worker		X			<p>All care leavers are allocated to a named PA - up until the age of 21</p> <p>After 21 care leavers are allocated to a PA – 25 virtual caseworker if there is not a continuing service identified in the pathway plan. The virtual worker system relies on care leavers to call into the office or via previous PA to request a service. Reactive service, not proactive</p> <p>CWAD have a named PA alongside any adult services allocated worker</p>	<p>More PA capacity to work with all care leavers up until age 25 with a safe PA caseload limit</p> <p>Ideally care leavers will stay with same PA from 18-25, then close at end of service</p> <p>Way of identifying those over 21 on a caseload (lead PA/secondary worker)</p> <p>Better system to keep in touch with care leavers over 21</p>
c. We have good support in place for care leavers who return home.			X		<p>No specific support for care leavers returning home.</p> <p>It is assumed that parents support the care leaver</p> <p>Support is bespoke and individual to each care leaver.</p> <p>le Meet with parents and care leaver to talk through expectations and rules on a one to one basis</p>	<p>Formal assessment and review including parents</p> <p>Discuss and identify expectations and rules with care leaver and parents</p> <p>Summaries / chronologies Should look at issues of when they came into care and should review pathway plan, discuss previous issues (why YP came into care) and identify how to manage potential issues to ensure all feel secure.</p>

						<p>How to prevent carer role for care leaver, consider safeguarding issues Consider siblings welfare / impact on others in the home.</p> <p>Inform any other professionals involved</p> <p>Not to cut back on contact or assume all is well just because the care leaver is with family/ extended family</p>
<p>d. We make sure all care leavers, staff and carers know that young people can keep PA support up to age 25 (if they wish) or return for support after age 21</p>	x				<p>Local offer</p> <p>Pathway plan is completed prior to 21st birthday to clarify support available beyond 21 years</p> <p>Keeping in touch letters are sent</p> <p>Support to care leavers over 21 is in line with Care leaver nurse (up to 25 – although capacity stretched)</p>	<p>Improve the local offer detail</p> <p>Ensure that all care leavers are aware that this opportunity is there for them.</p>
<p>e. We visit care leavers regularly and when they ask us to.</p>	x				<p>Care leaver contact is recorded in MOSAIC,</p> <p>Contact uses young people mediums by text, WhatsApp, video call, phone as well as face to face</p> <p>– positive feedback from health colleagues about PA contact with care leavers</p>	<p>Challenge to measuring care leaver contacts within MOSAIC so that this can be monitored effectively</p> <p>We should obtain feedback from care leavers as to whether they feel we are visiting regularly</p>

					Pathway plans reflect pattern of contact agreed Flexibility of approach	
f. We value the expertise of older care leavers who can act as 'peer supporters'/role models.				x	Older care leavers are invited to attend the Care Leavers Forum CLF supported to work with and support children in care as Young Facilitators at holiday activity days. Friends of Dorset Care Leavers have engaged care leavers to act as peer mentors / role models ie during care leavers week and music workshops led by care leaver	Peer mentor scheme Care leaver apprenticeship within the team Care leaver participation to be integrated within the team – better mechanism of obtaining and responding to feedback Each PA to take a responsibility of being a link for a peer mentor support Group activities to get care leavers together to benefit from peer support and care leaver role models
g. Care leavers report that they find it easy to get in touch with their worker or others who know them.			X		Team members have mobile phones with Whatsapp, social media capability Notify.gov is used to send group messages to care leavers Translation services and google translate can be used with care leavers for whom English is a second language Feedback Service – six monthly for Care Leavers	Translation services for care leavers whose first language is not English Care leaver app / Email to facilitate contact

h. Our local authority does all it can to keep in touch with all care leavers & keeps reaching out to those we are not in touch with		x			Good for those we are in touch with already but not so consistent with those we are not in touch with Keep in touch letters are sent and we offer a reactive service to those over 21	Better system to keep in touch with PA-25 annually How to continue to offer a service but respect young people's wishes to not be in touch
i. Our leaving care service(s) is in a space that encourages care leavers to drop in and attend activities.				x	There is no caller centre for care leavers Friends of Dorset Care Leavers has been set up with this specifically in mind	Development of a caller centre for care leavers - the hub? Combined services drop ins like the one in BCP where they have a care leaver drop in each Wednesday night Ideas of a Leaving care mini bus to provide some outreach
j. We monitor work load for our staff to ensure they have capacity to develop meaningful relationships.		x			Somewhat – managers monitor caseloads and try to establish parity of cases between team members Managers are responsive to caseload capacity and listen to PA's and efforts are made to relieve pressures Allocations meetings involve all team members to discuss new allocations Team are good at developing and maintaining meaningful relationships but at the expense of recording, so this is not reflected accurately on MOSAIC	4 FTE Additional PA support has been identified in the new structure which will positively impact on caseload weighting Specialist PA's (ETE, health, benefits etc) in the team working together to support the care leaver Co-located services – health nurses, benefits specialist, transitions, housing, adult services, Ansbury Multi agency attendance of team meetings

					Team go above and beyond to build relationships	
k. Young people have someone to call 'out of hours'.			x		<p>Limited support from out of hours services / CHAD</p> <p>Different advice might be given from these services as they are not working with all aspects of care leavers</p> <p>Emotional support from LAC nurses, The Retreat, National charities – Listening Works Connection 24/7</p>	<p>Sharing toolkits from health etc of what is available in different services</p> <p>Understanding what other support services offer and how they work – experiencing this ourselves so we can tell care leavers what happens in these services and how to access them</p> <p>Continue to use virtual support services developed during COVID to reach care leavers</p> <p>Barriers of transport to services to be explored</p>
l. Our local offer details the <i>additional</i> (above statutory requirements) support available to care leavers to develop and maintain positive social networks				x		Local offer needs improving
m. We regularly get feedback from care leavers to check how satisfied they are with the support they receive in relation to emotional support			X		<p>New feedback mechanism in place six monthly</p> <p>Care leavers can comment and feedback via web pages, but we are not aware any have done so</p> <p>We try to obtain feedback through text messaging to elicit feedback responses to limited degrees of success</p>	<p>Use participation workers to obtain feedback</p> <p>Incentive to respond (high street voucher) and provide feedback</p> <p>The (online) gather system is used by health and young people appear to like this system. Can this be utilised for care leavers ?</p>

						Other feedback mechanisms include "You said, we did"
3. Gold Standard Area: Care leavers' entitlements – being informed and supported						
<i>Thinking about leaving care support <u>at present</u>, please indicate how far you agree with the following statements:</i> please tick ✓ or X	Agree at present 4	Mostly agree 3	Mostly disagree 2	Disagree at present 1	How do we know this? Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)	Ideas for improvement / future actions
a. Our local care leavers' offer has been given to all care leavers.				X	Published on DfU but not very specific or local. It has not been given to all care leavers.	Need to develop local offer jointly with finance policy. Need to be clear regarding statutory responsibilities and associated costs. Consider different ways to communicate with care leavers to make sure they know what their entitlements are. Perhaps QR codes, credit cards with key numbers, possible printed version. Make accessible for all groups.
b. All adults supporting care leavers have a copy of the local offer and make sure young people access their entitlements				X		Will need to explore with care leavers the best way for this to happen
c. Care leavers are aware of the Care Leavers Charter (and/or local pledge) and involved in the design, updating and scrutiny of it.				X		Do we need the local pledge, the Care Leaver's Charter and offer as separate documents? Incorporate and join up.

d. Care leavers have opportunities to get support from, and give support to, other care leavers.			X		<p>Informally through meeting at care leaver forum or other events. Some introductions made by PA if care leavers are at the same Uni.</p> <p>Friends of Dorset Care Leavers promotes contact and builds confidence.</p>	<p>Consider peer mentor scheme.</p> <p>Develop opportunities through apprenticeships.</p> <p>Take forward Pathways to Employment which has stalled.</p>
e. Care leavers are encouraged and well supported to access their files		X			<p>Challenge by Care Leaver Forum to support Dorset Council to set up a protocol / policy to support Care Leavers to access their records.</p> <p>Pathway Plan asks about access to files, so is considered at each 6 monthly Pathway Plan review.</p> <p>DC Information Compliance have confirmed that they do not capture whether a file access request is from a care leaver.</p>	
f. Care leavers have clear information on how to make a complaint.		X			<p>There is a link to how to make a complaint from the Local Offer on Dorset for You, but the information is not as easy to find as it should be.</p> <p>Informal complaints are not always recorded.</p> <p>There is a postcard on complaints which has been</p>	<p>Easy to locate information to be developed.</p>

					<p>developed by Participation People, with LAC and care leavers. Folder plus postcards should be distributed to all LAC, but may have been lost by the time they leave care.</p> <p>There is a section in the Pathway Plan that gives information on how to make a Complaint.</p>	
<p>g. We use a range of social media platforms to engage and inform care leavers.</p> <p>Page 50</p>			X		<p>DCC previously reluctant to have a separate care leaver social media presence. However, DCYouthVoice shares information and engages Care Leavers – both on open group and private Care Leaver Facebook chat.</p> <p>Questionable whether WhatsApp is a social media platform?</p>	<p>Change of corporate membership to DC may assist with a new look at social media.</p> <p>Preference is for an App based platform.</p>
<p>h. We actively support care leavers to build networks to reduce feelings of loneliness</p>		X			<p>PA's look at where care leavers are living, who they are in touch with, where they can build on local networks.</p> <p>Provision of laptops, smart phones, Netflix packages etc during COVID-19 to reduce social isolation.</p>	

i. Care leavers are given and take up opportunities for volunteering in the local authority and community.			X		PA caseloads are large resulting in capacity issues. Dc has always offered volunteering opportunities, but they are not widely promoted.	BfC has increased number of PA's which will enable them to spend more time with care leavers to work on these issues. Take forward Pathways to Employment which has stalled. Need wider promotion of volunteering opportunities.
j. We have a high-quality advocacy service accessible to all care leavers.			X		Improved, but not all care leavers know it is available to them.	Lucy Johns to follow up
k. All care leavers get the key documents they need to begin their lives as young adults, e.g. national insurance numbers, birth certificates and passports.		X			Fairly confident that care leavers have key documents.	
l. We help care leavers understand the reasons why they were in care.		X			Pathway Plan asks the question. PA then goes back to record to find background/history.	
m. We regularly get feedback from care leavers to check how satisfied they are with the support they receive in relation to their entitlements.				X	.	Plan to set up six monthly survey to check support CLs receive in relation to their entitlements. Care Leaver as apprentice.

4. Gold Standard Area: Educated (to their potential)

<p><i>Thinking about leaving care support <u>at present</u>, please indicate how far you agree with the following statements:</i></p> <p>please tick ✓ or X</p>	<p>Agree at present 4</p>	<p>Mostly agree 3</p>	<p>Mostly disagree 2</p>	<p>Disagree at present 1</p>	<p>How do we know this? Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)</p>	<p>Ideas for improvement / future actions</p>
<p>a. We have clear financial policies outlining the support we offer care leavers attending further education (FE) and higher education (HE).</p> <p>Page 52</p>				<p>x</p>	<p>No financial policy</p> <p>Informal understanding by PA's within the team – in particular KW and KH PA ETE</p> <p>Work on financial policy has been completed in draft and due to external influences has not progressed</p>	<p>Develop links with SEN regarding financial planning</p> <p>Virtual school already liaise with SEN for ages 16-18</p> <p>Need to develop local offer jointly with finance policy. Need to be clear regarding statutory responsibilities and associated costs.</p> <p>FE colleges may not fully understand what we offer beyond 18 – needs to be clear and accessible</p>
<p>b. Our local authority education performance data shows care leavers starting points and individual progress made.</p>				<p>x</p>	<p>We have two data bases – sims (until age 18) and MOSAIC which do not integrate</p> <p>PA's have attempted to record achievement data – MOSAIC doesn't record progress, only snapshots of data</p> <p>Data could be better recorded on MOSAIC – nowhere to record attainments or report on these</p>	<p>Sims data could be extracted and added to PEP or via attachment onto MOSAIC – time consuming</p> <p>Consistent system and recording of GCSE and A level attainment – labour intensive – need a better system as results are pulled together individually by PA/VS</p>

c. Our virtual school head takes responsibility for maximising the learning opportunities for all care leavers up to 25.				x	<p>VS work currently with ages 3-18 due to funding and resources</p> <p>There is VS involvement for care leavers who are 16-18 (until end of year 13) Specialist VS PEP worker links with Ansbury and leaving care</p> <p>LAC pupil premium is not available beyond 16, however there are some examples of good practice of utilising this funding for 16-18 year olds</p> <p>VS have no direct involvement with care leavers ages 18-25.</p> <p>No dedicated educational worker which then impacts on PEP completion which does not happen beyond this time. Education is included in Pathway plan however this is not as detailed as a PEP</p> <p>Careers South West data base / work experience is funded through VS and is available to access by all care leavers</p>	<p>DA and new VS Head Lisa Linscott are picking up the issue of VS working with 0-25 in the new structure</p> <p>Possible broadening of VS specialist teaching roles – barriers around capacity</p> <p>Possible development of a Careers Leader role to strategically monitor the careers planning of care leavers</p> <p>Future 1-1 mentoring to complete basic qualifications to level 2 for care leavers over age 18</p> <p>What opportunities are there for care leavers beyond 18 which could access – create an online learning hub? Or access to other peoples portals - Using COVID resources as a base of info</p> <p>PEP beyond 18 to be re-developed in line with pathway plan</p> <p>Expand team PA ETE capacity to provide opportunity to focus on NEET data / solutions</p>
d. We have effective partnership arrangements with local FE Colleges and Universities and have named lead contacts.	x				VS and ETE PA's have developed positive working relationships with colleges and Universities	Better transition information needed from schools to colleges

					<p>Colleges do not take ownership and responsibility for writing the PEP – colleges will provide information but the PEP is not completed by the college</p> <p>Lead contacts are identified in colleges and universities – staff changes can be a challenge to keep up to date</p> <p>PROPEL website has lead contacts listed</p> <p>Ansbury have close contacts with SENCo's in colleges. Colleges provide own careers and guidance</p> <p>Ansbury work with schools and NEETS up to 21, requests via PA's 21-25</p>	<p>Improve relationship building – restart meetings “from care to college” (possibly online/virtual) to meet with HE / FE partners These meetings previously involved key contacts in colleges and offered training to understand the needs of care leavers (attachment, solution focussed approaches)</p> <p>Reinstate bespoke University visits for care leavers and foster carers prior to attending with our local Universities in Bournemouth</p>
e. Young people are helped with moving and supported to settle into University	x				<p>Through KW and KH offering practical and emotional support to move and settle into University</p> <p>Some foster carers and staying put / supported lodgings providers also help support with settling care leavers into University</p>	<p>Development of university care leaver peer mentors to support year one students</p> <p>Expand team PA ETE capacity to increase support</p>
f. Education professionals contribute to the Pathway Planning process (assessment, review and actions).			x		<p>PEPs are not completed by FE college links and are separate to pathway planning.</p> <p>Education professionals contribute to plans under 18,</p>	<p>NEET PEP beyond 18 to be re-developed in line with pathway plan</p>

					<p>through attendance of LAC review</p> <p>Reports of attendance are sent to VS and PA ETE</p> <p>For care leavers over 18 there are issues arising around colleges requiring consent to share information about adult care leavers</p>	Pathway plan could be sent to education professionals so they can contribute
g. Our local offer details the <i>additional</i> (above statutory requirements) funding and support available to care leavers to achieve their potential in education				x	<p>We have a local offer and are making amendments to landing page and SEO. Content is also being worked on but is dependent upon finance policy being ratified</p>	Local offer to be improved
h. We regularly get feedback from care leavers to check that they are satisfied with the support they receive with their education.			x		<p>There is a feedback question within the PEP from 16-18 but is not asked after this time. Pathway plan has a "my view" section</p> <p>Neither option is anonymous</p>	<p>Develop a Tell us what you think / survey monkey.</p> <p>Thomas Fowler sending text questions to care leavers about the service generally, we need to gather feedback about education provision, specific to the education provider and what would have helped in transitions</p>

5. Gold Standard Area: Employment – care leavers helped into work

<p>Thinking about leaving care support at present, please indicate how far you agree with the following statements: please tick ✓ or X</p>	<p>Agree at present 4</p>	<p>Mostly agree 3</p>	<p>Mostly disagree 2</p>	<p>Disagree at present 1</p>	<p>How do we know this? Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)</p>	<p>Ideas for improvement / future actions</p>
<p>a. We have a range of in-house 'ring fenced' opportunities for work experience, training, apprenticeships and employment for care leavers in the local authority.</p>			x		<p>Already have work experience opportunities, care leavers have guaranteed interview within an apprenticeship. If this is a degree apprenticeship may also need to have certain qualifications</p> <p>DCI- highways – identifying apprenticeship opportunities – not ringfenced but have actively approached leaving care to promote the positions</p> <p>We have plans and need to move forward (pathway to employment) – meetings and progression has been impacted by COVID 19</p> <p>There is a working group in place who are focussed on this project</p>	<p>Colline Murphy has the pathways to employment project as her priority in her new role</p>
<p>b. We help care leavers find suitable apprenticeships and make sure young people access the £1000 apprenticeship bursary</p>		x			<p>We support care leavers to access the bursary – team know about the bursary</p> <p>Signpost to Ansbury to look for an apprenticeships</p> <p>Encourage care leavers to set up alerts on Dorset for you</p>	<p>Training / info pack for potential employers – who are care leavers and what are their needs, identify wraparound services</p> <p>Videos to support care leavers / employers</p>

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					LP discussions with employers about levy transfer for care leavers. Require commitment to support the care leaver from DC with ways to support care leavers and employer to avoid triggers wellbeing issues as they may arise and a named contact – PA. mentor scheme?	Corporate parenting page for the intranet for internal opportunities
c. We find employability opportunities with partner agencies and local employers and have engaged with the national Care Leaver Covenant			x		LP – has engaged with local employers Levy transfer opportunities Not engaged with the covenant as yet. Chamber of Commerce have been encouraged to consider engaging with the covenant – 20 business mentors trained	To sign up to the covenant Promote levy transfer opportunities Links with Chamber of Commerce to promote offers to care leavers
d. All care leavers receive career planning support.		x			Ansbury are available for career planning support – offered at different points of life	Career coaching opportunities AQA accreditation
e. Employability professionals contribute to the Pathway Planning process (assessment, review and actions).				x	If a care leaver is in school, college or training these views are sought. If NEET this is not consistent	
f. We track and monitor the employment needs of our care leavers and actively seek out opportunities to match the needs and aspirations of the group.				x	Ansbury are contracted to monitor and track CSW database – work experience Job centre job coaches	

g. We have approaches and services to support young people who are less academically able or not yet 'work-ready.'			x		<p>Pathway to employment project however this has been stalled by COVID 19</p> <p>DC Work experience has been established – form available</p> <p>Work to be done regarding traineeships and supported internships – partner provider to be identified</p>	Pathway to employment to be progressed and embedded
h. We have effective local partnership arrangements with Job Centre Plus colleagues.				x	<p>Named link person Jason Dempsey at Weymouth job centre</p>	<p>To replicate a local partnership agreement as done by Trafford, and Somerset etc</p> <p>Positive links with job coaches needed to support care leavers into employment</p>
i. Our local offer details the <i>additional</i> (above statutory requirements) funding and support available to care leavers to achieve their potential in employment				x	<p>Some information about what we can support care leavers to apply for</p> <p>We have a finance policy written but this needs ratifying before local offer can be more specific</p>	Proposed funding and support to be clarified and added to the offer
j. We regularly get feedback from care leavers to check that they are satisfied with the support they receive in relation to their employment and work skills				x	Newly developed survey (5 themes) does not directly ask about employment and work skills	

6. Gold Standard Area: Having good health and wellbeing

<p><i>Thinking about leaving care support at present, please indicate how far you agree with the following statements:</i></p> <p>please tick ✓ or X</p>	<p>Agree at present</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Mostly agree</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Mostly disagree</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Disagree at present</p> <p>1</p>	<p>How do we know this?</p> <p>Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)</p>	<p>Ideas for improvement / future actions</p>
<p>a. Care leavers transferring to adult services report a smooth transition in support</p>			X		<p>The Transition process is started too late – 3 months before 18th birthday, teams are often starting package. Earlier initiation and transition plan is essential. Learning Dis – it is smoother as the yp go on to Adult services. Transition team could effect a smoother transition. A 17 year old who needs CAMHS can fall through the gaps in provision, and too hard to get into CMHT. Overall transition is REALLY important – giving confidence to access services in future. The Care Leaver service is beneficial & offers good support.</p>	<p>Start earlier. Refer several months/a year before. Local services need to know more about the Transition team and how they work. Identify yp who need support well before 18.</p>
<p>b. Effective partnership agreements and joint working is established between health services and social services.</p>		X			<p>Relationships with LAC & Healthcare are improving. Can be fragmented and disjointed –</p>	<p>Gaps around communication. Paediatrics have TRAFFIC LIGHT</p>

					<p>'we are trying to build a puzzle but don't have all the pieces'. Communication barriers – joint working – LAC Health get missed off meeting invites, or not told that there is a CAMHS referral. Is info about a child passed on from paediatrics? – are other concerns shared such as risky behaviour? No access to System 1 at present. LAC nurses are not office based with operational teams any more. Sharing an office space has helped communication.</p>	<p>system – at 15/16 yrs work on how to manage medical conditions. Communication must be joined up. Looking at the new structure – each nurse will be allocated a new permanence location– this will help with joint working. Foundation relationships need to be built on from previous close work with LAC SWs.</p>
<p>c. Are leavers have access to services to help with substance misuse, sexual health and pregnancy.</p>	X				<p>There is access to services – majority of social care workers will ask for signposting – Supported Lodgings help yp to get to appointments. LAC Health able to get in touch with the service leads for these areas. Team regularly get contacted to support with these issues. Sexual health works v closely with LAC Health and will prioritise LAC and CL, always find time to see yp. Reach – a very positive experience and quick response times as well. A recent referral to Reach was VERY fast.</p> <p>Care Leaver drop-in virtual service (2-weekly) to start June 2020.</p>	<p>No issues with sexual health services, a teenage pregnancy midwife and health visitor offer high level of service top Care Leavers.</p>

d. Links are established with CAMHS and community mental health services to ensure care leavers are given priority access to targeted services.			X		<p>If a yp is under CAMHS at age of transition, CAMHS refer to CMHT – streamlined - but dependent on whether they meet the threshold for CMHT. More difficult if not already under CAMHS. YP may not be ready to accept support when under 18, and then it is more difficult to get into CMHT. Have to have a diagnosed mental health disorder and then there are issues around consent. Steps 2 W – can self refer and yp have to be proactive; CL find it VERY difficult even at 18/19 and their mental age is a lot younger. S2W offer groupwork and online facilities such as Dorset Minds. More work needed by emotional health & wellbeing practitioners. For YP not ready to engage with CAMHS, this gets yp prepared</p>	<p>There is a gap – struggle with transitions in relation to mental and emotional health.</p> <p>More work like that done by Emotional health & well being practitioner – specifically for Care Leavers - would be beneficial and provide strong outcomes. YP can move forward to being CAMHS ready & are not limited by timescale.</p>
e. Health professionals contribute to the Pathway Planning process (assessment, review and actions).			X		<p>LAC Health are not involved in pathway planning directly. If a health need is identified, the conversation would be had with the young person by the Personal Adviser, referring back to LAC Health for guidance as required. Health part of the Plan.</p>	<p>Liaison between LAC Health and PAs regarding the Health aspect of the CL's pathway plan.</p>

f. Care leavers have access to, and are supported to understand, their full health history	X				From the point of view of LAC Health, the team complete review health assessments every year and this is sent to yp and SW. Report is written to the yp, and yp can also request their health records. IHA shows a chronology of health. This will indicate when they have had chicken pox, weight at birth etc. Health passports cover all immunisations etc. The IHA is a full medical history.	Use an app instead of a paper copy of the Health passport. This would work better for yp, less likely to get lost & more yp-friendly.
g. We actively help care leavers to recover and heal from past harm and to promote resilience and emotional wellbeing.			X		For a lot of yp, this recovery depends on the professionals involved and the relationships with them, which help to build resilience and self-esteem. Yet CL do move to adulthood with trauma from early experiences. Self blame, shame can impact yp. It depends what they have experienced and who they have worked with – a poor rship with a SW/other professionals can significantly impact. CAMHS will emphasise a situation changing – behaviours sorted out- before they start therapy, which can cause friction to the detriment of the child. This is down to resources. YP have a	More Life Story work. Better understanding of struggles with identity. Work with yp about triggers for behaviour – but with an awareness that suffering may be invisible if yp are conforming – puberty can be too late to implement support when yp behaviour changes. LAC psychologist work is very important. To support the carers to provide therapeutic pace parenting– More work from LAC psychologist is needed. LESS reactive work and more intervention &

					negative view of CAMHS – ‘they’re rubbish’.	prevention when young, rather than waiting for it to unravel when children are older..
h. Care leavers have access to a designated nurse (or equivalent).	X				All LAC children have a nurse allocated to them – support yp - can support them as well when they turn 18. There is now a new designated LAC CL nurse to bring the service up to date.	More PR for LAC Care Leaver Nurse’s service. SW to promote the service to LAC, and the PAs – permanence teams to highlight the service. More work around confidentiality needed.
i. Our local offer details the <i>additional</i> (above statutory requirements) support available to care leavers to promote healthy lifestyles		X			Focussed on the CL offer – PAs and Health. CL Nurse is part of the local offer. The local offer details the additional support offered to CLs. A signed covenant – all parts of society have a responsibility to help CL and promote their health and wellbeing, across education as well as health. LAC Nurses are pan-Dorset, one of the first counties to have a specialised CL service.	More insights needed into the CL local offer, shared across Permanence and Health. Updated info on financial support such as reduction in Council tax.
j. We regularly get feedback from care leavers to check that they are satisfied with the support they receive in relation to their health	X				For Feedback, LAC Nurses use an app – patient satisfaction questionnaire fed back to management teams. Specific to the trust to audit their work. Also, the service lead meets with operational SW teams to discuss feedback.	Info & Feedback from PAs to be shared, positive or negative, with LAC Nurses. Informally updating on CL feedback and evaluating the service from point of view of care leavers/PA.

7. Gold Standard Area: Being in safe and settled accommodation						
<i>Thinking about leaving care support at present, please indicate how far you agree with the following statements:</i> please tick ✓ or X	Agree at present 4	Mostly agree 3	Mostly disagree 2	Disagree at present 1	How do we know this? Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)	Ideas for improvement / future actions
a. We have developed a positive accommodation pathway (e.g. based on the Barnardos/St Basils' care leaver accommodation pathway) which means we have a range of accommodation matched to the needs of our care leaver population.			x		Joint Housing protocol for Care Leavers follows this pathway and is in draft for over 18's. This considers pathways to supported lodgings, staying put, self contained supported accommodation. We would like to have the opportunity to utilise training flats to improve tenancy readiness however do not currently have this resource. The accommodation we have access to is not specifically matched to the needs of the care leaver population, but rather what is available in the locality 16- 18 year old care leavers are not included in this policy, although are considered in the joint housing protocol	Joint Housing protocol for Care Leavers to be agreed and published Care leaver surveys could assist with more accurate matching of accommodation to needs

					<p>There are issues for young people who are living in supported housing beyond 18 where the rent exceeds the LHA rates resulting in a top up rent payment for those on benefit and the high rent for supported housing makes this accommodation unaffordable for care leavers who are working – ie Lily</p> <p>QARO service in the new structure is considering being able to review the pathway plan beyond 18, and the use of family group conferencing which could be used for return home (reflecting the recommendations in the St Basils pathway)</p>	
<p>b. We ensure that all accommodation offered to care leavers is safe and suitable including risk assessments conducted on unregulated accommodation (including for 16 and 17 year olds in 'other arrangements').</p>			x		<p>Accommodation for 16/17 year old care leavers are on the framework or due diligence has been achieved for accommodation. Each housing provider needs to complete an expression of interest form which asks questions about safety, locks, fire etc</p> <p>This does not extend to care leavers over 18 as commissioning is not the main route for housing beyond 18.</p> <p>Supporting people, who provide contracts for local supported housing projects have an overview of this</p>	<p>There are two systems in place, one for under 18's and one for over 18's. An accommodation pathway could bring this together</p> <p>Adapt a separate document / risk assessment / checklist for housing safety and security needs for care leavers and housing team / PA's to follow</p> <p>The checklist should also include an assessment of the local area and potential issues within the area</p>

					<p>accommodation for over 18's which includes suitability and safety.</p> <p>Estate agents provide a level of assuredly for accommodation rented through them</p> <p>No formal process for private landlords in place.</p> <p>Housing colleagues and PA's offer advice to check over a tenancy agreement, check HMO licences. Housing colleagues are unable to complete a physical check of the building etc</p> <p>A risk assessment / checklist for housing needs to be completed by PA's as we would expect a reasonable parent to do. Checklist template now available.</p> <p>To evidence the assessment of accommodation it needs to be included in pathway plan</p>	<p>Evidence the risk assessment of accommodation / type of checks completed clearly in the pathway plan and review at each pathway plan review</p> <p>Pathway plans should address "the facilities and services provided, state of repair, safety, location, support, tenancy status, and the financial commitments involved" for the young person, in accordance with Schedule 6 Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010. Current practice needs improving and IROs to have greater scrutiny of this aspect in Reviews. It should be in the "Where I live section</p>
c. Services work together to avoid care leavers becoming 'intentionally' homeless.		x			<p>Housing and leaving care team work together to try to prevent any intentional homeless decision – although it is recognised that if the draft Housing Protocol for Care Leavers (which details what is expected in joint working) was in place this would contribute to</p>	<p>Progress draft Housing Protocol for Care Leavers (Matt, Simon)</p> <p>Specific point of contact in housing / specialist housing professional wo work with care leavers and</p>

					<p>increase in consistency of response from all workers.</p> <p>Monthly young persons housing panel is held</p> <p>Eviction policies within supported housing options are not consistent – work to ensure those are consistent</p>	<p>assist with working out the pathway</p> <p>Improve young person housing panel attendance by relevant professionals and review terms of reference</p> <p>Supported housing pre eviction protocol to be revisited and enforced</p>
<p>d. All relevant services and stakeholders (including young people) have contributed to a detailed accommodation needs analysis.</p> <p>Page 67</p>				x	<p>Questions about accommodation are included in participation people (Dorset's young people's satisfaction survey) or commissioning surveys</p> <p>JE, SR and JO conducted a housing accommodation needs analysis at request of care leavers via participation people This was 3 years ago</p>	<p>Annual survey to be developed – through participation people / commissioning</p> <p>Learning from surveys to be reviewed and embedded in practice</p>
<p>e. Our housing allocation policy prioritises care leavers.</p>			x		<p>Allocations policy is currently inconsistent across all districts, although since reorganisation a new allocations policy across the council will assist with consistency.</p> <p>Different districts offer different priorities to care leavers – wey / port – high banding for care leavers ready to move on East Dorset do not always include all types of accommodation</p>	<p>New allocations policy for social housing / housing to be progressed</p>

					<p>New allocations policy for social housing / housing is currently out for consultation although has been extended by 8 weeks.</p> <p>The new allocations policy prioritises all care leavers and gives the opportunity for care leavers to join the housing register before they are ready for move on to increase their opportunity for housing</p>	
<p>f. We provide practical support with moving into and furnishing care leavers' homes.</p> <p>Page 68</p>		x			<p>At present, this is done by PA's on a case by case basis, purchasing the furniture and household items as needed.</p> <p>There is a proposal within the finance policy to transfer to a £2000 setting up home allowance in line with DfE guidance and provided by other local authorities</p>	<p>Leaving care finance policy needs to be progressed and agreed by SLT to ensure consistency</p>
<p>g. Joint working protocols and agreements are in place between children's services and housing partners.</p>			x		<p>There are 2 protocols, one for 16/17 year old regarding joint housing assessment, and the 18+ housing protocol or care leavers.</p> <p>Feedback was that the 16/17 policy is too complicated /long and it has not as yet been publicised. Launch event to promote and publicise was delayed due to COVID-19.</p> <p>The joint assessment process has been previously</p>	<p>Amended joint assessment policy for 16/17 to be better publicised</p> <p>Draft housing protocol for care leavers to be progressed</p>

					understood however this is not consistent across all professionals and can be negative experience for care leavers if not conducted sensitively	
h. We never use B&B accommodation.			X		<p>18+ Housing – under the homelessness legislation, if a care leaver is in need of emergency that day, B&B and nightstop are the only options available</p> <p>B&B locations not ideal – all in one area – transport links difficult to rural areas in Dorset</p> <p>Under 18's B&B is not used, however we have some creative unregulated solutions caravan / rent of properties to be staffed for young people</p>	<p>If B&B is unavoidable for care leavers, floating support referral to be made to support the care leaver into more suitable and permanent accommodation.</p> <p>Homelessness PA could also provide this service</p>
i. We identify and intervene early if care leavers are at risk of tenancy breakdown		x			<p>PA's do this well, as do some housing colleagues</p> <p>Evidencing tenancy readiness is a challenge</p> <p>Intervening early is difficult if young person doesn't share their tenancy difficulties</p> <p>Stability meetings take place for 16-18 year olds and in supported lodgings</p>	<p>Some care leavers have never had tenancies before – no knowledge of budgeting etc.</p> <p>The new allocations policy specifies the need to show that care leavers are tenancy ready</p> <p>Develop tenancy ready courses – AQA accreditation via Friends or via care leavers team</p> <p>Creation of training flats</p>

						<p>Peer mentor sharing information about what supported housing is really like</p> <p>Video's via local offer to demystify what accommodation options are and processes of housing interviews etc</p> <p>Floating support referral to be made for all care leavers at the point of moving into their own accommodation</p> <p>Homelessness PA could also provide this service</p>
j. The accommodation offered to care leavers is affordable, now and in the future.			x		<p>Lily rents are above LHA rate and are therefore not affordable for care leavers over the age of 18 in apprenticeships and those working</p> <p>Medium/low support move on accommodation needed from projects</p> <p>The single room rate exemption for care leavers is only until their 22nd birthday</p> <p>Some of the affordable accommodation in private rented sector isn't always great quality</p>	<p>National drive for single room rent exemption to continue for care leavers to age 25</p> <p>Commissioning challenge to local providers who offer accommodation at rents above LHA rates</p>

k. Housing professionals contribute to the Pathway Planning process (assessment, review and actions).				x	<p>Not consistently. Housing colleagues may have discussions with PA's if involved</p> <p>PA's need to consult with housing and make this clear in the pathway plan</p>	New policies are clear that Personal housing plan is to be shared with PA – There is a consent issue about sharing the Pathway plan with Housing as it is the young persons document
l. All care leavers are given the opportunity and encouraged to stay put with foster carers should they wish to.		x			<p>There are small numbers of staying put arrangements but all are supported</p> <p>Small numbers may be due to financial implications for carers, pressure placed on carers by agencies/fostering to release the space for a child in care</p> <p>Work has already been started on trying to put staying put arrangements onto the IFA framework to ensure this can happen for care leavers placed with an IFA (currently approx. 100 children (0-18) in IFA's</p> <p>– funding streams, fees etc have been agreed but progression of this initiative has been prevented during lockdown</p>	<p>Staying put to be discussed at each LAC reviews from the age of 15 years. IRO to review the pathway plan from 16 not the care plan to ensure future housing is discussed and recorded in the plan</p> <p>Progress work to put staying put arrangements on the IFA framework</p> <p>We need more foster carers – recruitment campaign</p>
m. Staying close in residential care is available in our authority.				x	<p>Not available.</p> <p>JO and JE explored how to support care leavers stay close to their residential setting in 2018 however there was a significant impact identified</p>	

					through special schools and reciprocal arrangements for children placed in Dorset by other local authorities, which would not benefit Dorset care leavers	
n. Our local offer details the <i>additional</i> (above statutory requirements) support related to accommodation available to care leavers.				x	Dorset local offer requires updating	Bespoke local offer to be created Leaving care finance policy and draft housing policies to be ratified so that local offer can reflect these
o. We regularly get feedback from care leavers to check that they are satisfied with the support they receive in relation to their housing				x	Limited feedback received from surveys. Participation people conduct an annual survey which asks some limited questions about feeling safe in accommodation	Participation people surveys 2017 last done about supported housing Develop a robust feedback process about services, using the communication methods we have with care leavers through social media. Use feedback to inform services

8. Gold Standard Area: Having an adequate level of income

Thinking about leaving care support at present, please indicate how far you agree with the following statements: please tick ✓ or X	Agree at present 4	Mostly agree 3	Mostly disagree 2	Disagree at present 1	How do we know this? Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)	Ideas for improvement / future actions
a. Our local authority has in place clear written policies and procedures on the financial assistance available to care leavers.				X	Local offer is published on DfU, but is too generic. Lacks local focus.	Need to develop local offer jointly with finance policy. Need to be clear regarding statutory responsibilities and associated costs.
b. Care leavers pathway assessments and plans include a comprehensive assessment of financial needs and how these needs will be met.		X			Pathway Plan does have a section on finance and the PA is required to complete an assessment of financial needs and an action plan regarding how these needs will be met.	You Tube clips on finance tips and guidance as links to Local Offer. Pathway Plan document is limited, and PA's can't be as creative as they would like.
c. Financial assistance is provided to young people when they are in a crisis.	X				PA's are enabled through All Pay cards to make limited emergency payments without referring to a manager.	
d. Care leavers receive a 'setting up home' allowance (at least £2000) that is sufficient to ensure they have all the essentials they need.			X		DC care leavers are not given a setting up home allowance which is not clearly defined. Payment is based on assessed need. However, the service does ensure they have all the essentials they need.	Current payments are not transparent and there is a risk of inequality. Finance policy and local offer need to be jointly developed.

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e. Care leavers have choice and flexibility in how and when they receive and spend their setting up home allowance.			X		Care leavers do have choice in how they spend the funding they receive, but this is not defined as a setting up home allowance.	Finance policy and local offer need to be jointly developed.
f. Care leavers are exempt from council tax (these provisions extend to young people out of authority and apply to young people up to age 25)		X			Council Tax exemption has been in place since 1 April 2020 but does not include those living outside the Dorset Council area.	Decision regarding care leavers eligible to pay council tax, who live in BCP LA area or out of county will be reviewed when new arrangement has bedded down.
g. We open savings accounts for children in care and encourage use of these as the child grows.			X		If child in care has been placed with foster carer, this is more likely to happen. Inconsistent as it is not automatic or stipulated in DC policy.	There needs to be a policy review in relation to finance policy.
h. Young people and staff have access to expert advice to help maximise income and financial support.				X	Under developed.	Aspiration to have a welfare adviser for CS including care leavers to maximise support, provide financial education for them and build confidence in money management. Financial stability needs to be assured early on when child is in care and reduce cost to LA. Better working links with DWP to replicate what is happening in other LA's.

i. Young people leaving care receive support to manage their money (e.g. to develop their budgeting and financial management skills).		X			PA's will work out care leaver income and outgoings, assist with setting up direct debits etc	Previous service resourcing has impacted on the ability to prioritise this support as much as would be wished. However there is additional staffing capacity going into the LC Service, so practice in this area will be strengthened going forward.
j. Our local offer details the <i>additional</i> (above statutory requirements) financial support available to care leavers				X	This is not fully developed.	Finance policy and local offer need to be jointly developed.
k. We regularly get feedback from care leavers to check that they are satisfied with the support they receive in relation to their income				X		Need a formal feedback system

9. Gold Standard Area: Managing day to day living

<p>Thinking about leaving care support at present, please indicate how far you agree with the following statements: please tick ✓ or X</p>	<p>Agree at present 4</p>	<p>Mostly agree 3</p>	<p>Mostly disagree 2</p>	<p>Disagree at present 1</p>	<p>How do we know this? Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)</p>	<p>Ideas for improvement / future actions</p>
<p>a. Young people are supported to develop the skills and confidence they need to maximise their chances of successful maturity to adulthood whilst in foster care, children's homes' or supported accommodation.'</p>		X	X		<p>Individual case work evidences some young people are well supported but this is not always consistent. We need to develop our expectations on placements when we place children. There was a discussion about how we have heavily used semi independent accommodation for 16+ and whether this is delivering what we need it to for our young people</p>	<p>Strong commitment current senior leaders for this to be a priority going forward</p> <p>A framework around our expectations for our young people and what skills they need/ should be acquiring as they go through their teenage years</p> <p>We need to develop a/or commission a range of resources available to ensure stronger matches to young people's need</p>
<p>b. Young people can return to a more supported environment if they wish.</p>			X		<p>This is resource lead in terms of opportunity and placement and not an established model that we work to at this point but could be</p>	<p>Development of new adolescent service will include this consideration</p>

c. Training flats (or equivalent) are available to provide a supportive environment to 'test out' independence and skills.'				X	Not yet available but part of existing forward plan for Weymouth residential development	Key aspect of planned development in Weymouth Commissioning conversations are starting about further developments in this area
d. Our preparation support is designed and run either by, or with, young people who have experience of leaving care. It focuses on both practical and emotional skills.				X	Currently we do not have this in place. We do have coproduction strategy launched in February but not fully operational currently due to COVID impact	An annual "Care Experienced" conference is held that has workshops on these issues and the information gleaned is put into an action plan for improvement and on-going iterative review.
e. Young people have a Pathway Plan that complies with regulations and guidance and that is reviewed in line with statutory requirements and quality assured.			X		Pathway Planning for young people in care in unregulated placements in particular needs strengthening. IRO service will be focussing on the QA of these placements in the future. Care Leavers have Pathway Plans which are reviewed but these are not QA'd through an independent reviewing process currently. PPlan format is not thought to sufficiently focussed on developing independence	
f. Young people generally report that they find pathway planning helpful in supporting them day to day.				X	Limited opportunities currently to obtain views from young people in a systematic way. Feels more process lead rather	

					than meaningful and impactful to the young person	
g. Our local offer details the <i>additional</i> (above statutory requirements) support available to care leavers to help them 'participate in society'			X		Local Offer needs developing as is not sufficiently reflective of local situation and opportunities	Link to finance policy sign off as this will directly impact
h. We regularly get feedback from care leavers that they are satisfied with the support they receive in relation to managing day to day living.				X	We get feedback through reviewing individual Pathway Plans however this is not currently collated. We will be undertaking a customer satisfaction survey. We feel that the questions that we ask need to be developed to ensure that get feedback on this specific area	Link to proposed redesign of Pathway Plan

10. Making sure support works for all care leavers (for example: disabled care leavers; young people who are homeless; in the youth justice system; living out of area; UASC; parents; LGBTQ)						
Thinking about leaving care support <u>at present</u> , please indicate how far you agree with the following statements: please tick ✓ or X	Agree at present 4	Mostly agree 3	Mostly disagree 2	Disagree at present 1	How do we know this? Add evidence, examples and comments (e.g. policies, projects; any disagreements in rating; obstacles face)	Ideas for improvement / future actions
<div>Page 79</div> <p>a. Our service ethos values diversity, promotes fairness and challenges discrimination.</p>		X			<p>Support to care leavers who came to the UK as UASC recognises and provides the additional support required.</p> <p>There is evidence of PA's supporting the religious and cultural needs of care leavers – <u>need case eg</u></p> <p>Evidence of LGBT work – <u>need case eg.</u></p> <p>PA's have links with projects and programmes which support and promote diversity – <u>need case eg</u></p> <p>DC has worked alongside Barnardo's on the HMP care leavers engagement service to provide support to care leavers in custody, contributing to training and awareness for prison staff about the needs of care leavers.</p>	<p>Training around equality and diversity specific to working with care leavers.</p> <p>Further developing the links with these organisations and agencies.</p>
b. We work with young people to actively mitigate discrimination and dispel myths about being in care.		X			PA are strong advocates for care leavers where they may be experiencing discrimination with housing providers, health	Need to roll out some information for partner agencies to get a better understanding of what is like

					providers and employers – <u>need case eg</u>	to grow up in care and how it impacts on day to day life as a care leaver.
c. We ensure that we offer the same level of support to care leavers living out of authority.		X			This is an expectation and is performance managed in PA supervision – <u>need case eg.</u>	
d. We have policies and procedures which specifically address the needs of different 'groups' of care leavers				X	None	Review of which groups are likely to experience poor outcomes with action plan to improve those outcomes.
e. Our staff are trained and supported to recognise and engage with care leavers with 'complex needs'			X		PA's have extensive experience in working with care leavers who are experiencing poor mental health, those in custody, those with learning disabilities and a range of other complex needs.	Reduced caseloads will equip PA's to do the work more effectively. Training in trauma informed practice
f. We know the number and experiences of care leavers who run away, go missing or are at risk of exploitation.			X		Care leavers are at liberty as adults to come and go as they please. Where would the data re missing come from? How would the police know they were a care leaver?	Exploitation is an issue in terms of understanding impact on a vulnerable adult. Need to work with adult services and police to define and agree policy specific to care leavers who are a vulnerable group. Helpful to explore what other LA's do around Care Leavers being reported missing
g. Care leavers in custody receive regular visits from their PA & support plans for release		X			Numbers of care leavers are very low. Those in custody get regular visits.	Lobby justice system to ensure care leavers are placed in prisons closer to home and that visits by PA's

					DC has worked alongside Barnardo's on the HMP care leavers engagement service to provide support to care leavers in custody, contributing to training and awareness for prison staff about the needs of care leavers.	are viewed by all prisons as professional visits.
h. We undertake multi-agency risk assessment on all care leavers, involving all agencies where necessary and have arrangements to escalate concerns to senior managers and DCS.			X		Pathway Plan only, reviewed at least 6 months which considers risk in a wider sense, but is not a multi-agency risk assessment. Need to Know briefings are welcomed by Snr Managers.	Incorporate some sort of RA in a Pathway Plan. Would need care around wording and message. Strengthen pathway for snr managers to be made aware of concerns.

Final 'global' rating in each Gold standard area

Having reviewed the different statements in each 'Gold standard' area please give a 'global score' for each area (out of 10)

NB: young people taking part in New Belongings visit 2 are doing this work too (the way the 'gold standard' areas are described replicates the wording in the exercise with young people) – part of the feedback to your local authority will compare the score areas

We would rate our current performance in... Listening to care leavers' views and doing something about it	/ 10 [score out of 10]
We would rate our current performance in... Entitlements: knowing your rights as a care leaver	/ 10 [score out of 10]
We would rate our current performance in... Supporting care leavers with their education	/ 10 [score out of 10]

We would rate our current performance in... Employment: helping care leavers into work	/ 10 [score out of 10]
We would rate our current performance in... Having good health and well-being	/ 10 [score out of 10]
We would rate our current performance in... Being in safe and settled accommodation	/ 10 [score out of 10]
We would rate our current performance in... Supporting care leavers to manage money	/ 10 [score out of 10]
We would rate our current performance in... Relationships: having people for emotional support	/ 10 [score out of 10]
We would rate our current performance in... Managing day to day life	/ 10 [score out of 10]
We would rate our current performance in... Making sure support works for all care leavers (different groups)	/ 10 [score out of 10]

Corporate Parenting Data Set

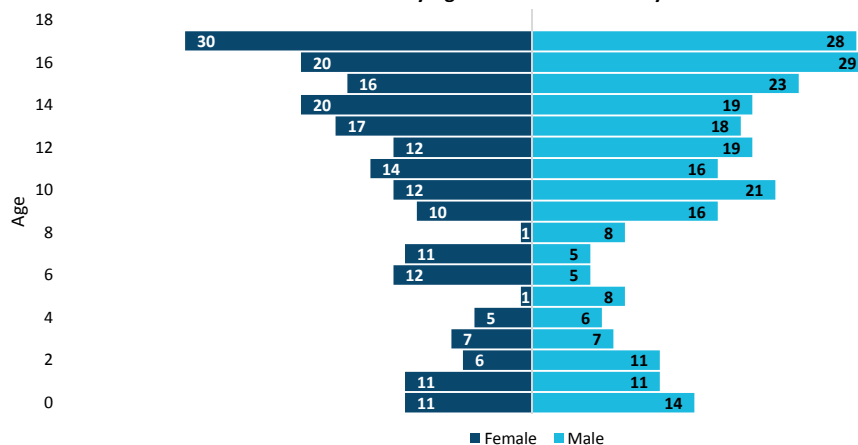
People - Childrens



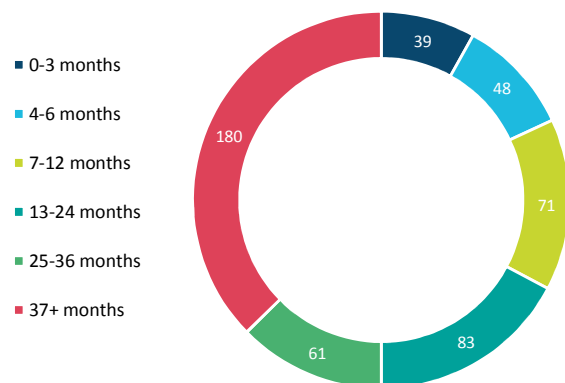
July 2020 Data

Produced by Business Intelligence & Performance (People)

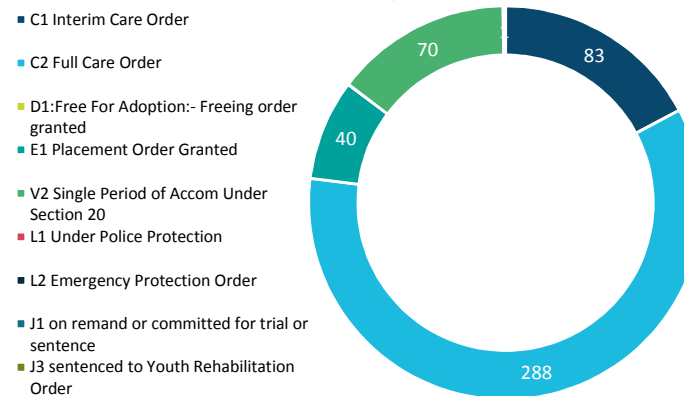
Children In Care by Age & Gender at 31st July 2020



Duration in Care at 31st July 2020



Legal Status at 31st July 2020

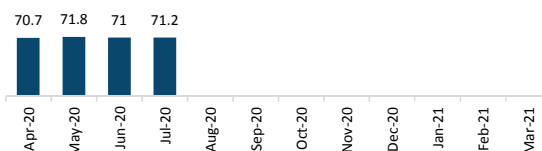


Corporate Parenting Data Set

People - Childrens

Produced by Business Intelligence & Performance (People)

Rate of Children In Care per 10,000



Natinal 18/19: **65**

Dorset 18/19: **54**

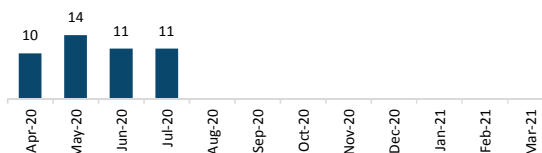
Statistical Neighbours 18/19: **55**

Outstanding SN 18/19 Range: **44 - 57**

Comments:

Our current rate of Children In Care puts Dorset as an outlier against good and outstanding statistical neighbours, statistical neighbours and England average. The number of children coming into care this year is lower than last year. The challenge is that when our children become looked after a significant number remain in our care until 18yrs.

Number of Children who have come into Care



Dorset 18/19: **157**

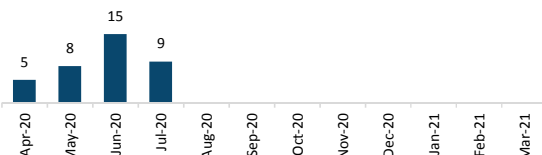
Statistical Neighbours 18/19: **234**

Outstanding SN 18/19 Range: **163 - 350**

Comments:

We are experiencing more children coming into care than ceasing in care. However, the largest cohort of children coming into care are aged 0-4 yrs having previously been our older young people. We continue to focus on ensuring that where necessary and where ever possible that children enter our care in a planned way with improved line of sight. Strengthened locality working and the development of the Adolescent service will support with this. Attention is being given to ensuring that plans for reunification and permanece are progressed in a timley way.

Number of Children who have ceased to be in Care



Dorset 18/19: **198**

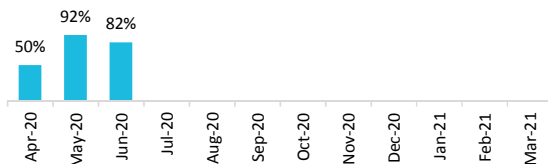
Statistical Neighbours 18/19: **213**

Outstanding SN 18/19 Range: **149 - 343**

Benchmarking Note:

Good and Outstanding Statistical neighbours include Wiltshire, East Sussex and Suffolk. The latest available benchmarking data has been included.

Initial Health Assessments



Comments: % Initial Health Assessment Monthly IHA data is report 2 months after the month due, this is because we have to allow for the data to fall into the month due, i.e. a child accommodated on the 31st May would not be calculated until 31st June and would be reported in July KPI's. Data supplied directly from the NHS.

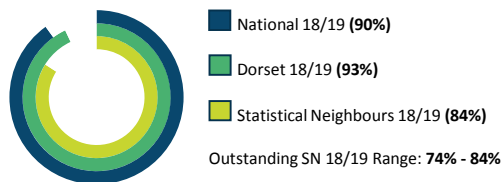
In April 40% were completed within 21-30 working days, the remaining 10% on or after 31 working days.

In May the remaining 8% were completed on or after 31 working days.

In June the remaining 18% were completed within 21-30 working days

Benchmarking data currently not available.

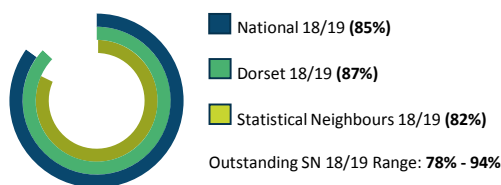
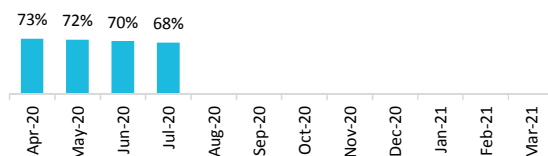
Review Health Assessments



Comments:

The RHA's in April were lower than normal due to the team being redeployed to support other health colleagues during the initial phase of Covid-19. Figures shown on graph are taken from Mosaic, however the data supplied directly from NHS is different and shows April 71.4% , May 95.2% and June 91.3%.

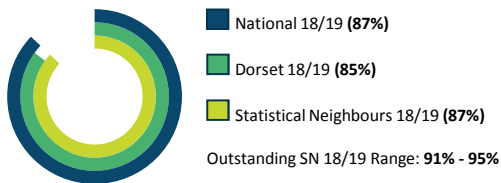
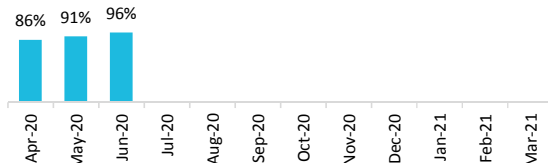
Dental Check



Comments:

Figures shown on graph are taken from Mosaic, however the data supplied directly from NHS is different. NHS data shows Dental CIC up to date with dental screening for the month of those due an RHA, target of 80%, April 92.9%, May 90.5%, June 91.3%.

Immunisations



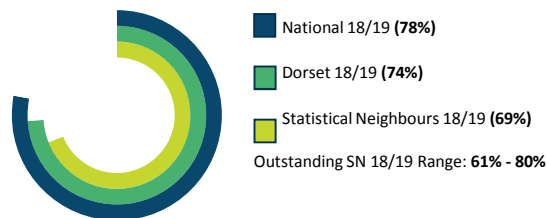
Comments:

Data shows Immunisations CIC up to date with the UK Immunisation schedule for the month of those due an RHA supplied directly from the NHS. They have a target of 85%.

EMOTIONAL WELLBEING



Children age 4-16 with Completed SDQ Assessment (All)



Comments:

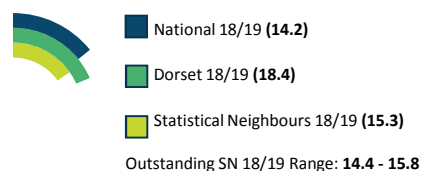
Number of children in care continuously for at least 12 months and aged 5 to 16 for whom an SDQ score was received via the Children in Care return (SSDA903). An SDQ score is required of all children aged 4-16 on the date of the last assessment. The date of assessment is not collected on the Children in Care return and therefore this cohort has been restricted to age 5-16 as at 31 March.

Comments:

SDQ data will be reported by the DC once the new processed is finalised as the return % and analysis for scoring will be completed by the DC EP's.

Data for this financial year is currently not available. It is hoped that this data will be available in time for the next Childrens Parenting Board meeting.

Average SDQ Score (All)



Comments:

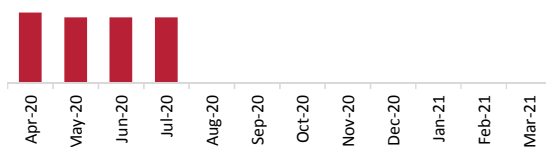
A low score is best with a score over 17 being classed as 'cause for concern'.

Corporate Parenting Data Set

People - Childrens

Produced by Business Intelligence & Performance (People)

CIC who have had a Missing Episode

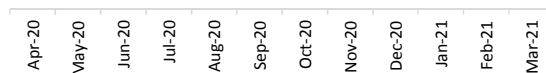


National 18/19 (11%)
 Dorset 18/19 (13%)
 Statistical Neighbours 18/19 (11%)
 Outstanding SN 18/19 Range: 9% - 11%

Comments:

14% of our children had a missing episode. This requires further understanding as sometimes in Dorset both absent and missing episodes are recorded as a missing episode which may result in over representation. Equally this may be due to a range of other factors. Focused audit attention will be given to clarify our understanding.

CIC with >1 Missing Episode

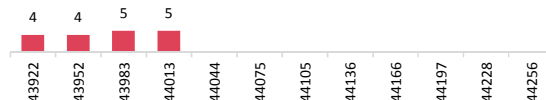


National 18/19 (7.2%)
 Dorset 18/19 (7.4%)
 Statistical Neighbours 18/19 (7.0%)
 Outstanding SN 18/19 Range: 4.1% - 7.6%

Comments:

Data reporting for this financial year is currently under development and will be available for the next Children's Parenting Board meeting.

Number of allegations made against foster carers



Dorset 18/19: 15

Dorset 19/20: 27

Statistical Neighbours 18/19: 10

Outstanding SN 18/19 Range: 5 - 20

Comments:

Of those allegations made the number substantiated are as follows: April 2020 - 0, May 2020 - 1, June 2020 - 1, July 2020 1 on going.

Corporate Parenting Data Set

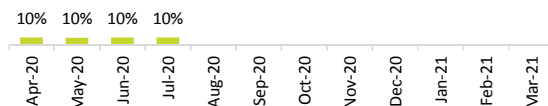
People - Childrens

Produced by Business Intelligence & Performance (People)

PLACEMENT



Children in Care with 3 or more Placements

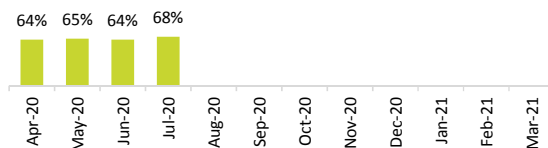


National 18/19 (10%)
 Dorset 18/19 (8%)
 Statistical Neighbours 18/19 (11%)
 Outstanding SN 18/19 Range: 9% - 12%

Comments:

We have worked closely with our carers and providers to support children who struggled with the restriction put in place during Covid 19 to reduce the likelihood of placement breakdown over recent months.

CIC 2.5 Years in same placement for 2+ Years

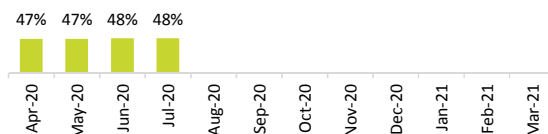


National 18/19 (69%)
 Dorset 18/19 (42%)
 Statistical Neighbours 18/19 (68%)
 Outstanding SN 18/19 Range: 70% - 76%

Comments:

This has been an improving picture, although we recognise there is more to do in enabling our children to achieve permanence earlier and ensuring stability is maintained.

CIC Living 20+ Miles from Home Address

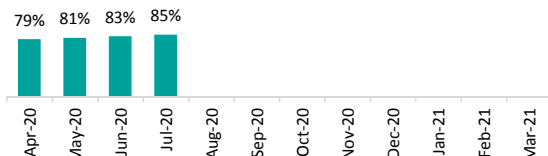


National 18/19 (20%)
 Dorset 18/19 (40%)
 Statistical Neighbours 18/19 (29%)
 Outstanding SN 18/19 Range: 19% - 39%

Comments:

We have too many children who are placed away from their local area and are not yet settled in their permanent placements. Being placed away from local areas can mean a change in school, change in friendship groups and community relationship which can be disruptive. Recruiting local carers for local children is central to our Sufficiency Strategy.

Children with a Permanence Plan



Comments:

Work has been undertaken to strengthen this area of practice from a low baseline of 29%. Quality of Permanence Plans is being tested this month through audit activity.

Corporate Parenting Data Set

People - Childrens

Produced by Business Intelligence & Performance (People)

INDICATOR	National 18/19	Dorset 18/19	SNs 18/19	Outstanding SN 18/19 Range
% Children in Care with an Education Health and Care Plan	0.272	0.274	0.34	27.0% - 43.3%
% Children in Care achieving expected standards in Key Stage 2 Maths	0.51	0.57	0.486	35% - 46%
% Children in Care achieving expected standards in Key Stage 2 Writing	0.5	0.43	0.463	32% - 42%
% Children in Care achieving expected standards in Key Stage 2 Reading	0.49	0.43	0.469	25% - 37%
Average Attainment 8 score for Children in Care	19.2	14.4	15.4	14.9 - 17.8
Average progress 8 score for Children in Care	-1.23	-0.96	-1.42	- 0.93 - -1.33
% all Children in Care Unauthorised absence	0.014	0.017	0.01	0.4% - 1.8%
% Children in Care who have been in care for 12 months who have had at least one Fixed Term Exclusion	0.117	0.121	0.136	10.1% - 15.6%

Comments:

Data for this year is being produced for the Virtual School Annual Report and going forward will be reported on a termly basis.

INDICATOR	Dorset 18/19	Dorset 19/20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20
Number of approved foster carers (All)	186	202	203	207	208	210
Number of new households recruited – separate connected persons out	Mainstream: 21 CP: 14	Mainstream: 22 CP: 18	Mainstream: 2 CP: 1	Mainstream: 1 CP: 3	Mainstream: 2 CP: 2	Mainstream: 1 CP: 0
Number of households de-registered – exclude connected carers	16	22	1	0	3	0
Number of households resigned	44	64	1	0	3	0
Number of allegations made against foster carers that were substantiated	Data not available	14	0	1	1	1 on-going

Comments:

For the 'number of new households recruited' a figures has been given for each mainstream and connected persons.

The 'number of households de-registered' just includes mainstream de-registrations.

A clear action plan is in place to look at improving the level of foster carer availability.

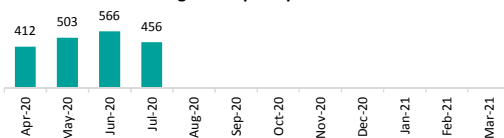
We have 28 internal foster carers who are hesitant to have children placed with them due to vulnerabilities and Covid 19. We remain in regular contact and are mindful not to add any pressure to do anything that they do not feel comfortable with.

To date we are finding placements for all children newly entering care. We have a small cohort of children for whom we are taking longer to progress with planned moves e.g. from residential to foster homes. A meeting with the social workers, fostering and commissioners has been helpful to review the children's profiles and see how we can support to find the right home for our children.

The biggest pressure remains for parent and child placements and where these are court ordered.

INDICATOR	Dorset 19/20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20
Number of adoptions finalised in year	16	-	-	5	3	3
Number of children living in adoptive placements pending adoption orders	-	-	-	-	-	19
Number of children with a match identified	-	-	-	-	-	5
Number of children where family finding is ongoing	-	-	-	-	-	17
Number of revocations of Placements Orders	2	2	6	7	8	-
Number of adoptive families recruited	60	2	7	4	6	2
Number of adoptive Families in assessment	-	-	-	-	-	45

Average number of days between entering care and having an adoptive placement



Natinal 18/19: **486**

Dorset 18/19: **433**

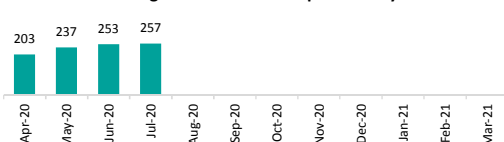
Dorset 19/20: **412**

Statistical Neighbours 18/19: **453**

Comments:

Progress in this area remains positive. During Covid restrictions, children have continued to move to their adoptive placements and we have not needed to use any of the Adoption Act amendments agreed for the period of Covid.

Average No. of days between a child receiving a PO & being matched to an adoptive family



Natinal 18/19: **201**

Dorset 18/19: **137**

Dorset 19/20: **203**

Statistical Neighbours 18/19: **176**

Comments:

Progress in this area remains a focus.

Comments:

Dorset have continued to perform well among statistical neighbours for the time a child starts in care and moves to their adoptive family. New permanence planning oversight for senior leaders through placement tracking meetings is proving scrutiny and challenge.

Corporate Parenting Data Set

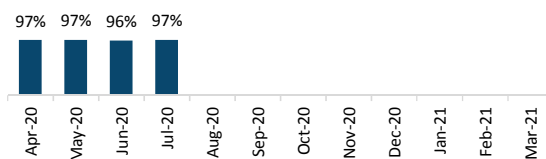
People - Childrens

Produced by Business Intelligence & Performance (People)

CARE LEAVERS



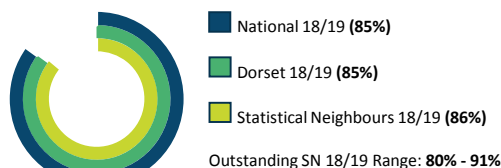
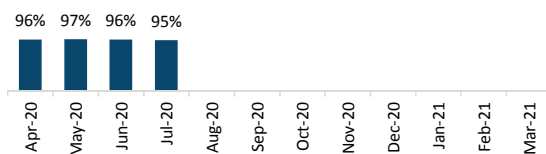
With an up to date Pathway Plan



Comments:

Benchmarking data currently not available.
While the completion of Pathway Plan is positive, the Pathway Plan template on Mosaic does not reflect the richness of conversation that takes place when completing these with our young people. Work is underway with New Belongings which will look to strengthen how plans are recorded.

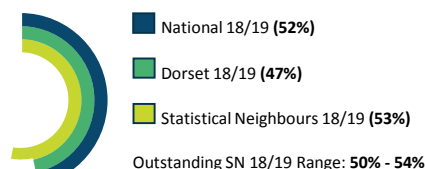
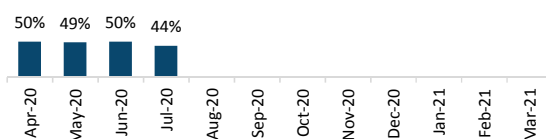
Living in Suitable Accommodation (19-21)



Comments:

Safe and Suitable accommodation is an important starting point to support our young people with a good transition into adulthood, good health (including mental health), gaining qualifications and moving into employment.

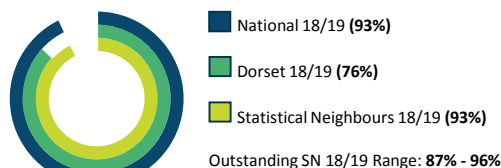
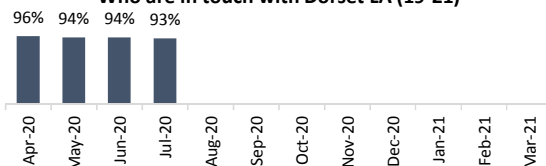
In Employment Education or Training (19-21)



Comments:

We are strengthening our service offer and working with Virtual School to ensure every child in care has a confirmed offer.

Who are in touch with Dorset LA (19-21)



Comments:

We are in touch with most of our care leavers and during the COVID19 lockdown period were in touch with our care leavers weekly. The team tries to locate young people with whom we have lost contact by various means.

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Corporate Parenting Board 9 September 2020 Children in Care Placement Sufficiency Approach

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr A Parry, Children, Education and Early Help

Local Councillor(s): Cllr

Executive Director: Theresa Leavy, Interim Lead for Children's Services

Report Author: Stuart Riddle

Title: Head of Commissioning

Tel: 01305-225539

Email: stuart.riddle@dorsetcouncil.gov.k

Report Status: Public

Recommendation: That the Board agree the Children in Care Placement Sufficiency Strategy for 2020-22

Reason for Recommendation:

1. Executive Summary

The Children Act 1989 (section 22g) requires local authorities to take steps that are reasonably practicable to secure sufficient accommodation for children and young people under their care who cannot live at home and whose circumstances indicate that it would be in their best interests to be accommodated within the local authority's area, so that they can see their family and stay at the same school. This is commonly known as the 'sufficiency duty'.

The attached paper summarises Dorset Council's approach for securing sufficient accommodation for children in care. At the end of July, 38% of children in the care of Dorset Council were accommodated outside the Dorset Council area. In the majority of cases, this would not be necessary to meet the needs or

ensure the safety of each child and will have resulted in disruption to family ties, friendships and education. In addition, this represents a substantial loss to the Dorset economy as goods and services are procured outside of Dorset.

This approach highlights key areas of concern and sets out the steps that Children's Services and partners will be taking to improve the situation. Some actions, such as the building of a new children's home in Weymouth are well underway. All lines of action will be underpinned by a robust deployment plan.

The full strategy document is under construction and will be produced and brought back to the board. The plan will be refreshed annually in order to address any new and emerging issues.

2. Financial Implications

The strategy is intended to improve the overall financial position of Dorset Council by increasing the influence of the council on the market, reduces ancillary costs such as travel, and increasing the proportion of spend within the local economy.

3. Climate implications

The strategy aims to reduce the impact on the climate by ensuring that the proportion of children in care accommodated in Dorset increases.

4. Other Implications

There are property and asset implications in the strategy, which are detailed in the September 2019 Cabinet paper "Children's Residential Care"

5. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low
Residual Risk: Low

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

NA

7. Appendices

Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2020-23

8. Background Papers

[Children's Residential Care – 3 September 2019](#)

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2020 -2023

Summary of Approach

The right place to live at the right time for
Dorset's children and young people

1. Introduction

1.1 What is placement sufficiency?

We believe in supporting all of our children and young people to have a safe place to live and thrive. We recognise that most children and young people are best brought up within their own families. Where this is not possible, we look to find a family or a home that best meets their needs and offers access to the support and opportunities needed for success and happiness in later life.

To meet this vision, we need to have the right home, with the right people, in the right place, at the right time. This strategy sets out our aims and priorities to deliver this.

1.2 Guiding Legislation

The Children Act 1989 (section 22g) requires local authorities to take steps that are reasonably practicable to secure sufficient accommodation for children and young people under their care who cannot live at home and whose circumstances indicate that it would be in their best interests to be accommodated within the local authority's area, so that they can see their family and stay at the same school. This is commonly known as the 'sufficiency duty'.

1.3 Dorset Council Policy

In 2019, Dorset Council adopted a policy of committing to reduce the number of children in care, taking a rights-based approach, which develops services which support children to be able to grow up in a family setting. We have a combined strategy to establish placement sufficiency:

- Change commissioning approach - block contracting, or a similar vehicle, to identify providers who will guarantee access to a number of placements
- Hybrid provision - where DC owns or leases properties which providers use to run children's homes, or which are directly provided by DC.
- Use existing, or new, sources of capital investment, such as a Social Impact Bond, to buy or build additional capacity in the residential estate for Dorset

2. Our Aims

1. Promote an increased range of homes in Dorset for our children and young people that meet their needs and provide them with a safe place to live and thrive.
2. Provide stability for our children and young people, by providing planned care and support at the right time that leads to permanent homes.
3. Help children and young people have the best chance of being part of a family by increasing the recruitment, retention and availability of foster carers in Dorset who can meet the needs of the children they look after.
4. Give children and young people who need them residential homes in the Dorset Council area.
5. Commission smarter to support better matching, ensure quality and get best value from our relationships with partner organisations.

3. Dorset Children and Young People

3.1 What do we know

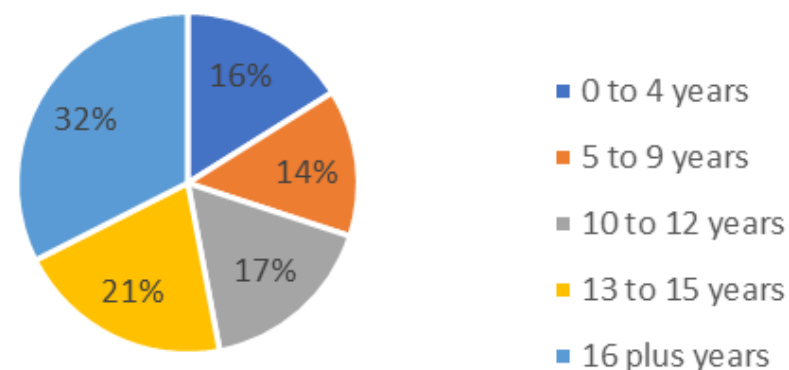
- The number of Children in Care in Dorset has increased over the past 5 years
 - There were 390 children on our care in 2015 and there are 482 now (July 2020)
 - The rate of children in care (71.2 per 10,000 population) is higher than the national rate and the rate in comparable council areas or the region
- One third of our children in care are from Weymouth and Portland
- Too many of our children in care are placed at a distance from home making it more difficult for them to keep in touch with family and friends and leading to changes of school
 - 47% of children and young people are looked after over 20 miles from their home address
 - 45% live outside Dorset
- Too many of our children have many moves before they find the right home for them
 - Long- and short-term placement stability is worse than national or statistical neighbour averages
- We need to be better able to support children and young people who have multiple and complex needs, are at risk of criminal and sexual exploitation, have mental health issues and additional communication needs
- We need to be better at supporting families with children with disabilities, improving the range of short breaks that provide a welcome break
- Dorset has responsibility for 264 care leavers and we need to be better at ensuring they have suitable places to live close to education and job opportunities

3.2 Demographics

Children in Care

- Over 60% of our children in care are aged over 13 years with a high number of adolescents coming into our care in last few years, this is changing and we are seeing increased number of young children now entering care
- Forty-five per cent are girls and 55% boys
- Fourteen per cent of our children in care are from Black, Asian, Mixed or other minority ethnic groups
- At any one time, there are around 10 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- Ten per cent of our children in care are disabled but an even greater proportion have a Special Educational Needs

Age



Care Leavers

- Dorset has responsibility for 264 care leavers – 46% are male, and 54% are female.
- Eleven per cent of care leavers are from Black, Asian, Mixed or other minority ethnic groups
- Eleven per cent are disabled.

- As we have a large number of teenagers in our care we know that this number will increase over the next 2 years but we expect it to decrease after that as the age profile of children coming into care changes and we reduce the number of older teenagers entering care.

4. Finding the right home

We recognise that children and young people in Dorset have a wide range of needs. When it comes to finding a home, we want to support children and young people to have a safe place to live and thrive. To do this we need a range of different homes and settings.

4.1 Foster care

Our vision is for all children in foster care to have stable lives, build trusting relationships, to feel cared for and benefit from high quality foster care for as long as they need it.

- 69% of children in care are placed with foster carers which is below national and regional average
- 16% of children in care who are placed with foster carers do so under established permanent arrangements
- 15% of children in care are placed with foster carers who are relatives or friends
- 4% of children in care at any one time are placed with foster carers and awaiting adoption
- Dorset Council supports over 140 foster carer households, many of whom look after more than one child or young person in care.
- 212 children are placed with Dorset Council foster carers, and 103 with external fostering providers.

- For young people moving into adulthood, the Staying Put scheme offers the opportunity to remain with their foster carer after they have turned 18. We need to develop this further, as we do our Fostering to Adopt offer so that more children can be placed with foster carers who can then adopt them.

4.2 Children's homes and residential care

Our vision is that children and young people who live in children's homes and residential care do so within Dorset and to have great quality care in homely environments where support is flexible and planned to suit their needs. We want them to be supported to be able to live with families, whether this is with foster carers, their biological family, or for young people to move towards independent living

- Currently 97 children and young people, 20% of those in care, live in children's homes and residential care.
- There are 5 children's homes in Dorset registered with Ofsted offering up to 19 places.
- One of these is a Dorset Council home for children who are disabled.
- Of the 4 other private children's homes' 13 beds, four are occupied by Dorset children and young people.
- Most Dorset children and young people who are looked after in children's homes and residential care live outside of Dorset, sometimes in neighbouring counties but too often far away from their families and friends. Sometimes this is because their needs are particularly complex and they need specialist therapeutic provision or residential schools, but they need to have every opportunity to live within Dorset
- Some children and young people are living in residential children's homes because we have been unable to find a foster family to care for them

4.3 Supported accommodation and Independent living

Our vision is for all young people in living in supported accommodation to have a safe place to live, whilst developing their life skills to successfully transition into adulthood and independence. We want Dorset young people to reach their potential during their transition into adulthood and beyond. We want young people leaving care to be supported to get the right accommodation and get practical and financial support.

Dorset Council commissions supported accommodation for young people, but due to increases in demand and emerging complex needs, additional accommodation and housing related support for young people is sought through spot purchasing.

Only 86% of care leavers remain in care until their 18th birthday, and we know we need to work to increase this number, and reduce the number of 17 year olds in unregulated accommodation, while working to improve the quality of the support offered in these settings.

We have a total of 63 young people aged 17-21 living in supported accommodation, 16 in Staying Put placements, and 7 in bed and breakfast or emergency accommodation.

Dorset care leavers are more likely at age 18 to be in unsuitable accommodation than the national or statistical neighbour average, and more likely to be living independently at age 19 to 21. We know that supported lodgings and staying put schemes are underused for care leavers in Dorset compared to national or statistical neighbour averages.

5. What we will do about it

5.1 Foster care

We will work to increase the supply and improve the quality of our fostering offer. We will:

- Review our end to end recruitment and assessment process to ensure we can increase the supply of foster carers being presented for approval at the Dorset fostering panel
- Develop the Mockingbird model in Dorset to improve the support available to carers
- Make sure we use our in-house foster carers effectively by increasing occupancy levels (the number of carers who have children with them) to 85%
- Link clusters of carers with residential provision to enable step down arrangements to be improved
- Increase the number of children who stay put with their carers after their 18th birthday
- Commission an improved family based short break offer for children who are disabled.

5.2 Flexible intensive support at the Harbour

We will implement a different way of supporting and providing care to our teenagers through a new model of delivery at the Harbour in Weymouth and Portland.

The Harbour programme is based on the successful No Wrong Door model and replaces traditional young people's homes with hubs which combine residential care with fostering, outreach support, and supported lodgings. Each hub has a dedicated multi-disciplinary team which works with young people on the edge of care,

around placement stability and reunification – working with families on a strengths based, relationship based, restorative model in a shared approach with partner agencies.

Every young person in the Harbour programme is given one key worker supported by a single team of trusted and skilled workers. These workers stick with the young person through thick and thin to access the right services at the right time and in the right place to meet their needs.

We will:

- Reconfigure and expand our existing edge of care and complex placements services to deliver this model
- Use residential bases in Weymouth for the core hub and have a live service by winter 2021/22

5.3 Develop Dorset Council residential care and children's homes

We will increase the availability of local residential care and children's homes by:

- Building a new children's home in Weymouth by September 2021 for up to 5 young people, who need longer term residential care.
- Not using residential care which is not registered with Ofsted. We will do this using the Harbour and by registering residential provision with Ofsted as children's homes, operated either by Dorset Council or by partner organisations.
- Working with partner organisations to expand the range of residential care in Dorset. We will encourage existing partners to develop this provision and block contract the homes. We will also tender to offer Dorset Council properties to be developed as new independent sector children's homes for Dorset Council's exclusive use under 'block contracts', along with a lot to enable new providers to contract with us.

- Review our children's home for children and young people who are disabled and look at how the service can be provided differently – exploring the potential to deliver the service in less institutional homes, and linking the service with dedicated foster carers and short breaks providers to deliver a graduated response.

5.4 Deepen relationships with independent foster care providers, particularly those with carers in Dorset

We know that over 150 children from other local authorities are looked after by independent fostering agencies in Dorset. We wish to work with these providers to ensure that this provision is secured and available for Dorset children in the first instance.

Although this sector of the market is reluctant to enter into block arrangements, we believe that we can improve confidence by prioritising matching in the brokerage process and reducing delay.

We also believe that there is scope to commission specialist schemes from the sector including parent/carer and baby placements.

5.5 Supported housing and independent living

We will increase the availability and quality of local supported housing and independent living options for our Care Leavers through:

- Developing more supported accommodation options in Weymouth and Portland
- Commissioning a range of supported accommodation options with flexible support across the county
- Embedding our joint protocol between children's services and housing to ensure that young people who are at risk of homelessness receive a robust response

- Seeking opportunities to develop affordable housing options for care leavers through the council's Building Better Lives Programme
- Increase the number of shared lives carers

5.6 Improve our contract monitoring with partner organisations who provide placements

We have created new posts within the Commissioning service to improve our contract monitoring arrangements with providers. We believe that this will

- Give more assurance about quality and standards
- Ensure value for money
- Improve placement stability by enabling us to work closely with providers to address issues early

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Committee Title Corporate Parenting Board
Date 09 September 2020
Report Title Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023

Choose an item.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr A Parry, Children, Education and Early Help
Local Councillor(s): Cllr A Parry
Executive Director: Theresa Leavy, Executive Director for People - Children

Report Author: Matthew Chislett
Title: Services Manager Corporate Parenting and Permanence
Tel: 01305 251414
Email: matthew.chislett@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Recommendation: Members to be sighted on Corporate Parenting Strategy for comment and sign off.

Reason for Recommendation:

1. Executive Summary

This strategy highlights the collective responsibility we all have in fulfilling our duty as corporate parents and embed it across the entire local authority. The strategy outlines the mission, vision and values that we will uphold and sets out our key priorities and actions we will take to achieve them, identifying measures that will tell us whether we have been successful.

The Corporate Parent Strategy has been co-produced with young people by the previous Corporate Parenting Officer prior to Covid 19 and more recently updated to reflect current priorities.

2. Financial Implications

N/a

3. Climate implications

N/a

4. Other Implications

N/a

5. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

This strategy identifies how as corporate parents, we deliver priorities with our children in care and care leavers and is centred on the principles of equality and equal opportunity.

7. Appendices

Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023



Dorset's Corporate Parenting Strategy

2020 – 2023

Written by: Matthew Chislett, Service Manager: Corporate Parenting and Permanence

Authorised by Theresa Leavy, Director of People.

Strategy review:

Updated strategy released: August 2020

Contents	Page Number
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- What is a Corporate Parent?	5
- What does this strategy do?	5
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Our Mission and Our Vision	8
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The Context and Financial Note	9
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Introduction

Corporate Parenting

What.... Corporate Parenting is the term used to refer to our collective responsibility to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children in care, and the young people who have left our care.

Who... Corporate Parents include elected members, officers of the Council and all employees, with support from stakeholders and our partners. It is our responsibility to ensure that our children and young people are safe, happy, well cared for and are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Corporate Parents must be aspirational and provide a stable platform for young people not just to progress in life, but to be ambitious and to access new opportunities and experiences. We have a responsibility to support them to gain the skills and confidence to lead independent lives, while ensuring they know they can call on help and support when they need it.

Why... Children in care are among the most vulnerable children and young people in our county and experience some of the greatest challenges. They require additional support to overcome the adverse childhood experiences that will contribute to poor life outcomes. We must provide them with the best possible services, including access to safe housing, education and work opportunities and to health services that meet the individual needs of each child in care and care leaver.

What does this strategy do?

This strategy will:

- Highlight the collective responsibility we all have in fulfilling our duty as Corporate Parents and embed it across the entire local authority.
- Outline the mission, vision and values that we will uphold and the current context.
- Set out our key priorities and actions we will take to achieve them.
- Identify measures that will tell us whether we have been successful.

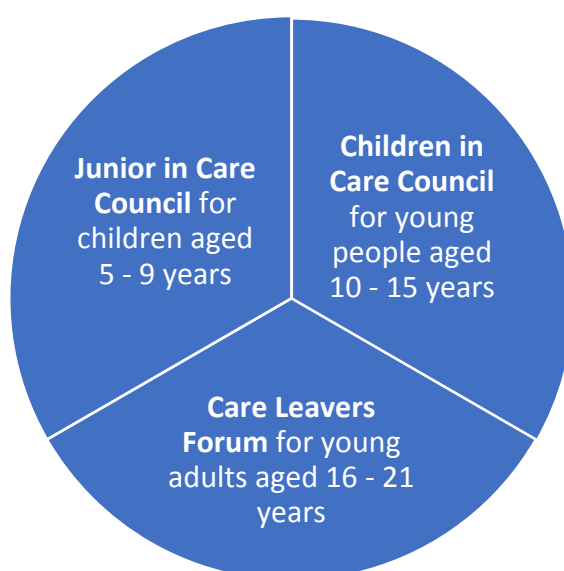
The Children and Social Work Act (2017) outlines the seven key Corporate Parenting Principles, which underpin our collective responsibilities and duty to children in care and care leavers:

- Act in their best interests and promote their physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings
- Take their views, wishes and feelings into account
- Help them to gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
- Promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes for them.
- Be safe, to have stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
- Prepare them for adulthood and independent living.

This strategy also reinforces the responsibility of our partners, namely health services, the police, educational and housing services, to assist Dorset Council in delivering services to children and young people to enable them to reach adulthood safely and to live independent and happy lives.

This strategy has been co-produced with children and young people to ensure they have a meaningful voice and we have developed ways to share thoughts, feelings, opinions and ideas and, where necessary, complaints (see figure X below).

The Voice of Dorset's Children in Care



Each forum is open to any child or young person that has experience of being in care. The Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Forum report back to children in care. They do this in a number of ways, including:

- Activity days in the school holidays
- Writing letters to them individually
- Attending Foster Care Forums.

They also ask the Corporate Parenting Board to challenge young people on anything they want help with too!

The Dorset Care Satisfaction Survey is an annual survey sent out to children in care and young people to give feedback on their experiences of care. It is presented at the Corporate Parenting Board and published on the Dorset Council website.

Dorset's Promise to Children in Care and to Care Leavers

In collaboration with children, young people and other professionals and stakeholders, we have developed a pledge to our children in care and to our care leavers. This sets out our priorities and commitment to them. We asked them to tell us what was important to them.

They asked us to focus on eight things.



The promise is a commitment to children and young people by the Council so they know what help and support is available and what they can expect from their Corporate Parents. We will continue to talk to children and young people about the services we provide.

Overall, the aim of this strategy is to set out the key vision and priorities for the Corporate Parenting Board and to show how they will be worked towards to improve outcomes for children in care and care leavers. We will work together with local authority partners, stakeholders and with our children in care and our care leavers to better understand: what is important to them, what is, or is not, working, where the gaps are in our service, what we do well and not so well, how we can improve what we do.

We want to work together to make Dorset a happy, healthy, safe and aspirational place to live.

Our Mission and Vision

Dorset Council is committed to working with children, young people and families to achieve the following:

<p>Children in Dorset thrive, are happy and are the very best that they can be.</p> <p>We listen and act so that the voices of children and families is at the heart of everything we do.</p> <p>We work together to collaboratively shape, support and develop communities.</p>	<p>We inspire and enable children, young people and their families to find solutions that enable them to develop sustainable, safe and secure relationships with each other and within their community.</p>
--	---

At Dorset Council, we want to get it right for children and families first time. We will do this by helping at an early stage, to meet need rather than manage threshold and to co-produce services with families. Their voices will co-design our services and drive their plans.

As a Corporate Parent, we will have high aspirations and be strong advocates for our children and young people. We want children in care and care leavers to be supported to develop the skills and resilience to prepare them for a successful adult life, and to deliver these services to the highest standard. We will develop, review and improve relationships and plans with our stakeholders and partners to achieve our priorities.

This strategy forms part of a wider range of activity that supports a shared aim to improve provision for children in care and care leavers:

- Our Corporate Parenting Board
- Our Junior Care Council, Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forums
- Our Promise to Children in Care and Care Leavers informed by the views of our children and young people and relevant stakeholders and partners.
- Our Virtual School working with educational providers to improve outcomes for vulnerable children.
 - Set up of a Complex Fostering Team to support getting children back into stable placements in their local communities. Recruiting local carers for local children is a key target.
-
- Our Strategy for Children, Young People and Families 2017 – 2020 and the Council's overarching Corporate Strategy 2020 - 2024
- Ensuring our Corporate Parenting responsibilities are embedded in all policies and strategies across the local authority.

Our Corporate Parenting Values

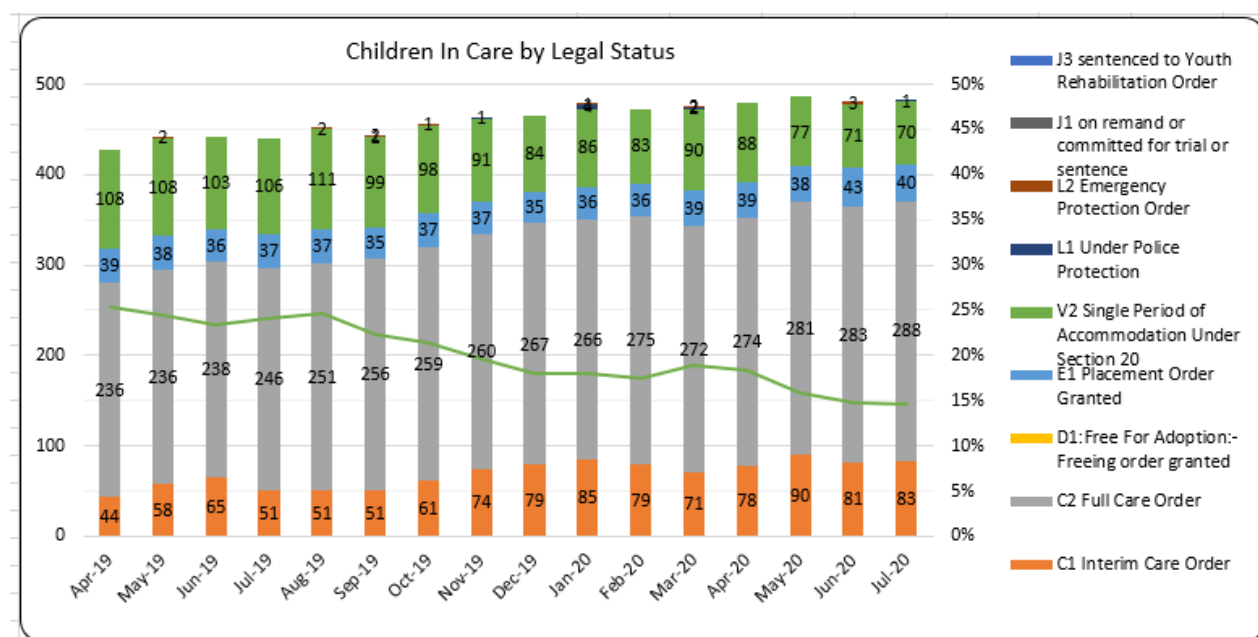
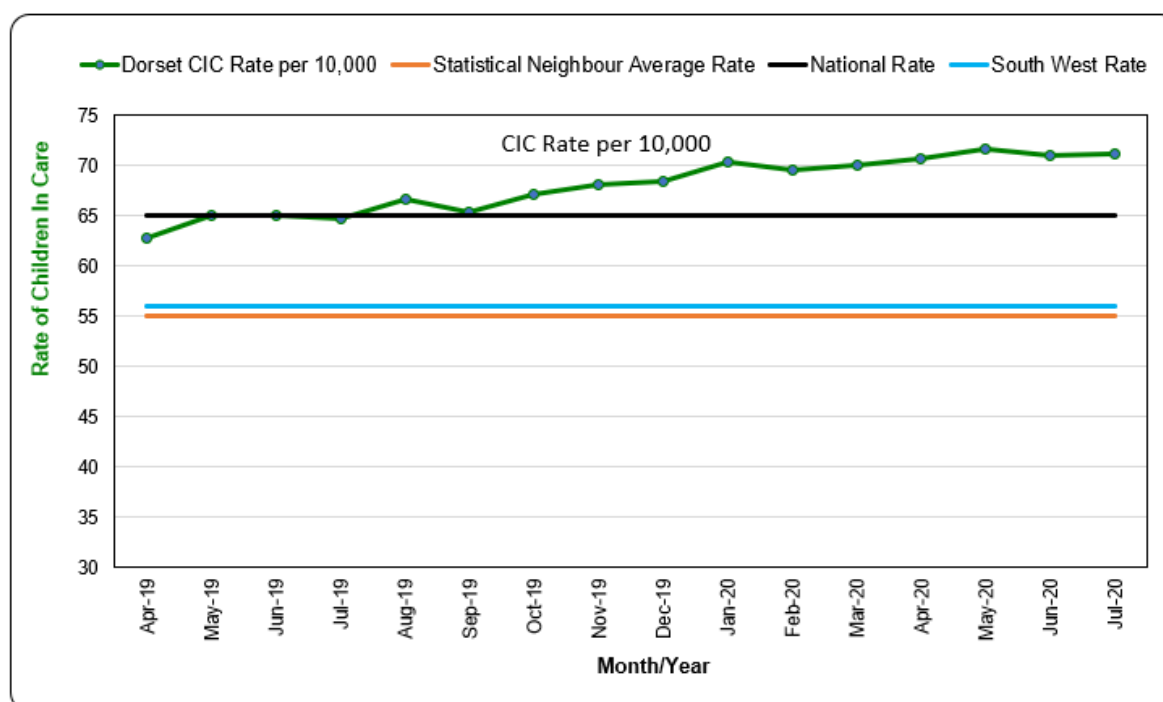
Our Values in Dorset Council are that we are:

Collaborative – Strength Based – Restorative

For children in care this means...

They are the voice at the centre of development, policy and decision-making. They are listened to and their views acted upon and formally responded to.	The responsibility to achieve good outcomes lies across the whole council and with its partners. These services are rooted in the community, are good quality, efficient and easy to access.
If safe and possible, they will live with their family. If care is necessary, the options will be explored and the best quality placement will be found that offers stability and meets their needs.	Prevention and early intervention is a core aspect to give children in care the best opportunity to remain within their family unit.
They will access the best education provision possible and be supported in reaching their full potential.	They will be championed and supported as they leave care and live independently.
Have a knowledgeable and supportive social worker who is a constant and helps develop them and to access services in preparation for leaving care. There will be an independent person or advocate to talk to if needed.	The importance of peer support and forums to get together with other young children and people in care to discuss important things they have in common.
Their care and permanency plans will be regularly reviewed and reassessed so the child or young person is getting the right support at the right time.	

The Context



Financial Note

Given the pressure on public finances, commissioning services that drive this plan will be challenging. However, Dorset Council and their partners will remain ambitious for their children in care and their care leavers and are committed to robust and effective provision to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children. We have the core aim of equipping children and young

people 'for life', and therefore, in the long term, reducing the ongoing costs of supporting care leavers in vulnerable adult populations. We aim to do this by a combination of developing additional provision within Dorset and by taking steps to manage the children social care market better through our sufficiency strategy.

In 2019, Dorset Council adopted a policy of committing to reduce the number of children in care, taking a rights-based approach, which develops services which support children to be able to grow up in a family setting. Dorset has a combined strategy to establish placement sufficiency:

- Change commissioning approach-Block contracting, or a similar vehicle, to identify providers who will guarantee access to a number of placements
- Hybrid provision- where Dorset Council owns or leases properties which providers use to run children's homes, or which are directly provided by Dorset Council.
- Use existing, or new, sources of capital investment, such as Social Impact Bond, to buy or build additional capacity in the residential estate for Dorset

Our Priorities and Ambitions

To be an effective Corporate Parent we have developed the following priorities/ambitions:

- 1 Increase opportunities to hear the voice of our children and young people and to take their views, wishes and feelings into account.
- 2 Promote better physical and mental health and well-being through improved access to health information and services.
- 3 Have high aspirations for children in care and care leavers in their education, training and employment.
- 4 Ensure safe and stable accommodation within the family home or close relatives and friends. If not possible, children are moved to a permanent placement without delay.
- 5 For our children to have a good and enriching experience of care provision and to prepare for adulthood and an independent and successful life.
- 6 Effective governance and planning arrangements are in place to mean the Corporate Parent can be the best they can be.

These priorities are closely tied in with the 'golden thread' running through the new Strategic Alliance Children, Young People and Families Strategy being developed this year.

The overarching priority of the whole service is to deliver services at the 'right time', and to do 'with', not 'to', or 'for'.

Early intervention is key to providing effective support to children and families. A whole system response with joined up provision can deliver good outcomes for all children and families to prevent the need for care.

Priority 1: Increase opportunities to hear the voice of our children and young people and to take their views, wishes and feelings into account when developing our services.

It is our duty to listen to, to consider and to respond to the views, wishes and feelings of our children and young people. Not just when working through their own individual experiences, but to help shape the delivery of our services. They can tell us how we are doing, what would make a difference to them and what issues are most important.

We will:

- Use the new Dorset Promise to inform the design and delivery of our services. We will revisit, revise and reaffirm our commitment to the children and young people in our care.
- Continue to work with and build on the work of our forums: Junior in Care Council, Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Forum.
- Ensure that our children and young people have consistency in the support they receive by keeping the same social worker where possible, and that they are fully involved in their plans and reviews.
- Build in regular reviews and re-assessment of the child's life and outcomes as they progress through the care pathway to ensure their needs are being met at the right time.
- Every child in care over the age of eight will have an independent advocate to support their views being heard in decision-making forums.

Priority 2: Promote better physical and mental health and well-being through improved access to health information and services.

Physical and psychological ill-health tends to be higher in children in care and care leavers and they may have difficulty accessing the services they need. This can be due to not being able to access or to attend appointments, or not wanting to talk about feelings or medical worries.

We will:

- Ensure that our children receive timely health assessments and individual action plans that are shared with those involved in their care, as appropriate, and that are regularly reviewed.
- Provide dedicated emotional health and CAMHS support in partnership with the CCG. We will be consistent in our use of the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire to understand the emotional and behavioural needs of our children.
- Improve access to training for foster carers and adopters to support the emotional wellbeing and development of our children in care (CAMHS/Child in Care nurses)
- Improve access to activities that promote good wellbeing, resilience, independence and confidence.
- Provide better access for our children to regular health checks via a GP and access to a dentist near to where they are living. There will be a planned transition from children to adult services for children in care and care leavers to enable access to continuing healthcare.

Priority 3: Have high aspirations for children in care and care leavers in their education, training and employment.

Good corporate parents set high aspirations and ambitions to that encourage individuality, confidence and personal development and growth. In order for children and young people to achieve good outcomes they must be given the opportunity to reach their full potential via stable, supportive and suitable education. Young people will be supported in accessing placements that encourage development of their abilities, skills and knowledge and onto further or higher education or apprenticeships and training programmes.

We will:

- Create better access to good quality education at schools and colleges to prepare them for future education or training opportunities.
- Establish recruitment and employment practices that offer supported work experience, apprenticeships and jobs for those in, or have left, council care.
- The Dorset Virtual School will champion our children in care, and support, challenge and hold to account education and training settings to deliver the highest quality of opportunities. We will work towards all of our children in care having a confirmed offer.
- Create opportunities to attend a variety of social clubs, groups and cultural activities to meet new friends and to broaden their views, experiences and involvement in activities they enjoy.

Priority 4: When children are unable to live within their family we will ensure our children are matched to carers who promote local connections, provide safe and stable placements and achieve timely permanence.

When children enter our care, our focus will be on developing a clear and accessible pathway which is informed by the voice of the child or young person to ensure that their needs are met. All children need a permanent family arrangement wherever possible and to have it provided in a timely way. If a return to the family home is not possible, we aim to ensure access to a range of high-quality care placements within 20 miles of their home postcode.

We will also be pro-active in recruiting foster carers to increase provision to accommodate our children with specific needs. We have a drive to recruit more local carers to keep local children placed in the county.

We will:

- Ensure that all placements are registered and monitored appropriately. We will try to keep our children in the county where possible.
- Enable Family Group Conferences for every child at risk of going into care to explore all options and to see if it is possible for them to stay with family or people known to them.
- Provide a Permanence Plan which assesses, plans and reviews the needs of every child in care and care leaver within four months and before the second Child in Care review.

- Conduct Quality Assurance via in depth audits each month. Service Managers and Head's of Service will conduct 'dip samples' on permanence cases; key themes will be pulled together on a quarterly basis to feedback for learning.
- Develop a 'complex' foster team to manage specific needs – disabilities, older children and siblings groups. We will focus on the needs of our foster carers to support them to provide a safe and stable home, to increase provision and to retain them.

Priority 5: For our children to have a good and enriching experience of care provision and to prepare for adulthood and an independent and successful life.

Our children and young people should be able to thrive across all areas of their lives whether home life, education, socially or work, and to build resilience through strong and trusted relationships going into adulthood. They should have opportunities to be part of the local community and to learn and grow.

Accommodation assistance to care leavers is a priority in Dorset; young people are competing with other vulnerable groups such as families with young children and in finding financially sustainable accommodation.

We will:

- Ensure that children and young people are supported and have strong relationships with those involved in their care creating appropriate lifelong links. They must have all the necessary information and options explained and available to them.
- Maintain a Specialist Care Leaver service and personal advisors to support young people in moving towards independence, including accessing accommodation and health services as a priority.
- Develop the joint housing protocol for care leavers and ensure that there are robust and varied packages of accessible support for young people.
- Work with our partners to give them access to cultural, sport and leisure activities, building on our MAX card scheme.
- Champion our young people and celebrate their achievements together such as with the Children in Care Awards.
- Ensure that services are delivered locally and keep children close to home.

Priority 6: Effective governance and planning arrangements are in place to mean the Corporate Parent can be the best they can be.

All council departments, members and officers and partner agencies have a responsibility to act together to support the local authority to be effective Corporate Parents to all children in care and to care leavers. To do this, there needs to be a good structure in place so all are aware of their responsibilities and roles to ensure that the service development and delivery meets the needs of children in care and care leavers:

We will:

- Ensure the appropriate governance arrangements are in place to implement any decisions made about our children in care and care leavers.
- That our plans link with strategic plans and joint plans with Childrens Services and partner agencies and reflect any statutory and regulatory changes.
- That we monitor and review our performance in-house, and also in line with our geographical, statistical neighbours and nationally. This approach will also help us to understand where gaps in our service exist.
- Audit the ability of all services to deliver the Corporate Parent agenda, and monitor and review their contribution to positive outcomes, especially those with disabilities and from minority groups.
- Ensure that the Corporate Parent role is embedded in employee awareness training, that employees sign up to a commitment to the role and to disseminate information and key messages. Corporate Parent officers and members will use their influence to support the accessing of services and outcomes will regularly be reported on.

How will we know?

The Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) purpose is to ensure that the whole Council and partner agencies have a joint commitment to Corporate Parenting to achieve continuous improvement to services to enrich the lives and meet the specified aims and outcomes for children in care and care leavers.

Our progress against our priorities will be measured through a series of qualitative and quantitative measures, including data and performance analytics, reporting, feedback and challenge from the children and young people involved in the service. Examples of measures are provided below. Members and officers will report on progress against the strategy at the formal CPB meetings. The annual review of the strategy and its effectiveness will be evaluated and discussed within the CPB annual report.

Channels of feedback and communication

<i>Opportunities to be made available for corporate parents to meet regularly with children in care and care leavers.</i>	<i>All children in care over the age of 8 yrs are offered an Advocate. All children to be made aware of the complaints procedure.</i>	<i>Corporate Parenting training to be promoted to all staff and members of the council.</i>
<i>Children in care and care leavers have the opportunity to coproduce services and consult on service delivery.</i>	<i>Children in care and careleavers are involved in audits and development of services.</i>	<i>Children in care and care leavers participate in the to recruitment and appraisals of staff.</i>

Ultimately, we will measure our success on how we have made life better for the children and young people in our care – are they ‘better off’?

Measures that will tell us how we are doing

This is not an exhaustive list but gives an example of the types of data that will be collected.

Priority 1: Increase opportunities to hear the voice of our children and young people and to take their views, wishes and feelings into account when developing our services.
Feedback from the annual Satisfaction Survey: - % children in care and care leavers who completed the survey stated that they were well supported by children’s services in working towards their aspirations and education goals % children in care and care leavers who completed survey stated they feel safe and well cared for % children who stated that their health support was good % children in care who participate in their reviews % care leavers stated they were involved in their Pathway Plans No. of children who attend the Children in Care Council – monthly No of care leavers who attend the Care Leavers Forum - monthly
Priority 2: Promote better physical and mental health and well-being through improved access to health information and services.
% initial health assessment % reviews of health assessment % dental check % of immunisations. % SDQ questionnaire completions (4- 16 years) Average SDQ scores
Priority 3: Have high aspirations for children in care and care leavers in their education, training and employment.
% of children in care with an EHCP plan % children in care achieving expected standards in Key Stage 2 Maths (termly) % children in care achieving expected standards in Key Stage 2 Writing (termly) % children in care achieving expected standards in Key Stage 2 Reading (termly) Average Attainment 8 score (yearly) Average progress 8 score (yearly) % children with a Personal Education Plan % children in care unauthorised absence % Looked After Children who have been looked after for 12 months who have had at least one Fixed Term Exclusion % all Looked After Children on reduced timetable % Care Leavers who are in Employment Education or Training (19-21yrs)
Priority 4: When children are unable to live within their family we will ensure our children are matched to carers who promote local connections, provide safe and stable placements and achieve timely permanence.
% of children with a permanence plan.

% children who achieved permanence - SGO % children who achieved permanence - Adoption % children in care living more than 20 miles from home address % children in care with 3 or more placement % children in care 2.5 yrs in same placement for 2+ yrs No of foster carers with delegated powers of responsibility Number of allegations made against foster carers Number of allegations made against foster carers that were substantiated % of children who have had an episode of missing % of children in care with more than one missing episode % children in care living in a commissioned placement % children in care living in foster placement	
Priority 5: Good and enriching experience of care provision and to prepare for adulthood and an independent and successful life.	
% care leavers who have a current Pathway Plan % of care leavers living in suitable accommodation (19-21 years) % of care leavers no longer in touch with Dorset local authority (19 – 21 years)	
Priority 6: Effective governance and planning arrangements are in place to support corporate parents can be the best they can be.	
No. of formal and informal Corporate Parenting Boards and attendance per annum. Participation of board members at activity days and participation events. Engagement with takeover events and audit. Benchmarking Corporate Parenting Data Set against previous year, Good and Outstanding Statistical Neighbours and National	

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