

# Corporate Parenting Panel

CLA and Care Leaver Accommodation Update  
June 2021

27/5/21

- Croydon Sufficiency Strategy and Plan
- Croydon CYP Accommodation Strategy:
  - In House Fostering, Independent Fostering Agencies, Residential Children's homes, Semi Independent Accommodation, Supported Housing and Care Leavers
- Housing, Gateway, Adults and Children's Social Care – Whole Council Approach to meet Corporate Parenting Responsibility
- Opportunities across Local Authority and CCG – joint approach
- Savings programmes attached to accommodation and placements
- Key decisions to be made, next steps set out here

- 30 For Croydon - a strong strategy designed to bolster the service we are able to give children and make us less reliant on commissioned providers
- Support from SLCP across LAs to develop and improve fostering recruitment
- We have a core foster carer population that is aging and more retirements will therefore follow over the next five years
- For the next 3-5 years, we will need to work in partnership with IFAs to meet need
- Also a possibility that we will have a larger number of new, less experienced carers who may struggle with higher needs placements for a few years

- In terms of supporting our in-house delivery, what must we consider the IFA market to mitigate this? Options could include:
  - a parallel 'in house search' opportunity for an IFA, with a payoff of lower prices and the same allowance structure for children
  - An offer that is targeted to a particular group of children and young people from IFAs, again at a capped cost
- Original plan to look more to IFAs for UASC, however it is highly likely that we will have less UASC numbers over the next few years
- We are currently looking to deliver specialist, high needs services in house, but the numbers of in-house carers we have may mean we need other options – should we look to develop this within the market as well?
- The difficulties around staying put, and the impact on sufficiency – every staying put placement is a great success for that child, but is also a fostering vacancy that no longer exists – Looking at Supported Lodgings as a potential answer

- Croydon's numbers are low for residential in comparison to our neighbours; a lot of efforts are made to keep children out of residential, step children down from residential, and return children home
- Our APPA has had more referrals at more favourable rates
- Small number of local providers on APPA and local placements – engagement sessions taking place with the eight children's homes that operate in Croydon; this appears to have led to some placement offers
- Highest needs cohort; we consistently struggle to regulated placements – often due to intense aggression or mental health concerns beyond foster carer's confidence levels or abilities.
- Spot purchased referrals are consistently failing to meet these needs, leading to suggestions for different approaches; options include:
  - Directly commissioned home – where we contract with a provider to set up and run a home for us in borough
- In-house home which the local authority run

## Semi-Independent Accommodation

- Current plan is to consider and design an accommodation pathway similar to ones used in Southwark and Camden that accommodates 16-18 year old CLA, 16-18 year old homeless young people and care leavers in a more young-person friendly way – however this will need further scoping and a large amount of design
- This is more likely to attract registered social landlords, and is designed to reduce the reliance on spot purchased semi-independence; reducing risk and cost
- Large changes afoot in terms of legislation; DfE currently out to consult on regulation for Supported Accommodation for 16-18 year olds
- Consideration will be needed in light of the legislation change, as to what we may wish to do locally

# Supported Housing and Supported Lodgings

- Current offer for supported housing is being re-commissioned for a year (with the option to extend for a further year) to enable robust re-commissioning and re-design work to meet projected need
- Plan for a model of Supported Housing Delivery that is smaller, more dispersed, more home-like and more young people focussed; this is likely to be more expensive than the current offer, but also safer and more likely to be able to accept young people.
- Supported Lodgings development is also part of this plan – homelessness focussed service has been re-commissioned for a year, to consider robust re-commissioning/in-housing assessment

