

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

Informing our approach to fairness

Proposal:	Children's Social Care – In-house residential
Date of assessment:	November 2020
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Assessment team:	Maria Brady, Janette Brown, Sophie Stallworthy
Version:	2 – updated following consultation
Planned review date:	June 2021

Section A: Current service

1. What does the service / function / policy do?

The Children's Act 1989, requires Children's Social Care (CSC) to take steps to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within the city, which meets the needs of children that we are caring for and whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in our area ('the sufficiency duty').

To meet our sufficiency duty, our Corporate Parenting service is responsible for providing safe, stable homes that meet the individual needs and support the achievement of good outcomes for children and young people in our care. Depending on the needs of children and young people this can include placements with friends and wider family, in fostering, in adoptive placements and residential children's homes.

The Corporate Parenting service also manages our six in-house residential children's homes. Details, including the number of beds, remit and Ofsted ratings, are set out below:

Name	Number of beds within the home	Remit	Ofsted Ratings
Children's Home 1	6	Long term residential home	Good
Children's Home 2	6	Long term	Good
Children's Home 3	3	Short-Medium Term Home	Good
Children's Home 4	1	Short Term Home	Not yet inspected
Children's Home 5	6	Short break beds for children and young people aged 6-17 with disabilities and additional needs	Outstanding
Children's Home 6	4	A temporary registered home providing capacity through the COVID-19 pandemic	Not inspected
Total	26 beds		

2. Who do we deliver this service for?

Our service is available to all children and young people age 0-18 who live within the city and are assessed as being a child in need or at risk of significant harm. We care for children and young people from age 0–18 and up to age 24 where a young person has a significant learning need. We provide leaving care support to young people from the age of 18 up to the age of 25.

Our ambition is to support families to stay safely together. However, where this is not possible a child or young person enters the care of the council. In Newcastle at the end of October 2020 there were 685 children in care, a rate of 117 per 10,000. This is higher than our statistical neighbours. Our ambitious Family Valued programme (described in the Keeping Families Safely Together Integrated Impact Assessment) sets out how we plan to work differently to reduce the number of children and young people entering and remaining in care.

Children in care tell us that they would prefer to grow up in loving family homes. In Newcastle, 70% of our children in care do so through fostering arrangements. Our use of independent sector children's homes has fallen dramatically in the last twelve months, 42 children and young people benefit from these placements. At the end of October 2020, a much smaller number of children (14 or 2%) live in our in-house children's homes. This is because we are finding out more about them, we are working with them before they return home or because it is the best and safest place for them to live.

3. Why do we deliver this service?

Section 22G of the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts places a duty on us to take steps to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within the city, which meets the needs of children that we are looking after, and whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in our area ('the sufficiency duty').

We are also committed our corporate parenting responsibility for enabling children in our care to experience happy and fulfilling lives.

4. How much do we currently spend on this service / function / policy?

Gross expenditure	Gross income	Net budget	Comments:
£3,412,700	-	£3,412,700	Based on 2020-21 Base budget. This budget covers the cost of our in-house residential service

5. How many people do we employ to deliver this service?

No. posts	No. full time equivalent officers	Comments:
81	72.38	Posts and FTE relate to those staff employed in our residential services within Corporate Parenting.

Section B: Proposal for future service

6. How do we propose to change the service / function / policy?

Update following consultation: We have considered the feedback provided during the consultation period (see Section C). As a result, there are no significant changes to the proposal.

Children's Social Care is transforming how it works with children and families to safely reduce demand for services and to keep families safely together.

Background to our proposal

In 2018, in response to rising numbers of children and young people coming into care and higher than average numbers of children on Child Protection plans, we began work to radically transform how we work with families. The Right Child, Right Care Transformation Plan was developed focusing on strengthening and developing our workforce to better meet demand, growing our in-house fostering provision and reducing the use of external residential provision.

Fundamental to reducing our use of external residential provision was ensuring our in-house residential provision had the capacity and skills to work with children and young people who often entered care in emergency situations with highly complex needs.

Since April 2019, we have tested and learnt from new models of residential care. We have:

- Opened two smaller homes (Children's Homes 3 and 4) that provide a homely environment and have the space for therapeutic work with children and young people. The aim of both homes is to support either reunification with family or a new, more stable, foster care placement. These models build on practice elsewhere in the country and have made a positive difference. However, we recognise that working with young people in this way requires larger properties.
- Created an innovative new service to work with residential staff across our children's homes to identify signs of trauma and help them to respond appropriately to resulting behaviour, fostering resilience and improving outcomes. A separate therapist within our fostering service also supports our foster carers to help prevent the breakdown of placements. This team has made a positive difference with staff and children and young people.
- Launched a new Outreach team that works with children and young people with complex behaviours to safely avoid the need for care, prevent placement breakdowns and support family reunification.

The models above, allied to learning from practice across the country, means that we have a clearer view on the strengths and areas for development across our residential estate, particularly as we implement Family Valued from autumn 2020.

In summary, in the future we want our Children's Homes and wider model to focus on:

- Relationships as the starting point to work with children and young people in our care
- Supporting families to stay safely together – including the ability to work with young people to get them home

- Making the most of the skills and expertise of our staff – across our Children’s Homes and wider services to help overcome challenges that could otherwise lead to placement breakdown
- An appropriate mix of smaller Children’s Homes providing emergency provision when short term needs arise and continuing to provide loving and stable long-term homes where this is the right thing to do for the child or young person.

Proposed changes to our in-house residential model

To achieve the above we are proposing the following changes to our in-house residential estate:

- Closing temporary Children’s Home 6 – this was intended to provide temporary capacity at the beginning of COVID pandemic.
- Closing Children’s Home 4 – as above, learning suggests that we need more spacious accommodation to provide the best possible support to vulnerable young people.
- Changing the remit of Children’s Home 2 to support short-term, emergency and turn-around work with young people. This change is important and fits with the Keeping Families Safely Together IIA and our work on the Family Valued programme, to work intensively with young people to support change and help them return home.
- Investing in and opening an additional children’s home – Children’s Home 7 - which will provide longer term care for more complex children in a more spacious setting.

This means we will operate five Children’s Homes in the city from 2021-22 which, subject to the needs of individual children, will provide loving and supportive homes for up to 22 children and young people. The changes we have outlined above will positively impact the children and young people in our care by, creating a more “homely” environment, improving matching of children who live in each of the homes, and where appropriate will better enable us to support children and young people to reunify with their family or settle within a fostering family.

These changes will not result in staff reductions although staff will be required to work with children and young people across the remaining homes. To support this, we will implement one operating model across all of our remaining homes; ensuring consistency of experience for staff and children and young people. These changes are anticipated to achieve savings of £425,790 in 2021-22.

Proposed In-House Residential Provision			
Name	Number of beds within the home	Remit	Summary of any changes
Children’s Home 1	6	Long term residential home	No change to number of beds or remit
Children’s Home 2	4	Short term / Emergency / Turnaround Home	Changing the home’s purpose from a long-term residential home to a home for shorter term and emergency placements.

			<p>Children's Home 2 is due to be replaced with a new build property. Work on the new build property will commence in Summer / Autumn 2021.</p> <p>Until the new home is complete Children's Home 2 will continue, in the interim, to provide 6 beds.</p>
Children's Home 3	3	Short term / Emergency / Turnaround Home	Purpose will be for shorter term and emergency placements
Children's Home 5	6	Short break beds for children and young people aged 6-17 with disabilities and additional needs.	No change to capacity.
Children's Home 7	3	Long term provision for children and young people with particularly complex emotional and behavioural needs, for whom continuing care health funding would be appropriate.	This will be a new Children's Home. Subject to registration we expect it to be available from early 2021.
Total	22		

7. What evidence have we used to inform this proposal?

Information source	What this has told us
Our Data collection (known as SSRS reports)	It confirms that Newcastle's rate of children on Child Protection Plans and Children in Care is high and above the latest statistical neighbour data.
Research into good practice in Children's Homes	<p>We explored models including, No Wrong Door, Mockingbird and Multi-systemic Therapy Family Intervention Teams. We also spoke to other councils including Leeds City Council, North Yorkshire County Council and Nottingham City Council.</p> <p>This research made clear the value of homes with fewer beds with staff able to work with children and young people in a trauma-informed way. The research also highlighted the important role short-term Children's Homes have in working with children and young people to safely return home and in some cases to proactively prevent entry to care.</p>
Newcastle Sufficiency Strategy 2020-22	<p>Our Sufficiency Strategy sets out our most recent analysis of demand for placements for Children in Care.</p> <p>The Sufficiency Strategy confirms that despite planned reductions in the number of Children in Care we will continue to require in-house Children's Homes. These homes and our staff</p>

	will be equipped to work with and care for a diverse range of children and young people, including those with complex needs.
Ofsted Home Inspection Outcomes	All of our children's homes are rated good or outstanding.
Ofsted Inspection of Children in Need of Help and Protection and Looked after Children, July 2017	In July 2017, the council was judged to be 'Requires Improvement' with areas of good e.g. the Newcastle Safeguarding Children's Board, leadership and management, adoption services and services for care leavers. A recommendation from the inspection was that: "Newcastle City Council should accelerate plans to ensure that sufficient placements are available to meet the needs of children locally, particularly in an emergency, and especially those children who have more complex needs."
The Pass the Parcel report published by the Children's Commissioner in December 2019	The Children's Commissioner makes some recommendations that are highly relevant to the sufficiency of local placements, but in particular, that DfE should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a capital injection for future commissioning arrangements and consider financial incentives for local authorities that place children locally; and, • Update guidance for the training and development of staff in children's homes – particularly in relation to children's mental health – so that a focus on children's immediate safety does not compromise their emotional wellbeing.

8. What will be the financial impact of this proposal(s)?

This proposal will achieve net revenue savings of £425,790.

9. What will be the impact upon our employees of this proposal?

No. FTEs	% workforce	Comments:
N/A	N/A	N/A

Section C: Consultation

10. Who have we engaged and consulted with about this proposal?

Date	Who	How	Main issues raised
Dec 20 – Jan 21	Newcastle Residents	Let's Talk	A member of the public commented that smaller homes seemed like a good idea for children and young people and would be a win-win solution if these homes were also more energy-efficient and cost-effective, and enabled children to stay in their local area.

			They also commented that children should not be placed in homes if they are about to close.
Dec 20 – Jan 21	VCS Organisations	Let's Talk Online Event	No specific comments raised at this event.
15 January 2021	Health Watch	Let's Talk (in writing)	Health Watch commented that they supported the transformation of children's social care services to aim to keep families safely together wherever possible. However, they queried whether the closure of the temporary capacity provided by Children's Home 6 should be paused, as the Covid-19 pandemic continues into spring 2021.
15 January 2021	Connected Voice	Let's Talk (in writing)	Connected Voice commented that they understand that improving the residential offer for children and young people needed to be done in conjunction with the keeping families safely together proposal (see IIA 3).
13 January 2021	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership	Virtual Teams Meeting	Feedback was positive about the developments that will be implemented to support families to stay safely together. Discussion around the continued availability of external provision for children and young people outside of the city.
11 January 2021	Education Staff and School Representatives	Virtual Teams Meeting	No issues raised about the proposal
16 December 2020	Children's Social Care Staff	Virtual Teams Meeting	Feedback was positive about new approaches to supporting families to stay safely together. Staff commented that families need the right support systems in place to support children to remain with their families. Staff also queried whether the financial position might change in the future due to current uncertainties (e.g. COVID).
4 December 2020	Registered Managers and Deputies of In-house Children's Homes	Virtual Teams Meeting	Feedback was positive about how the changes being implemented with the Family Valued approach will reduce the need for residential homes for young people. Staff felt changing the remit of Children's Home 2 to a short term / emergency / turnaround home was positive as long there is sufficient provision for them to move on to. Staff noted that Children's Home 5 was different from the other homes and this must be recognised.

Section D: Impact assessment

Type of impact (Actual / potential disadvantage or beneficial outcome; none)	Detail of impact	How will this be addressed or mitigated?
People with protected characteristics		
Age		
Potential beneficial outcome	Our proposals will create smaller and better homes for children and young people in our care. The revised statement of purpose will allow for better matching of children's needs within residential homes and placements including but not limited to age, gender, faith, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background, sexual orientation and any disability or medical issues.	
Disability		
Beneficial outcome	Our proposals will ensure our homes are more suited to working with children and young people with a range of complex needs and disabilities.	
Gender reassignment / identity		
Potential beneficial outcome	Our proposals will create smaller and better homes for children and young people in our care. The revised statement of purpose will allow for better matching of children's needs within residential homes and placements including but not limited to age, gender, faith, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background, sexual orientation and any disability or medical issues.	
Sex		

Type of impact (Actual / potential disadvantage or beneficial outcome; none)	Detail of impact	How will this be addressed or mitigated?
Potential beneficial outcome	Our proposals will create smaller and better homes for children and young people in our care. The revised statement of purpose will allow for better matching of children's needs within residential homes and placements including but not limited to age, gender, faith, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background, sexual orientation and any disability or medical issues.	
Marriage and civil partnership		
None		
Pregnancy and maternity		
Potential beneficial outcome	Our proposals will create smaller and better homes for children and young people in our care. The revised statement of purpose will allow for better matching of children's needs within residential homes and placements including but not limited to age, gender, faith, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background, sexual orientation and any disability or medical issues.	
Race and ethnicity		
None	Our proposals will create smaller and better homes for children and young people in our care. The revised statement of purpose will allow for better matching of children's needs within residential homes and placements including but not limited to age, gender, faith, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background, sexual orientation and any disability or medical issues.	

Type of impact (Actual / potential disadvantage or beneficial outcome; none)	Detail of impact	How will this be addressed or mitigated?
Religion and belief		
None	Our proposals will create smaller and better homes for children and young people in our care. The revised statement of purpose will allow for better matching of children's needs within residential homes and placements including but not limited to age, gender, faith, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background, sexual orientation and any disability or medical issues.	
Sexual orientation		
Potential beneficial	Our proposals will create smaller and better homes for children and young people in our care. The revised statement of purpose will allow for better matching of children's needs within residential homes and placements including but not limited to age, gender, faith, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background, sexual orientation and any disability or medical issues.	
Other potential impacts		
People vulnerable to socio-economic impacts		
Beneficial outcome	Our data tells us that children in care are more likely to come from deprived areas. For children who need our care within a residential setting our proposals will create smaller and better homes for them.	
Businesses		
Potential beneficial outcome	Where possible and appropriate local businesses will be used in the construction and decorating of the new Children's Home 2.	

Type of impact (Actual / potential disadvantage or beneficial outcome; none)	Detail of impact	How will this be addressed or mitigated?
Geography		
Beneficial outcome	Our data tells us that children in care are more likely to come wards where there is a higher proportion of deprivation. For children who need our care within a residential setting our proposals will create smaller and better homes for them.	
Community cohesion		
None		
Community safety		
None		
Public Health		
Potential beneficial outcome	Our proposal will improve the residential offer available to children and young people in our care who require a residential placement. Improvements in the quality and condition of our homes, the matching of children and young people within homes, and a greater focus on re-unifying children and young people with their families will support improved health and wellbeing outcomes.	
Climate		
Potential beneficial outcome	Where it is possible and appropriate the construction of the new Children's Home 2 will include the installation of energy efficient systems.	