

REPORT FOR: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date of Meeting: 12 April 2016

Subject: High Costs Placements Monitoring

Key Decision: No

Responsible Officer: Chris Spencer, Corporate Director of People

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Simon Brown,
Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and
Young People

Exempt: No

**Decision subject to
Call-in:** No

Wards affected: All

Enclosures: Appendix 1 - High Cost Placements report to
Corporate Parenting Panel

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

The purpose of this report is to inform the Corporate Parenting Panel of progress made in monitoring high cost placements.

Recommendations:

Corporate Parenting Panel is requested to note the report and support officers recommendations to coordinate another review of high costs placements in September 2016.

Reason:

The Corporate Parenting Strategy includes the priority to deliver safe and stable placements, provide a choice of good quality placements that provide security, stability, safety and high standards of care. The review of high cost placements ensures costs of care are kept to a minimum and the services provided are meeting the desired outcomes for the children in their care.

Section 2 – Report

See attached report – Appendix 1
High Cost Placements report to Corporate Parenting Panel

Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No
Separate risk register in place? No

Legal Implications

This report is for information only.

Financial Implications

If all of the panel's recommendations are able to be realised there are potentially £500k savings to be made as a result of reviewing these placements. Progress will be monitored at the next panel in September 2016.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

Looked After Children come from diverse backgrounds and have a wide range of needs. We need a range of placements to ensure these needs are met. The discussions regarding value for money ensure that each individual young person's placement has clearly defined objectives and desired outcomes which reflect their needs.

Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

The review of placements for children in care contribute to the administration's priorities.

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
- Making a difference for families

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jo Frost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 30 March 2016		
Name: Helen Ottino	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 30 March 2016		
Ward Councillors notified:	NO, as it impacts on all Wards	
EqIA carried out:	NO	

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Peter Tolley,
Head of Service - Corporate Parenting
Tel : 02087366943 Email : Peter.tolley@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

NONE

Appendix 1

High Cost Placements report to Corporate Parenting Panel

The Councils saving plans for 2016/17 include £500k to be saved through children's placements and £200k to be saved through Leaving Care placements.

On 26th February a challenge panel undertook a review of the 20 most expensive placements. The panel was chaired by Paul Hewitt Divisional Director of Children and Young People and had representatives from children's social care, finance, procurement, commissioning and health commissioning.

These 20 placements account for an annual spend of over 2 million pounds. The panel looked at these cases in detail and highlighted a number of ways to make potential savings.

- 1) Improved commissioning with robust attention to the breakdown of costs and linking costs more clearly to outcomes
- 2) Having clear timeframes for moving children to lower cost placements such as Fostering or Semi Independent placements
- 3) Ensuring there is clear identification of therapeutic costs which can be met by health and developing clearer pathways to the Tripartite Panel and Health funding
- 4) Ensuring there is clearer identification of Education costs which can be met through Government grant funding
- 5) Ensuring that children move back home at the earliest possibility and that appropriate support is available to ensure children remain with their birth families where at all possible.

Individual actions plans were identified for each of these young people and these will be reviewed and monitored robustly. If all of the panel's recommendations are able to be realised there are potentially £500k savings to be made as a result of reviewing these placements. Another panel is scheduled for September to review progress and consider new high cost placements made. It was noted that whilst we need to ensure there is value for money the children in these placements have complex needs and present very challenging behaviour. In undertaking this exercise we will not compromise the safety or wellbeing of children.