

Briefing for London local authority Leaders and Lead Members for Children
Following discussion at London Councils Executive on 8/11/22

Secure Children's Home for London and Pan-London Commissioning Vehicle

Following thorough debate at London Councils Executive on 8/11/22, the proposal for the new London Secure Children's Home was welcomed and it was agreed that each Local Authority should be asked if they would commit to being a member of a Pan-London Vehicle that would be responsible for the commissioning and operation of the home. This follows the London Lead Members for Children Workshop held on 12/10/22, where Lead Members discussed the proposals and unanimous support from the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS). The template Cabinet paper, developed with ALDCS and Society of London Treasurers is now with all local authorities for decision at Cabinet or the appropriate decision-making body, as decided locally.

The key points from the paper are listed below:

- London currently has no Secure Welfare provision for children, resulting in placements far from home at great cost and with weak arrangements following the placement.
- Following work by London local authorities, Health and the Mayor's office, a proposal to Department for Education has secured a grant for £50 million capital and over £3 million revenue to develop a Secure Children's Home in London, to be opened in 2025-26. To access these funds, we require a Pan-London Vehicle (PLV) to oversee the provision, which also offers potential for wider joint commissioning. The grant will fund capital and revenue costs for development of the provision.
- Whilst the development period is funded by Department for Education, after launch there will be core operating costs (e.g. management, finance, procurement etc) and placement costs to be funded. It is presently proposed by ALDCS that this is funded by way of an annual subscription charge to PLV members of £20k payable once the home is operational.
- An alternative funding model is being developed which would remove the annual contribution with the all the costs being met through placement fees.
- Membership of the PLV will not guarantee a placement being available to the Member Authority but they would be prioritised for placement and have a lower fee than non-member local authorities
- The Department for Education need confirmation of local authority support and Barnet (as current fund holding local authority) is seeking committed partners for the next phase.
- Local authorities are being recommended to support the proposal and join the PLV. This will enable your local authority to influence the next phase, including design of building and provision, further financial modelling, revised business case, provider selection, development of practice model, safeguarding arrangements and placement processes.
- After this development phase, local authorities will have the option to continue their membership of the PLV into the operational period or end their membership.
- There will be ongoing opportunities for London local authorities to join or leave the PLV in line with arrangements agreed by the member local authorities

For further information, please contact

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