

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

15 July 2020

HOUSING OFFER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Report of the Senior Housing Manager, Neighbourhood Directorate

1. Introduction

A paper was presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in July 2019 which outlined how the Council will prevent and tackle Homelessness through the adoption of the Homeless Prevention Strategy and the development of joint protocols with Together for Children to tackle homelessness in Young People.

This report provides an update on this work.

2. Strategic Context

The Housing Strategy for Sunderland 2017 – 2022 has as one of its main priorities “to support vulnerable people to access and maintain housing” and within this priority there is a key action to develop a joint protocol between Together for Children and the Housing Service to ensure that 16 and 17 year old homeless young people, and those leaving care are supported to find suitable accommodation.

To help meet this aim, the Council launched its Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Prevention Strategy in November 2019 following consultation key with partners, including Together for Children.

This Strategy focuses on this issue as outlined within the key priority ‘to prevent homelessness among young people’ and to ensure that there is suitable advice and accommodation for them. This could be accommodation within the family home, in commissioned or supported accommodation or in their own tenancies with appropriate levels of support.

3. Actions So far

- The Homelessness Prevention Strategy was launched in November 2019, and includes actions to develop delivery plans linked to the priorities in relation to homeless young people and care leavers and these are:
 - A pathway agreed to have a coherent and consistent pathway for those young people facing homelessness.
 - The councils Housing Allocation scheme has been revised considering the HRA and the needs of care leavers are now considered.

- We have made a commitment that no young person will be placed in hostel accommodation with shared facilities.
- A Joint Protocol between Housing and Together for Children was completed for the prevention of homelessness and provision of suitable accommodation for 16-17-year olds. This outlines clear and practical arrangements to prevent youth homelessness and to ensure 16- or 17-year olds have accommodation which meets their needs
- This Joint Protocol is now available on the Council's website and can be accessed [here](#)
- Advice and guidance for 16 to 17 year olds who may potentially become homeless is now available on the Council's website and centres on giving advice to young people and their families to access advice and guidance regarding housing.
- Work to ensure that young people can afford their own tenancies with housing providers. We are continuing to work with partners to give advice on affordability, including work with HASST to implement best practice.
- We are also working with the Private Rented Sector to make it easier for young people to access and sustain a tenancy. Landlords now accept paper bonds to secure accommodation and we have also been successful in securing funds from MHCLG for use as a 'personalisation pot' which could be used to pay rent up front and secure accommodation for young people.
- Jointly commissioned supported housing for young homeless people and looked after children. A working party has been established and they are exploring funding options to enable programmes to be developed.

5. Recommendations

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to:

- i) Accept this report as an update on the joint work undertaken by Housing and Together for Children on the housing offer for young people, and,
- ii) Agree to receive a further report / update regards the Homelessness Strategy and Joint Protocol in relation to young people.