

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## REPORT TO: Scrutiny

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**Date of Meeting:** 11<sup>th</sup> November 2013

**Report of:** Nigel Moorhouse, Head of Service Early Help and Protection

**Subject/Title:** Residential Task and Finish recommendations - update

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### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Scrutiny members of progress made in respect of the recommendations contained in the task and Finish report on residential care completed in August 2010 and considered at Cabinet on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 The residential task and finish review, completed in August 2010, made a number of recommendations in respect of the way forward for the service. Due to the changes in the governance and scrutiny arrangements for Children's Social Care services, the final outstanding recommendations have not been formally reported to Scrutiny.

### 3.0 The Recommendations of the report

- 3.1 Outstanding recommendations were as follows;
- 3.1.1 That the responses to the recommendations made to Cabinet in the report by the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee entitled Review of Residential Provision, considered by Cabinet on 20 September 2010 be noted. **This was completed**
- 3.1.2 That in response to recommendations 3 & 7 the recommendation that a further 12 residential beds should be made available within Cheshire East for children requiring residential provision and to reduce the reliance upon provision external to Cheshire East be endorsed.

**A further 12 residential beds were commissioned by the local authority in 2011. Four of those beds were subsequently relinquished due to a lack of confidence on the provider. The remaining 8 beds are contracted to Together Trust who manage 2 provisions in Macclesfield on behalf of the Council. The 2 provisions are Ivy Lane (4 beds and judged 'good' by Ofsted in**

**December 2012) and the recently opened Victoria Lodge (4 beds). Cheshire East currently has 16 in house residential beds.**

- 3.1.3 That the Director of Children's Services be charged with taking steps to secure access to such provision in the most cost-effective manner; and that the provision should meet all statutory requirements to ensure high quality support is provided and the needs of the young people placed in the provision are met; that this be subject to completion of a cost and benefit analysis and formal approval of the revenue and capital budgetary provision via the Council's 2011/14 Budget.

**Since the securing of the additional provision, there has been a reduction in the spend on the out of area budget and a decrease in the number of children needing to be accommodated in private provider Children's Homes. The average unit cost of in house provision is £2,129 as opposed to external provision which averages £3,237 per week currently.**

**The Cheshire East Council Placement Sufficiency Statement (attached as appendix 1) details further how the Council is seeking to secure cost effective high quality placements for its Cared for Children.**

- 3.1.4 That the necessary steps be taken to ensure the present arrangements with the Together Trust for the delivery of residential care at Wilkinson House in Sandbach can be continued for a further period of 12 months while additional provision is secured within the Borough.

**Residential Care continued at Wilkinson House for a further period of 12 months. As Together Trust were awarded the contract for the Macclesfield Homes, this enabled a seamless transition for the group of young people who were remaining in residential care at Wilkinson House at that time.**

#### **4.0 Further information.**

- 4.1 The increase in in-house residential provision has ensured a reduction in the number of children placed in costly external residential provision from 42 in April 2012 to 25 at the end of September 2013.

Furthermore, at the end of August 2013, 82% of Cared for Children were living within a family situation compared to only 68% in April 2012

Children exiting care as a result of adoption continues to increase from 16 in 2009/10 to 26 for the year 2012/13.

There is a continued drive to reduce the numbers of children placed in external residential care.

## **5.0 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications in respect of the content of this report.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

- 6.1 That the recommendations resulting from the previous residential task and finish report are signed off as completed and that there is recognition that future placement commissioning etc will respond to information collated for the purpose of the annual placement sufficiency statement.

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