

## Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Budget Proposals 16/17: Step by Step Supported Lodgings		Karen Felgate - Contracts and Commissioning Manager	19 January 2016 Version 2 (Exec)
<b>Proposal:</b>	To cease funding this resource.		
<b>Total budget 15/16:</b>	£100,000	<b>Recommended officer saving 16/17:</b>	£100,000 (100%)
<b>Initial proposed saving 16/17:</b>	£100,000 (100%)	<b>Final recommendation to Executive 16/17:</b>	To proceed with this savings proposal, without any modifications.
<b>Nos of responses:</b>	<p>24 responses were received in total:  DnA Project, Step by Step Partnership Ltd (7 responses), West Berkshire Council Care Leavers Team and Housing Service, UNISON, Tilehurst Parish Council, Pangbourne Parish Council, Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.  Six respondents are users or carers of users of the service.</p>		
<b>Key issues raised:</b>	<p>All responses received indicated the negative impact the cut in funding would have on very vulnerable young people, to whom the Council has a Corporate Parenting responsibility. These include Looked After Children, Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers, care leavers and mothers and babies. Those who made this point made it clear that the service provided a 'lifeline of support' supporting those who had already faced much adversity.</p> <p>Responses from professionals who accessed the service were clear that there was very little alternative.</p> <p>Respondents strongly argued that the impact of closing this service was likely to have a greater cost implication to other statutory services (including Housing Services, such as homelessness) and statutory care services for children. Concerns have been raised that the proposal was not based upon evidence of need and is short sighted. This should be taken into account prior to any decision being made.</p> <p>Concerns were raised that there is no alternative model or form of support provision being suggested with this proposal.</p> <p>Respondents felt that discussions with the providers to form an alternative support model to support this vulnerable group should precede any decisions.</p> <p>The impact respondents believed cuts in services will have were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in demand/cost to services elsewhere</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Increased pressure on Children's Services</li> <li>• Foster placements</li> </ul>		
<b>Equality issues:</b>	Vulnerable young people (age), pregnancy and maternity,		
<b>Suggestions for reducing the impact on service users:</b>	<b>Suggestion</b>	<b>Council response</b>	
	Increase foster placements.	This would put more pressure on Council budgets as will lead to an increase in high cost placements and will prove to be more expensive than supported lodgings	
	Reduce placement capacity to reduce costs	<p>Remodelling and reduction of service is an option. Council could consider retaining a smaller number of contracted placements.</p> <p>Step By Step have come back with the following proposal :</p> <p>There are additional costs which are not associated with core delivery but are a monthly payment triggered by the occupancy rate and vary according to use of the service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10 placements at 95% occupancy across the year would necessitate £59,280 plus core delivery costs of £26,000 totals £85,280.</li> <li>- 8 placements across the year would necessitate £47,424 plus core delivery costs of £25,000 totals £72,424.</li> <li>- 6 placements across the year would necessitate £35,568 plus core delivery costs of £24,000 totals £59,568.</li> </ul> <p>Step by Step propose that 8 placements would succeed in continuing to meet local need whilst also succeeding in reducing the cost of provision. This would lead to a saving of £42,576 on the existing contract value.</p> <p>Step by Step would seek to retain the full bank of hosts to ensure a choice of placements and a full range of expertise, whilst also enabling the possibility of spot purchased placements in the future should local need increase or should there be a desire to reduce the costs associated with foster placements for young people who may otherwise be eligible and better suited to Supported Lodgings provision.</p>	

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	Contract for Bramlings should be looked at before this vital service	Bramlings is part of a holistic service for homeless services within West Berkshire. This service is also under consideration in the next round of savings in 2017-18.	
	Retain these placements and grow them over time to reduce the need for more expensive fostering/less effective supported accommodation options	Reduction on use of high cost residential placements/IFA's?	
	Access service on the basis of spot purchasing framework with some core staffing costs allocated to co-ordinate placements	Not sure that this option will reduce costs significantly	
	Share costs with a neighbouring authority and build up a larger bank of hosts across the area.	Not sure that this option will reduce costs significantly	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Dedicated young person's information advice and guidance service maintaining a directory of support and connecting young people to specialist services	West Berkshire already has the Local Offer which provides an information service. This could be extended? How?	
	Private rental sector worker and bond deposit to build links with the private sector and broker accommodation for vulnerable young people	Limited private rented accommodation available in the district. Will not provide level of support required.	
	Full saving of £201,000 is taken from the Mental Health Supported Living Scheme in order to save the supported lodging scheme	This would delay closure of service for one year only	

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	West Berkshire Council could invest in early intervention such as mediation, mentors/talent coaches, to reduce and avoid cost across a range of Council budgets now and for the future	This will not fully mitigate the impact of the loss of this service	
<b>Suggestions for how others may help contribute:</b>	<p>Step by Step have suggested that they could deliver a wide range of alternative support services and would be very happy to discuss options along the lines of those outlined above based upon 8 placements across the year.</p> <p>Many respondents felt that discussion with the providers to form an alternative support model to support this vulnerable group should precede any decisions. Discussions could establish exactly what other options can be provided and at what price and if alternative sources of funding can be explored</p>		
<b>Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:</b>	Although no new issues have been raised through the consultation, Step by Step is seen a valuable and effective resource for young homeless people. The service offers not only housing related support, but produces tangible benefits for the wider well being of the individual placed within the service.		
<b>Officer recommendation as a result of responses:</b>	<p>Apart from an offer from the provider to deliver a more targeted service for a lower level of funding, which it is not possible to identify at this point, feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this proposal.</p> <p>Whilst it is understood a decision to withdraw funding will have an impact on the users of the service, given the level of financial savings the Council is required to make to achieve a balanced budget position and maintain core statutory services, the recommendation is to proceed with the proposal as described with no changes.</p>		

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