
Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

7 January 2021

The National House Project

Report by Director of Law and Assurance

Summary

The National House Project is part of the DfE Innovation Programme to increase the range and choice of accommodation for young people who are or have been looked after. The aim of the project is to better prepare care leavers for independence.

The evidence from other House Project sites indicates that the service improves outcomes for care leavers and has reduced demand on supported accommodation from young people who are willing and able to live independently with support. It is therefore proposed to create a local house project in West Sussex.

The aim of the House Project is to provide a new accommodation offer for care leavers with longer term savings for the wider public sector through improved outcomes.

The proposal is to fund a local House Project for a 3-year period. Implementing a local House Project will offer a group of care leavers (each project generally works with between 10 and 15 young people at one time) with the opportunity to take ownership of their accommodation from the start. They will do this with specialist support from the project team. This will help to equip care leavers with the necessary practical and emotional skills to deal with the challenges that they may experience in managing a tenancy or household. In addition to the professional support, all the young people in the project will form a network and support each other on a day-to-day basis.

Focus for scrutiny

The Committee is asked to consider the proposed implementation of a local House Project in West Sussex prior to decision by the Cabinet on 22 January 2021 (as set out in the report attached at Appendix 1).

Key areas for scrutiny include:

- (1) The evidence from other house projects, and whether this demonstrates that the proposed model will provide improved outcomes for care leavers in West Sussex, as well as reduced costs for West Sussex County Council.
- (2) How the Council will monitor and evidence the success of the project.
- (3) Whether the identified risks as set out in section 6 of the report are the right ones and whether the mitigating actions are sufficient.

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

Details

The background and context to this item for scrutiny are set out in the attached reports (listed below), including resource and risk implications, Equality, Human Rights, Social Value, Sustainability and Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessments.

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Appendices

- Appendix 1: The National House Project draft decision report.

Background papers

None