

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 09 July 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Neighbourhood Support Housing Services - Young People's Accommodation & Support Tender	
<b>Report of</b>	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 Bury Council currently commissions Great Places to deliver the following services:
- **Young People's supported accommodation** (25 units)
  - **Teenage Parent's supported accommodation** (12 units)
  - **Resettlement / Floating Support Services:** tenancy sustainment support for young people moving from the above and statutory services into the community, including those with Complex Needs, Care Leavers, Looked after Children, Young people known to the criminal justice system, unaccompanied and separated migrant young people.
- 1.3 In November 2024, the Market Shaping and Oversight Board approved a 6-month contract extension of the above services from April 2025 to September 2025 to enable an in-depth review, consider future modelling of service provision and inform commissioning intentions in partnership with Children's Services and Housing Services.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The recommendations to Cabinet:
- Agree to the procurement of the following lots under Neighbourhood Support Housing Services:
    - i. **Lot 1 – Young People's Accommodation and Support Service (including care leavers) for age 18 to 25;** to include 40 units of accommodation comprising of self-contained units in a block(s) with shared communal space for social, educational and recreational opportunities based on the Foyer Model. (25 units immediately increasing to 40 by April 2026) with 6 to 9 months outreach support for those leaving the service and young people living independently in the community.
    - ii. **Lot 2 – Ofsted Registered Young Families Accommodation and Support Service (including care leavers) for age 16 to 25;** to include 20 units of mixed accommodation, (12 units immediately increasing to 20 by April 2026) with 6 to 9 months

specialist family outreach support for those leaving the service and young families living independently in the community.

- iii. **Lot 3 – Ofsted Registered Accommodation and Support Service (including care leavers) for age 16 to 18;** to include 9 units of mixed accommodation available from commencement of contract. With 6 to 9 months outreach support for those leaving the service.
- iv. Agree to a further 4-month extension for current contractual arrangements to 1st February 2026, to be funded from the adult social care budget. This is to allow sufficient time for procurement and mobilisation of service provision.

### **3 Reasons for recommendations**

- 3.1 Current contractual arrangements with Great Places will end on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
- 3.2 There has been a significant increase in the numbers of single young people and young families experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including care experienced young people, therefore supply of accommodation and support needs to increase to meet the growing challenge.
- 3.3 Joint funding arrangements are proposed to improve outcomes for young people, young parents and their children to enhance their quality of life, whilst also achieving value for money and potential cost savings to Children's Services by reducing the use of unregulated, out of borough placements, and spot purchase arrangements. The current cost of spot purchase arrangements ranges from £850 to £5625 per week, this highlights the opportunity this commission will provide by investing to save in the longer term.
- 3.4 We need to ensure that commissioned services:
  - Are aligned to the Care Leaver Covenant demonstrating Bury Council's commitment to supporting care experienced young people and ensuring we provide them with quality accommodation and support services in Borough, keeping them close to their connections and community.
  - Provide accommodation and support that enables young people to develop the skills needed to live healthy, independent lives in our communities.
  - Are aligned to delivering the objectives set out in '**Bury's Housing Strategy**':
    - Support that enables people to live well in the community.
    - Eliminate rough sleeping by 2025
  - Contribute to helping us achieve our aspiration in the '**Let's Do It Strategy**' that '**all children and young people in Bury reach their potential, are happy, healthy and safe and are therefore able to make the best use of their skills to lead independent and successful lives**'.

- Delivers the Core Outcomes:
  - Improved quality of life.
  - Improved early years development
  - Improved educational attainment
  - Improved adult skill levels and employability
  - Inclusive economic growth

#### **4. Alternative options considered and rejected**

- 4.1 The current contract for young people's accommodation and support services end on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025. Procurement rules only allow for a further extension to contractual arrangements, if we can demonstrate a clear intention to procure.
- 4.2 If new services are not commissioned, we will have unmet housing and support need, therefore, this provides an opportunity to review the current service provision, support modelling and funding arrangements.

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#### **5. Background**

- 5.1 The Community Commissioning Division commissioned a range of Neighbourhood Support Housing Services in 2018/19 to reduce and prevent homelessness and sustain future tenancies. Neighbourhood Support for Young People was awarded to Great Places to deliver from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 for 3 years with the option to extend annually for a further 2 years.
- 5.2 The provision for Lot 4 was extended by 6 months to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025 to allow for an in-depth review to determine future commissioning intentions.
- 5.3 Accommodation and support services are vital for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, especially care leavers where the authority has corporate parenting responsibilities. To ensure careful consideration of the needs of young people a partnership approach was agreed and a project group set up to oversee the review and tender process. The group includes membership from Adult Social Care, Children Services and Bury Housing Services.

- 5.4 A full review has been completed and recommendations on the next steps have been developed.

## 6. Review Methodology

- 6.1 To ensure a robust review and inform recommendations, a range of exercises have been carried out. This included a:
- desktop analysis of data relating to young people and young families.
  - research / benchmarking exercise related to youth homelessness.
  - consultation exercise using surveys and semi structured face-to-face discussions with current customers at all services.
  - Soft Market Testing / Stakeholder Event.

## 7. Findings

### 7.1 Key findings from Data Analysis:

- 7.2 Data was reviewed to consider the number of young people and young families accessing Bury Council Homelessness and Housing Advice Service and the current commissioned services. This data is shown below:

### Bury Council Homelessness & Housing Advice Service – Data from Jan 24 - Jan 25 for Young People:

Category	Total Number Age 16-24	Total Number of Care Leavers Age 16-24
Accessed Homeless and Advice Service	958	38
Already Homeless	183	9
Received Advice Only	305	3
Prevention Duty Owed	154	6
Valid Section 21 Notice	22	0

### Current Accommodation & Support Service Provision (25 units) – Data from March 2024 - March 2025 for Young People:

In the last 12 months at Castlecroft House and Peel Lodge:	Total Number
Young People on the Waiting List	97
Young People Moved Into Service	15
Young People Moved Out of Service	16
Incidents Reported	10
Safeguarding Concerns Reported	12

- 7.3 The data highlights demand is exceeding supply of supported accommodation for young people causing extensive unmet need and increased risk that young people will remain homeless or be unable to sustain future tenancies without support to develop skills.
- 7.4 The number of incidents and safeguarding concerns is considered reasonable over a twelve-month period at a scheme for 25 young people. The nature of these incidents and safeguarding concerns are important as they inform what types is needed; most incidents related to anti-social behaviour, and most safeguarding alerts related to mental health concerns.
- 7.5 The number of Care Leavers 18+ that accessed the above services during the period considered was **5**.

**Bury Council Homelessness & Housing Advice Service – Data from Jan 24 - Jan 25 for Young Families:**

Group	Adjusted Number of Individuals	Number of Children	Number Pregnant	Care Leavers
Single young women (16-24) - pregnant, no other children	35	0	71	36
Single young women (16-24) - with children	115	144	6	4
Couples (16-24) - with children	77	56	4	0

**Current Accommodation & Support Service Provision (12 Units) – Data from March 2024 - March 2025 for Young Families:**

In the last 12 months at Ellen Court	Number
Young mothers on the waiting list	15
Young mothers moved into the service	4
Young mothers moved out of the service	4
Incidents relating to visitors, anti-social behaviour and domestic harm	12
Safeguarding concerns relating to child protection, mental health and domestic harm	11

- 7.6 In the 12-month period considered, as total of **38** young people (**3 Care Leavers**) received support from the floating support / resettlement service who had either moved on from Castlecroft or Ellen Court or were living independently in the community and had adult social care needs.
- 7.7 The data highlights demand exceeds current supply, causing unmet need and increasing the risk for families being placed in temporary hotel accommodation. This is concerning as homelessness has a negative impact on families in many ways, especially for children, potentially impacting their health, social and emotional development.

- 7.8 It is accepted that not all young parents and families will want or need supported accommodation, however a proportion would benefit from this model of housing to develop independent living skills.
- 7.9 Others may need / want to live independently in the community with floating support, as such we must consider whether a specialist family outreach support service is needed for young families.
- 7.10 Consideration must be given to the nature of incidents and safeguarding alerts at the scheme as this indicates the type of specialist support some families may need to stay safe, in particular, domestic abuse, child protection, anti-social behaviour and mental health.
- 7.11 **Equalities Data**
- 7.12 Analysis of equalities data identified significant gaps across housing in recording protected characteristics.
- 7.13 It is recommended that equalities awareness training for housing services, referring teams and those delivering services would help address concerns around trust and disclosure.
- 7.14 **Key findings from research**
- 7.15 Several schemes were benchmarked across Bolton, Burnley and Warrington. The following good practice was highlighted and shared with stakeholders for consideration:
- Accommodation and support for young people from age 16 to 25 years (Ofsted registered)
  - Mixed housing portfolio (shared/dispersed/remodelled)
  - Excellent facilities and design features
  - Funding arrangements included both Adult's and Children's Social Care.
  - Panel approach to allocations and move on
  - Tenancy arrangements that require active engagement
  - Excellent relationships with universities offering placements
  - Innovative approaches that empowered young people
- 7.16 **Bury Care Leavers Housing Needs Assessment & Housing Plan 2025 - Key findings**
- The Joint Housing Protocol between Children's Services, Adult Services and Housing Services is the agreed approach to discharge statutory duties
  - Projected over the next five years, the number of care leavers in Bury is estimated to be c.338 by 2029/2030
  - Semi-independent supported accommodation and supported lodgings is the second most prevalent accommodation setting
  - Need to increase supported accommodation for 16-17 children in care who will become care leavers *and* increased provision of supported housing for care leavers post-18 years,

- Need to secure sufficiency of c.46 places for 16- and 17-year-old children in care in Ofsted regulated supported accommodation by 2029/30.
- Secure sufficiency of c.25 places for 18+ care leavers in supported housing by 2029/30.
- Strong indications for the development of a 'Foyer' model in Bury

## 7.17 Consultation

### 7.18 Consultation with customers at the current single young people services:

- 100% said having staff available to them when needed was very important  
*"Having someone to check on us works well, it's nice to be asked how you are and have a weekly meeting in private"*
- 100% said receiving resettlement support, from the same staff team, helped them to keep their tenancy  
*"My experience with the service was impeccable, I've been able to help other friends into similar services with the skills I learned"*
- 90% said having their own kitchen, bathroom and private living room space along with safety and security at the scheme is very important to them  
*"It is important that the same staff support you after moving from the scheme as you have built up trust with them"*
- 70% said help to access training, education, employment and voluntary opportunities is important to them along with space for socialising, study, leisure and sport
- 70% said help to access mental health support services is important to them  
*"Support from trained staff during the night is important to me as I can't sleep at night and my mind runs away with me I struggle to switch off, engaging in activities helps takes my mind of it"*

### 7.19 Consultation with customers at the current young families service:

- 100% said the service should be called Young Families or Young Parents Service (not 'teenage')
- 100% said the service should not be for females only  
*"You should have the choice if you want to live with the father of your children to receive their help and support"*
- 100% said help & support from the same staff should be available after they have left the service if needed
- 90% said the service should have a block of flats **and** separate properties where staff visit
- 90% said help with budgeting, paying bills, registering & bidding for properties, and moving on are very important  
*"Definitely need help registering and bidding and understanding the process"*
- 85% said help with accessing training, education, employment and voluntary opportunities are very important, including on-site training opportunities

*"Access to childcare so that we can go out and do opportunities like training or work"*

- 80% said the facilities should offer a creche / playroom / nursery with outdoor space

*"Things for everyone to get involved in with our children, I want the children to play with other children"*

- 75% said the service should have support staff and security at night and over the weekend

*"Security walk rounds and a point of contact in office in case you need it"*

## **7.20 Soft market testing / stakeholders**

7.21 A total of 32 providers and stakeholders attended a soft market testing event. Highlights from our review were shared and the following key themes from discussions were recorded:

### **Young Families:**

- Service Provision should be inclusive for young mothers, fathers, and families.
- Services should aim to keep families together, where safe to do so.
- Support offer should focus on parenting skills, bonding / attachment, budgeting, healthy eating, safe relationships, education and training.
- Onsite facilities should offer a creche / nursery, outside play space, toddler groups, communal areas, and education space.
- 24/7 staffing with trained night staff for safety and support.

### **Care Leavers:**

- Consensus that care leavers (18+) should be integrated with all young people to avoid segregation, stigma and isolation.
- Care leavers with 'complex needs' may benefit from a smaller Ofsted-registered scheme (3 / 4 units), but balance is key.

### **16- to 17-year-olds:**

- This cohort have distinct needs and require separate services due to safeguarding, vulnerabilities and developmental differences.
- Smaller scheme needed that is Ofsted-registered for legal compliance.
- Emergency provision / bed spaces needed offering assessment, with a focus on mediation, mental health, crisis / family support.

### **Allocations and Prevention:**

- Multi-Agency Panel approach to allocations and move-on needed
- Prevent Homelessness, offer early intervention / mediation / crisis support / emergency bed spaces to support a return to the family where safe to do so.

### **Accommodation Models:**

- Foyer Model should be offered for young people not tenancy-ready
- Need a mixed offer including shared accommodation with self-contained units, and dispersed property models to meet varying levels of need.

### **Support Offer:**



- Holistic support needed that is trauma-informed, person led and tailored to individual needs. One-size-fits-all approach is ineffective.
- Prioritise mental health support before practical skill development.
- In-Reach & Hub Models: External agencies and professionals should provide wraparound support / services on-site.

#### **Mental Health:**

- Multi-disciplinary approach to deliver onsite support and services.
- Partnerships with Universities and Colleges offering student placements and clinical sessions for added value.
- Developing independent skills only works when emotional needs are addressed.

#### **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion:**

- Ensure all services are inclusive
- Equality training for all staff should be of high quality and co-produced

#### **Move-On Support:**

- Realistic move-on pathways / flexible timelines
- Increase capacity of social housing and utilisation of allocation policy
- Better utility of the private rented sector and access for young people

#### **Floating Support:**

- Essential for successful transitions to independent living; should be mandatory on exit from all supported accommodation.

#### **Commissioning and Strategic Considerations:**

- Longer contracts to support transformation, provider stability, and protect funding (suggested: 5–10 years with inflation).
- Joint Commissioning arrangements needed between adult's and children's services.

## **8. Conclusions**

### **8.1 The review has identified the:**

- Need to identify new opportunities with developers and Registered Housing Providers to develop housing options for young people and young families.
- Importance of mixed provision to meet needs of different groups.

### **8.2 Our new Young People's Accommodation and Support offer must:**

- Reduce homelessness among young people offering stable settled safe accommodation
- Support young people to access education, training, employment / voluntary work
- Improve health outcomes, in particular mental health and access to appropriate services
- Improve social opportunities, community connection, purpose and belonging

- Support young people to move on and successfully sustain tenancies in the community
- Promote equality & inclusion for all young people, celebrate diversity and offer safe space
- Keep young families together, promote healthy and safe relationships and improve outcomes for children and young parents
- Provide trauma informed environments and approaches to build confidence and trust
- Adopt a system wide joined up approach to partnership working with all stakeholders working collaboratively with young people

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### **Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

*Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.*

9. This commission further contributes to helping us achieve our aspiration in the 'Let's Do It Strategy' that is detailed below

#### **Local**

- Local housing options for young people to keep close to family and social networks
- all children and young people in Bury reach their potential, are happy, healthy and safe and are therefore able to make the best use of their skills to lead independent and successful lives'
- Developing and regenerating the unique townships where people young people live
- Prevent the need for young people to have to move out of the borough to have their needs met.
- Bring Bury young people back in borough if its right for them for their health, wellbeing and independence.
- Work with local developer's and providers who know the local area.

#### **Enterprise**

- Encouraging enterprise to drive inclusive economic growth through for developers and Registered Housing Providers to invest in Bury.
- Enterprising innovation and creative solutions to current housing issues for young people.
- Innovate and model new solutions and future developments for young people in a difficult housing market

#### **Together**

- Working together to design quality, fit for purpose homes for young people that are inclusive.
- Working together with service users, their carers and families to shape accommodation options and design.
- Working together to ensure inclusivity throughout the housing agenda.

#### **Strengths**

- Taking a strengths-based approach to recognise the assets and strengths of communities and young people.
- Recognising the strengths of young people enabling their independence, choice, and control for their current and future housing.

The commission will also support the delivery of the following 'Core Outcomes' for young people in Bury:

- i. Improved quality of life.
- ii. Improved early years development
- iii. Improved educational attainment
- iv. Improved adult skill levels and employability
- v. Inclusive economic growth

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### Equality Impact and Considerations:

A full equality analysis has been carried out. Potential impacts have been identified for some characteristics and circumstances all of which have been mitigated meaning all impacts are neutral for this activity.

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### Environmental Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact [climate@bury.gov.uk](mailto:climate@bury.gov.uk) for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact [c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk](mailto:c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk) for advice)*

An environmental impact assessment has not been undertaken for the scheme, as there are no implications or carbon impact of this decision.

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### Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Increase of demand of people who having housing/homelessness problems accessing the service and have complex needs (mental health, offending histories, and substance misuse problems).	Additional pathways are being developed to support specific interventions for residents. This includes residents with mental health problems, those struggling with addictions and those that require support to break negative cycles of behaviour.
Lack of available move on properties for young people who are tenancy ready which may risk blockages for young people needing supported accommodation.	Work closely with Bury housing Services and develop strong relationships and have regular communication. This includes developing bespoke solutions for young people in the Private Rented Sector

**Legal Implications:**

10. The procurement of the Lots under Neighbourhood Support Housing Services are compliant with the Council's contract Procedure Rules and the Procurement Act 2023.

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**Financial Implications:**

*To be completed by the Council's Section 151 Officer.*

13. The financial implications are in line with the approved 2025/26 budget.

**Appendices:**

*Please list any appended documents.*

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**Background papers:**

*Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.*

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning