

AUDIT COMMITTEE BRIEFING NOTE: Children in Care Commissioning Strategy and Sufficiency Duty

Our strategy (2010 – 2013) outlines our plans to meet the placement needs of Children and Young People in Care (CIC) and on the edge of Care.

The strategy covers the service vision for CIC placements, our local needs analysis, identification of service development areas, recommendations and an action plan.

The sufficiency duty is a duty on the LA under the Children & Young Person Act 2008 to ensure that there are sufficient local placements (so far as reasonably practicable) to meet the needs of children in care, to stimulate and support the market to deliver placements, and to provide placements which meet the needs of CIC (targeted, complex and acute).

The key objectives of our strategy are to:

- Improve placement stability (*through the skills of foster carers and by utilising appropriate, good and well matched provision*)
- Promote use of special guardianship or residence orders as alternatives to care where appropriate
- Develop and strengthen early intervention and prevention services and safeguarding (*through the Council's Service restructure*)
- Develop local foster care provision, particularly internal provision (*by having a targeted recruitment campaign*)
- Increase capacity of local residential and appropriate provision and stimulate the market (*through the framework tenders and market development activity*)
- Ensure robust information and tracking of education requirements
- Ensure that placements and resources have good effective evidence models to improve outcomes for CIC (*through the framework tender, contracted outcomes, reporting and monitoring*)
- Collaborate with multi agency partners to provide flexible packages to prevent admission to care, support the needs of CIC in care and provide support to return home.
- Identify permanence planning options earlier in care planning