

Report of the Director for People and Neighbourhoods

Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2024-27

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides a refresh of our Children's sufficiency strategy 2020-2023 setting out our refreshed sufficiency needs and approach to ensuring that we have sufficient homes for our children and young people in care for the period 2024 until 2027.
- 1.2 This Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy is one of a suite of documents that contributes to the delivery of the Children and Young People Plan 2024-2027 and is key to delivery of our Corporate Parenting Strategy.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.2. The Children's Act 1989 places a statutory duty on local Authorities to "take steps that secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within the authority's area which meets the needs of children that the local authority is looking after, and whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in the local authority's area".
- 2.3. Ensuring the Sufficiency Duty is met, requires Stockport to safeguard, either through direct provision or commissioned services, a range of placements sufficient to meet the needs of all children in care. Stockport's Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care draws together the findings from extensive research into the needs of children and young people in care and explores the current picture of accommodation within Stockport.
- 2.4. The refreshed Strategy identifies the need for more internal and external foster care placements for children who can live in a family environment and promotes the development of specific types of placements within Stockport that will ensure that, as far as possible, children and young people can continue to live locally, close to their families, school and communities.
- 2.5. This Sufficiency Strategy sets out the current and future needs of children in care in Stockport for 2024-2027, this includes:
 - Our recruitment strategy for foster placements and supported lodgings providers
 - Our children's home development programme
 - Engagement with local providers who can help us to meet a wider range of needs within or close to Stockport.
 - Forecasting the demand for care leavers needs for post 18 housing and supported accommodation

2.6. This Sufficiency Strategy is required to be published on the Stockport Council website and has been designed to be read alongside the Greater Manchester (GM) Children's Sufficiency Strategy and joining Greater Manchester commissioning initiatives, where they are relevant to the needs of Stockport young people. Stockport's Children's Commissioning team, meet regularly and work closely with regional colleagues, to develop proposals and contribute to shared initiatives.

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to review and comment upon the refreshed Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Sufficiency Strategy Children in our Care 2024-2027.

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