



Market Position Statement

From 2019 to 2022

A statement to providers about our Children's Services explaining the current demand and projected future need for our foster, residential and supported living services for our children looked after

Introduction

We have a developed Commissioning Strategy called "Right Home, Right Place-Commissioning Accommodation and Support for Looked After Children in Cardiff" that shapes and informs our commissioning priorities. This strategy was developed through data analysis of the children looked after population; consultation with stakeholders including children and young people; engagement with Providers; and linking back to our Children's Services and Corporate parenting strategies. This commissioning strategy contributes to Children's Services Strategy by looking to facilitate, with partners, a range of provision and options which support further improvements in outcomes for this important group and children, young people and families. This will be supported by a Children's Services approach which places an emphasis on prevention and early intervention to give children the best possible outcomes and better manage the pressure on public services.

Our vision is to have a vibrant provision in Cardiff able to meet the changing needs of our children and young people in a flexible and responsive way.

Aim – What do we want our strategy to do? Our aim is to build, reshape, and expand our current provision, services and placements to further improve the outcomes of our vulnerable children, young people and families.

The commissioning strategy 'Right Home, Right Place' provides direction on the arrangements we will put in place and services we will commission to achieve the following commitments:

- We will reduce our reliance on services away from Cardiff where these are not in the best interest of the child and young person.
- We will increase the number of children and young people supported to live safely with their families.
- We will strive to safely reduce the rising number of children and young people looked after.
- We will increase the numbers of kinship carers.
- We will increase the number of Cardiff Council Foster Carers.
- We will work positively with Independent Fostering Agencies and Residential Providers.
- We will increase the range of local residential services.
- We will improve the way we commission.

We are now able to set out our Market Position Statement (MPS) to effectively communicate our vision for the strategic commissioning of accommodation and support for children looked after to the market. Our aim is to meet our Sufficiency Duty by increasing placement choice and enable good matching, through;

- Working in partnership with children and families to co-produce solutions for service delivery based on their needs,
- Shaping and growing our internal services to respond to their needs,
- Collaborating and working with stakeholders, and a range of public and private sector partners to deliver local services to our children looked after,
- working in collaboration with public sector partners across the regional footprint where this offers identifiable benefits,

- working in collaboration with a range of providers to co-produce outcomes focussed services acknowledging that there are a range of different methods for strategic commissioning with multiple partners who may be co-operatives, charities or commercial partners.

Purpose of our Market Position Statement

This Market Position Statement is primarily aimed at fostering providers (referred to as IFA's) and providers of children's residential care homes who are; delivering, able to deliver, or are planning to deliver services in our local area. This document will help to structure engagement between the Council, Children's Services, our children looked after, their family and friends, carers and providers regarding the future vision of this service.

Our Market Position Statement will:

- Act as a starting point for discussions between Children's Services and Care Providers;
- Provide data on current placements and forecast demand to inform providers on specific areas of growth or need;
- identify priority service areas of development where we want to co-produce, collaborate and commission services from providers.
- Clarify and develop our strategy in terms of the range of commissioning approaches we want to develop

Where sufficiency cannot, for identifiable reasons, be achieved in the local area, there is a joint commitment to prioritise sufficiency across regional footprints that mirror the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and Local Health Board (LHB) footprint. The basis for this commitment is evidence based, intended to support improved outcomes for looked after children and to maximise use of local resources for local children.

If considering Cardiff as a location for your service we welcome an early conversation with providers to help inform location assessments and decision making on service developments.

What Outcomes do we want for our Children?

We will ensure that children looked after are in safe, secure and homely environment that meets their assessed needs, to enable them achieve the best possible outcomes and fulfill their potential. Under the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014, this is now articulated through the concept of well-being.

The Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru (4C's) have in worked with young commissioners to identify outcomes that are important to children and young people, (Young Persons 360 degree Outcomes [Link](#)).

Consultation with Children and Young people and Key Stakeholders

We have carried out a number of consultative exercise with Children and Young People and Key Stakeholders who have provided us with a clear vision of what works, what does not and what provision they would like to see in the future. This is critical information to influence commissioning and will form part of an ongoing process of consultation and planning to inform our strategic priorities. A number of engagement exercises have been carried out to inform this and other strategies and come from the following sources;

- Bright Spots Survey of 255 of children looked after by Cardiff County Council(September 2018)

- Local Authority Social Services Annual Report consultation(April 2019)
- Consultation with children and young people living in the Cardiff Council Residential Service (May 2019)
- Child Friendly City consultation (July 2018)
- Key Provider workshops in September and October (2019)
- Key Staff engagement in October (2019)

There are a number of themes, which emerged from our consultations with children and young people, which can be summarised as the following:

- They do not like the term 'placement' or 'unit'. They want a place they can call 'home'.
- Young people want regular review contact arrangements,
- They want to understand why decisions have been made,
- Children want to feel included and understand why they are in care,
- Children and Young people want to be trusted and feel involved in activity planning,
- When care planning they want staff to be aware of gender differences
- They want opportunities to improve young people's feelings about their appearance and body image.
- They want more opportunities to benefit from being in the outdoors.
- Most Children and young people have good relationships with their carer's.
- The vast majority feel safe in their setting.
- Most feel positive about their futures.
- They would like access to the internet.
- Most children and young people want to stay in their local are.
- They want to remain close to their families, friends and local communities.
- They want to remain in contact with carers after they have left for ongoing support.

Our Providers have also made some important messages. The overriding messages was a willingness to work even closer, in partnership, with the Council. A number of important messages emerged through these discussions.

- Understanding of the importance of children and young people being placed close to home where appropriate to do so.
- Providers have a range of experience, skills and knowledge that can help in the development of services.
- Willingness to engage in shared learning and development.
- A shared challenge on recruiting Foster Carers.
- Providers would like a more planned approach for young people leaving care.
- A need for an ongoing dialogue.
- Providers want to understand how needs and demand is changing.
- The importance of the partnership between the Council and Providers.
- There could be further improvements in the placement process.
- Providers willing to consider alternative commissioning arrangements.
- We are seeing some children and young people with more complex needs.

Our staff have also given use some important messages especially with regard to the changing nature of their work and the changing needs of the children, young people, parents, carers and families.

- It is more difficult to find suitable homes for our children and young people,
- There are more sibling groups needing support,
- Some children and young people have more complex needs,
- We want to be able to offer more support to families,
- We want to help bring families together again,
- We need to improve out processes,
- Demand is going up.

Carer Skill Set & Training

Our social work practice adopts the Signs of Safety approach that is outcome-focused and strength-based. It is therefore helpful if carers are recruited, trained and supported to work in a consistent way alongside our social work teams. We want to be able to place Cardiff children looked after with carers who are confident and competent in their approach, with appropriate qualifications and training (e.g. completion of the All Wales Induction Framework (AWIF), achievement of Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) at the appropriate level for the roles they are undertaking). We will also, where appropriate provide opportunities for joint training.

As an Authority, we have a range of internal resources that we can deploy to work with external providers to support placement sustainability and prevent placement breakdown.

Support we will offer in service development

We want to work collaboratively with good quality providers to co-produce development of services that we need. In specific areas, a co-production approach with shared resource components between us and providers that work in an integrated way may be identified as the best approach. Opportunities for discussions on co-production will be publicised across the market.

We take a relationship based approach to commissioning underpinned by compliant procurement processes. We believe that use of e-procurement systems are an effective tool that can complement relationship commissioning rather than transactional commissioning, with a positive ethos adopted by partners.

We will facilitate events for existing and potential providers on an ongoing basis.

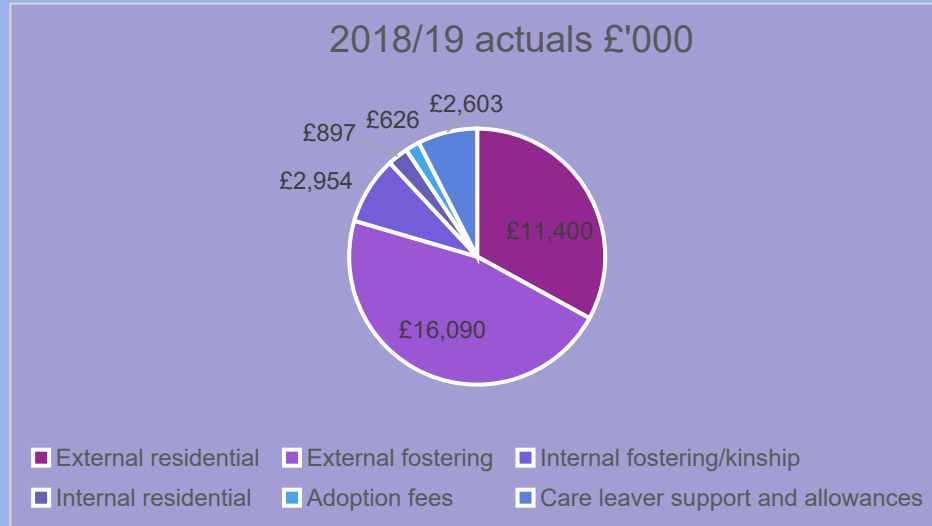
We will use forums and events at local, regional and national level to engage with providers, these may be facilitated by Cardiff Council, 4Cs or RPBs and we encourage providers to attend these events which are valuable to information sharing and networking.

We will ensure the voice of the child is heard by continuing to support children who are looked after to influence our commissioning decisions and will always consult with them to shape the services that they want.

Resource

Like most Welsh Local Authorities, we operate within the context of reduced funding and increasing demand pressures.

2018/2019 spend and the distribution across service areas was as follows:



For 2020/21 Social Services in Cardiff has a provisional efficiency savings target of £2.528m. With approximately 70% of its net budget made up of externally commissioned services, there is a strong savings focus on the cost and volume of commissioned services.

We are therefore more likely to commission services that have clear aims and objectives, target resources and provide strong evidence of impact of value for money. Having a model of care that is understood and embedded across the whole organisation is a development that we absolutely welcome. Research evidences those models setting clear expectations with a consistent approach build staff confidence. They improve the quality of assessment, intervention, and direct work with children and their families and ultimately improve outcomes for children. We are committed to work with providers to support service

Current Trends - Key Factors that are specific to Cardiff-the Local Context

- The population of Cardiff is growing at a faster rate than any other large city across the UK which will have a significant impact on demand for public services.
- The age profile of the population of Cardiff is expected to increase significantly. The number of children between the ages of 0-19 years is forecast to increase from 88,280 in 2017 to 107,630 in 2035, which is a significant increase of 18%. This will have a significant impact on Children's Services and the types of services we need to provide and commission.
- The rate of referrals to Children's Services in Cardiff has been in line with the Wales rate until March 2018 where it was slightly higher.
- When considering the number of children looked after over the last 5 years, Cardiff has seen a significant rise of 20% from 2013 (78 per 10,000 population) to 2018 (97 per 10,000 population). More recent data indicates that there has been a further increase from 112 per 10,000 population in March 2018 to 122 per 10,000 at 31st March 2019. This is an increase of 62% since March 2013.
- There is a close relationship between those becoming looked after and those ending care, in other words the upward trajectory reflects more children becoming looked after than those ending being looked after.

Fostering

Where we are now

Demand is increasing in Cardiff and there are insufficient foster care placements to meet this demand.

There is a lack of skill set to support requiring more complex care packages to remain in families

We are keen to place more children locally in Cardiff; too many are placed outside of Cardiff due to lack of sufficiency.

We lack fast response emergency placements.

We lack sufficient age appropriate placements.

We are slightly above the Welsh average for 3 or more placement moves.

What we don't need

We do not want to compete with independent providers for local carers.

We want to work together with independent providers to ensure that there is sufficient resources within Cardiff based on profiles of need.

Where we want to be

We want to work with the market collaboratively to ensure that Cardiff placements are filled with Cardiff children and young people.

We would like more of our young people to be close to Cardiff

We would like to be able to respond to the therapeutic and mental health needs of children looked after

We would like to develop respite provision to offer flexible short break opportunities, including emergency provision for complex cases

We would like to see a high level of placement stability with Cardiff being below the Welsh average.

Key Statistics

- Numbers of external IFAs has increased over 3 years period against relative little growth in house provision.
- Recent audit of 100 placement referral forms has shown that 5 or more – mental health CSE, exposure to DV
- As at March 2019 there were 194 (23%) out of area fostering placements
- Cardiff is unusual with a such a low level of in house fostering provision
- 18% of placements are emergency requests
- 9.6% of children looked after with 3 or more placement moves.

Carer skill set & training desired:

- * Ability to support children and young people who have therapeutic, mental health and behaviour management needs;
- * Resilient when faced with threat of physical harm by young people; skilled in de-escalation;
- * Resilient & trained to work with childhood trauma, absconding, risk of CSE, risk of criminal exploitation, self-harm behaviours, USAC and those with ASD
- * Carers who are able to accept emergency referrals
- * Carers who are able to work to reunify children and young people with their families
- * Proactive asking for support when needed;

Residential

Where we are now

Demand is increasing for residential placements

We are keen to place more children locally in Cardiff; too many are placed outside of Cardiff due to lack of sufficiency.

Too many children and young people are placed in secure welfare placements

There has been an increased demand for specialist therapeutic and non standard models of residential care

What we don't need

We do not want to compete with independent providers.

We want to work together with independent providers to ensure that there is sufficient resources within Cardiff based on profiles of need.

Where we want to be

To commission more specialist placements to meet the needs of our most vulnerable young people and most complex care packages.

To have sufficient accommodation with support for care leavers and young people who cannot live with family and friends or independently, including UASC who are subject to age assessments

We want to work collaboratively with a provider to develop local provision targeted at crisis intervention for young people. This includes the ability to accept emergency placements.

To have additional residential provision locally that can respond to children and young people with complex needs including mental health.

Have a range of furnished family homes across Cardiff, which can be utilised on a flexible basis by Children's services. These will include:

- * Step up step down provision
- * Emergency provision
- * Alternative to secure
- * Older children working towards independence

Key Statistics

- * 20 residential placements since Jan 2019
- * 58 out of area residential placements (82% of the residential population)
- * 5 young people in secure welfare placements

Who we need

- * Ability to support children and young people who have therapeutic, mental health and behaviour management needs;
- * Trained in signs of safety
- * Trained in trauma recovery & empathetic
- * Trained in crisis intervention, can work calmly under the pressure of emergency planning
- * Resilient when faced with threat of physical harm by young people; skilled in de-escalation, minimising restraints;
- * Resilient & trained to work with childhood trauma, absconding, risk of CSE, risk of criminal exploitation, self-harm behaviours, USAC and those with ASD
- * Services who are able to work to reunify children and young people with their families

How we will commission services

Striving to ensure we commission confidently, working in partnership with providers of quality services and partnership organisations engaging in continuous improvement resulting in services which, respond to the needs and aspirations of service users and carers.

The key principles that drive our approach to commissioning are that all commissioned services should be:

- Child centered, family focussed, strength based and restorative
- Evidence based and trauma informed
- Involves service users
- Outcome focussed
- Best value for money
- Appropriately skilled carers
- Flexible and responsive

We will continue to use the All Wales Local Authority Frameworks to commission individual placements across a range of placement types. These frameworks deliver strategic level partnerships with providers in fostering and residential services. The frameworks are used where either the Local Authority's Sufficiency Duty necessitates external commissioning or where best quality, outcome delivery and value for money is achieved through external commissioning rather than internal service delivery.

The vehicle we use for e-tendering external fostering and residential placements is the Children's Commissioning Support Resource (CCSR) which offers transparent and outcomes focussed placement commissioning for both Framework and Non-Framework regulated placements and allows compliance with the relevant procurement guidance and regulation that underpins our commissioning. We want our market providers to be registered on CCSR to respond to tenders that are published.

For bespoke or larger tenders we use Sell 2 Wales and actively require our market providers to be registered on this site to respond to tenders that are published ([link](#)).

Following the distribution of this MPS, we will be organising events for all providers to share the Strategy and MPS and we will be happy to speak to individual providers about any issues they have about the MPS following these events. If you are considering Cardiff as a location for your service, we welcome an early conversation with providers to help inform location assessments and decision making on service developments.

This MPS is a live document and will be updated annually or whenever there are key changes that you need to know about. ([hyperlink to LA Website post Cabinet](#))

Contact us Commissioning - email & telephone Contracting - email & telephone