## 1. Introduction

1.1 Lancashire County Council is to commission a service that delivers high quality accommodation-based support to Looked After Children, Care Leavers, vulnerable, including homeless, Young People and Homeless Families (“Families”) with a range of needs to acquire the necessary skills to move on successfully to more independent living and to develop the responsibilities associated with adulthood. Flexibility and a multi-agency collaborative working approach will be key to ensuring that Young People and Homeless Families achieve the best possible outcomes.

1.2 [The Service will provide 24-hour support services from the accommodation named in the background information.] [The Provider will be required to source appropriate and affordable accommodation from which to deliver 24-hour support services.][One unit will be allocated within the accommodation for the purpose of meeting crisis (emergency) support].

1.3 Providers will ensure that (X Service – enter address of Young People’s service) is delivered in accordance with the Lancashire Joint Protocol 2017-2020.

## 2. Objectives and Principles

### 2.1 The overarching objectives of the Service are:

2.1.1 Where homelessness cannot be prevented and the Young Person accesses supported accommodation it is expected that the provider will facilitate a return to family wherever it is possible and safe to do so.

2.1.2 [To ensure that sufficient emergency accommodation is available to meet demand locally.]

2.1.3 To enable Young People and Families to access services close enough to maintain links with family, friends and education.

2.1.4 To ensure that services are available for Young People and Families with a range of needs as outlined in section 4.2

2.1.5 To ensure that staffing levels within services are appropriate to meet the needs of the intended client group.

2.1.6 To support Young People and Families to gain access to services at the point of need and support them to move through services at the right time in accordance with their needs and circumstances.

2.1.7 To improve the health of Young People, Care Leavers, Looked After Children and Families and ensure that they are able to access relevant universal services as and when necessary.

2.1.8 To enable Young People, Care Leavers, Looked After Children and Families in Lancashire to achieve their optimal potential.
2.1.9 To ensure that services deliver value for money and the efficient use of limited resources.

2.2 Key principles

2.2.1 Treat Young People and Families as individuals and promote their dignity, privacy and independence.

2.2.2 Acknowledge and respect the gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, race, religion, culture and lifestyle of Young People and Families.

2.2.3 Keep Young People and Families safe.

2.2.4 Maximise the independence of Young People and Families.

2.2.5 Support Young People and Families to understand that they need, and have the right, to take risks in their lives, and support how to manage those risks.

2.2.6 Encourage Young People and Families to be a part of all decisions that involve them.

2.2.7 Provide a high quality service which is Young Person and Family centred and adapts as the needs of Young People and Families change.

2.2.8 Young People and Families are supported to move on at the right time.

3. Service Outcomes

The key focus of the Service must be on supporting and preparing Young People and Families to transition successfully to independence. In addition to any specific needs identified in the individual Care, Pathway Plan or Support Plan where applicable, the provider will work to achieve the following outcomes for Young People and Families:

3.1 Promoting Health and Wellbeing. Young People and Families:
- enjoy good physical, emotional, mental and sexual health;
- have a healthy lifestyle;
- have access to information about health issues that allows them to make informed choices as they move to independence.

3.2 Staying Safe. Young People and Families are living in a physically safe environment with appropriate support networks to meet their individual needs.

3.3 Develop Positive Relationships. Young People and Families are supported in developing; peer, family and working relationships to aid their development and promote emotional well-being.

3.4 Identity: Young People and Families feel secure and proud of their identity and are able to choose their religion, culture, gender, sexuality.

3.5 Enjoy and Achieve: Young People and Families:
- have access to employment, training or education and receives encouragement and recognition for their achievements;
- achieve academically in line with their ability
- participate in social, cultural and leisure activities;
- make positive friendships.
3.6 **Promoting Participation:** Young People and Families:
- positively participate in the local community;
- are actively involved in making decisions about their future;
- develop self-confidence to deal with change and other life challenges;
- understand the effects of all acts of discrimination and is able to challenge their own perceptions on this;

3.7 **Promoting Independence:** Young People and Families engage in further education, employment or training, develop independence and money management skills and are supported in the transition to independent adult life.

3.8 The Provider will be required to report on a quarterly basis against these outcomes. The indicators that will be measured in the quarterly return are detailed in Appendix A.

### 4. Service Description

#### 4.1 Service Model

4.1.1 The Service shall operate every day of the year and will provide a 24-hour staffed service at [the accommodation named in the Invitation to Tender.] [from appropriate and affordable accommodation sourced by the Provider]. [One unit will be allocated within the accommodation for the purpose of meeting crisis (emergency) support]. The Service shall be staffed by support workers between the hours of 07:00am and 12:00am. Night cover that is provided under a concierge arrangement outside of these hours will not be funded by the County Council.

4.1.2 Young People and Families will have access to their personal space (eg. flat/room) at all times of the day and night.

4.1.3 The Provider will actively promote Young People's Care/Pathway/Support Plan and Family support plans and will be responsible for delivery of the Service, the day to day monitoring of the wellbeing of Young People and Families and for providing regular updates to support the statutory review processes.

4.1.4 Where the accommodation is not owned by the Provider the Provider shall set up a Service Level Agreement/Housing Management Agreement with the Landlord(s) that specifies the terms of the relationship between the Provider and Landlord with respect to ensuring the continued availability of the accommodation and arrangements for rental of office space (where applicable).

4.1.5 The Service should at all times accommodate and support young people with the appropriate level of need, in accordance with the Joint Protocol and Specification. To meet individual needs, either to facilitate a new placement or to maintain an existing placement, the Provider may request that an assessment of the needs of Young People or Families is undertaken by the County Council to determine whether additional support is required, where they are known to Social Care. Where agreed to be appropriate and necessary the County Council will either agree to fund additional support from a) the Provider, b) an alternative support provider or c) from the County Council’s in-house service(s). Additional support services will be subject to regular review(s).
4.2 Eligibility, Referrals Procedure and Prioritisation for

4.2.1 Young People's Services

4.2.1.1 The Provider will operate at all times in accordance with the current Joint Protocol and its additional guidance documents (the "Policy"). This Policy sets out the eligibility and prioritisation criteria and the referral pathways into the Service, which vary depending upon the referring organisation or individual.

4.2.1.2 The Service shall be accessed by Young People, primarily aged 16-21 but in some instances up to age 24 in accordance with the Policy. The target group will be Young People with complex needs and/or challenging behaviour issues such as (but not limited to) Young People: with substance misuse issues; with low to moderate level of learning disability or mental health problems; who are known to the criminal justice system; who are at risk of exploitation. Young pregnant females will only be accommodated on a temporary basis whilst other more suitable accommodation is identified.

4.2.1.3 The general eligibility policy for initial access set out under Section 2 of the additional guidance document 'Guidance for Providers Managing Access to Block Contracted Supported Housing Schemes' (Appendix B) applies to the Service. The Provider and the County Council will jointly review suitability to ensure that the Service safely meets the needs of the individual Young Person, in terms of staffing levels, building design and service model.

4.2.1.4 In order to meet the needs of some Young People the County Council may request that the Provider facilitates a trial stay (typically 1-2 nights) for a Young Person. The Provider and the County Council will work collaboratively to plan trial stays where it is possible and practicable to do so, taking into account exits from the Service. [Emergency units will not be utilised for trial stays].

4.2.1.5 [Except in the case of emergency admissions] The Provider's admission procedures shall incorporate as a minimum the following:
- At least one (1) introductory visit by the Young Person to the accommodation setting during which the Young Person is introduced to the allocated Key Worker and, where practicable, to other Young People accommodated at the setting. The Young Person will be familiarised with the setting, their own personal space within it, the communal areas and the surrounding community.
- Provide each Young Person with a 'welcome pack' and any other information held about the setting and Service.
- Ensure that the allocated worker is present to welcome and settle the Young Person at the time they move in.

4.2.1.6 [The Provider must have established processes in place to accept emergency placements without detriment to the Young Person referred or to Young People already placed with the Service].

4.2.2 Homeless families

4.2.2.1 The Service can be accessed by homeless families and couples or single people who are pregnant, and require additional support to be able to develop the skills required to maintain independent living in the community.
4.2.2.2 [The Service can be accessed by Young People up to the age of 24, where following an assessment of the Young Person's needs and needs of other Young People/Families staying in the Service, it is considered an appropriate setting for that Young Person]

4.2.2.3 [In exceptional circumstances, the Service can be accessed by single people over the age of 24 who are in priority need and do not pose a risk to families or young people]

4.2.2.4 The Service can be accessed by households who are aged 16 years or over

4.2.2.5 The Service can be accessed by Young People and Families for up to a maximum of 2 years; however, the actual duration of support received by people accessing the Service will reflect individual needs.

4.2.2.6 The intended target group are those households who demonstrate a range of support needs including learning disabilities, mental health needs, substance misuse issues, a history of offending behaviour, other diagnosed and undiagnosed conditions and/or challenging behaviours. Households are likely to have experienced difficulty maintaining or accessing accommodation because of the level or complexity of their needs.

4.2.2.7 The Service Provider will only consider referrals from the district housing authorities. Applicants and all other statutory and voluntary agencies must be advised to approach their district local authority regarding access to the Service.

4.2.2.8 Households who present with high or complex needs must be given priority unless, following an assessment of their needs and the risk presented, it has been determined that they cannot be safely supported within the service, or owing to the presenting needs of individuals already living within the service it would be unsafe to accept another households with complex needs at that time.

4.2.2.9 The Service Provider will develop a Referrals, Assessment and Prioritisation policy and procedure which is in line with the specification. The Service Provider will discuss with and obtain the approval of the district housing authorities within the locality [Enter names of districts] and Lancashire County Council when developing or reviewing the policy.

4.2.2.10 The Service Provider shall assess and prioritise applications in line with their policy which must award priority to people in greatest need of the service unless, in specific circumstances, this would result in the service becoming unmanageable or unstable

4.2.2.11 The Service Provider must circulate its recommendations for entry into service to the district councils in the locality and obtain agreement prior to implementation.

The Service is primarily intended to meet the needs of eligible applicants who have a connection with the locality in which the service is based. Therefore the Service Provider must give priority to applicants based on the following criteria:

a. Local connection with the locality [enter name of locality and districts] in which the Service is based.

b. Local connection with a district local authority in the wider Lancashire County Council administrative area (i.e. excluding Blackpool and Blackburn).

c. Local Connection with another area outside Lancashire.

4.2.3 Young People and Homeless Families
4.2.3.1 The Service must not operate blanket exclusions. Decisions will be based on the information collected as part of the assessment of the needs of the individual and any risk presented by them. The Service Provider will be required to supply data regarding the number of applicants rejected, along with the reasons, to the County Council.

4.2.3.2 The Provider will not unreasonably exclude applicants with rent arrears and will be required to consider the full circumstances before taking a decision, including: reasons for the debt accruing; the individuals willingness to repay the arrears in the future; their current housing circumstances and their reasons for applying for the Service.

4.2.3.3 The Service must be able to accept applicants who are not immediately in receipt of benefits where it is anticipated that the family will be eligible for benefits (i.e. families who have never previously claimed income related benefits leading to delays in processing housing benefit).

4.2.3.4 The County Council may request in writing for a unit to be held to facilitate a planned move for up to 28 days. In such instances the rental element will be funded by the County Council.

4.2.3.5 The Provider will work closely with the District Council and the County Council to ensure that utilisation of units is maximised, so as to prevent unnecessary voids that would adversely impact on the financial viability of the scheme.

4.2.3.6 The Provider shall respond to weekly requests from the Council for details of current and expected vacancies, and inform the Council as and when unplanned vacancies arise.

4.3 Placement Reporting and Reviewing Responsibilities

4.3.1 The Provider will contribute information and opinion to Looked After Children Reviews, Pathway Plans and Pathway Plan Review processes, including the completion of any appropriate County Council documentation and will attend professional meetings as required by the County Council.

4.3.2 In addition to quarterly data requirements set out in Schedule 5, reporting and reviewing responsibilities may include (but are not limited to):
- Preparation of reports for meetings and reviews
- An exit interview and/or end of placement report
- Evidence of consultation with Young People and Families
- General Service feedback from Young People and Families
- Issues of complaint and actions undertaken as a result.

4.4 Contact and Communication

4.4.1 The Provider shall have staff present at the property at all times. In the event of an emergency/crisis situation the Provider will assess the urgency of the situation and determine an appropriate response. This may require a referral to the County Council's Emergency Duty Team and/or contact with the police.

4.4.2 At the request of the County Council the Provider will allow County Council staff the access to any Young Person and Family placed, and shall cooperate with and allow a person authorised by the County Council to conduct an interview and visit the Service setting at any reasonable time.
4.5 Warnings and Evictions

4.5.1 The Provider will notify the County Council in all instances where a warning is issued to a Young Person or Family where Children or Adult Social Care are involved.

4.5.2 The Provider must report to the County Council where contact and communication with the Young Person or Family is significantly breaking down and the Provider is concerned that the breakdown will lead to eviction unless action is taken.

4.5.3 The Provider will work collaboratively with the County Council and District Council to maintain the placement wherever possible. This may include joint agreement to commission additional support services.

4.6 Move on

4.6.1 The Provider must promote independent living skills to ensure that Young People and Families move on from the Service as soon as they are ready to do so in order to meet the needs of the Young Person and Family and to ensure that the Service is utilised effectively.

4.6.2 The Provider will work closely with the local Housing Authority and any other private or Registered Social Landlords to find suitable independent or shared accommodation. The Service shall support the resettlement of Young People and Families for an expected duration of 4 weeks, and will remain available as a point of contact (drop in facility) for all Young People and Families who have moved on.

4.6.3 From service commencement the Provider will work collaboratively with the County Council and all relevant parties including other supported accommodation Service Providers commissioned by the County Council to support the Young Person and Family to achieve a planned exit at an appropriate time. A planned exit may include (but is not limited to):

- return home, where it is safe and appropriate to do so;
- move on to alternative appropriate supported accommodation with less intensive support;
- move to other private, Local Authority or Registered Social Landlord accommodation.

4.6.4 The County Council and the Provider will jointly monitor and assess the needs of Young People, and Families where there is social care involvement, throughout the duration of placement and will jointly manage move on expectations.

4.6.5 The Provider shall conduct an exit interview with Young People and Families when a Service ends and retain a record that can be reviewed by Council at their request.

5. Staff Requirements

5.1 The Provider will maintain good employment practice in accordance with relevant legislation.

5.2 The Provider must at all times provide sufficient staff cover of appropriate ability, qualification, skill, knowledge and experience to operate at capacity, including key work cover appropriate to the size and needs of the Service. Adequate cover must be in place for staff absences to ensure Young People and Families receive a consistent service. Records of staff working within the Service must demonstrate the agreed staffing level. The use of temporary / agency staff shall be kept to a minimum.
5.3 The Service will provide flexible support to meet the needs of Young People and Families. As an overarching requirement the Provider will deliver support in accordance with the Young Person or Family’s Care or Pathway Plan or Support Plan which may or may not specify a number of direct support hours to be provided. Where direct support hours are not specified the Provider will support the Young Person or Family to meet the outcomes set out in the Care or Pathway Plan or Support Plan.

5.4 It is recognised that the level of one-to-one contact will vary depending on the needs of the individual and during the period of occupancy. However, it is expected that on average weekly one to one support should be a minimum of around 2 hours per week, with Service Users with more complex needs requiring a minimum of around 4-5 hours per week. Where a Young Person is not engaging the Provider shall inform the County Council and further actions will collectively be agreed. The level of one to one support required and being provided will be discussed as part of contract management meetings.

5.5 The Provider will endeavour to match staff skills, knowledge and other attributes to the needs and preferences of Young People and Families. This will include a range of skills relevant to engaging with Young People and Families from different backgrounds and circumstances.

5.6 The Provider will demonstrate, including from written and electronic records, that they consistently follow safer recruitment practice.

5.7 All staff working in or for the Service are interviewed as part of the selection process and have full employment history and references checked to assess suitability before taking on responsibilities.

5.8 The service has a record of the recruitment and vetting checks which have been carried out on those working (including as volunteers) for the service which includes:
   a) Identity checks;
   b) Confirmation of enhanced level Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance, with a record of the unique reference number
   c) Checks to confirm qualifications which are a requirement and those that are considered by the service to be relevant;
   d) At least two verified references, preferably one from a current employer and, where possible, a statement from each referee as to their opinion of the person’s suitability to work with Young People and Families;
   e) Checks to confirm the right to work in the UK. Where the person has lived outside of the UK, further checks as are considered appropriate where obtaining a DBS. Disclosure is not sufficient to establish suitability to work with Young People and Families;
   f) Record of the date on which each check was completed and who carried out the check. The DBS Disclosure information must be kept in secure conditions and be destroyed by secure means as soon as it is no longer needed. Before the Disclosure is destroyed, records need to be kept as described above;
   g) An effective recruitment system for deciding who is to be appointed and the circumstances in which an application should be refused in the light of any criminal convictions or other concerns about suitability that are declared or discovered through the recruitment process.
   h) Not normally allowing staff members and others subject to the above checks to start work at the provision until all the checks are completed.

5.9 Where practicable, Young People and Families are involved in the recruitment of staff.

5.10 The Provider shall ensure that each member of staff is provided with a comprehensive induction course during the first two (2) weeks of their employment.

5.11 Records of staff working within the service demonstrate the agreed staffing level. Contingency plans are in place in the event of a shortfall in staffing levels.
5.12 Staff members who are placed in charge of the provision have substantial relevant experience of working in the provision and have successfully completed their induction and probationary periods.

5.13 Staff rota have time scheduled to ensure handovers take place which include the planning of support sessions with individual Young People and Families.

5.14 Where only one member of staff is on duty at any time, a risk assessment has been carried out and recorded in writing, identifying any likely risks to Young People, Families, staff and significant others.

5.15 The staff group who are in day-to-day contact with Young People and Families includes staff of both genders whenever possible.

5.16 Staff have the skills and the up to date knowledge required to meet the needs of the target group outlined in Section 4.2 and training keeps them up-to-date with professional, legal and practice developments and reflects the policies, legal obligations and business needs of the service. The induction process must include familiarisation with all policies and procedures.

5.17 The Provider will, where appropriate, use the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) tool which will enable early identification of service users who may be at higher risk of crisis due to historic trauma and can be used as a risk stratification tool where appropriate. It should also be used to support the delivery of trauma informed approaches and interventions. A link to the Lancashire Care e-learning course which provides an overview of ACE and its links to trauma informed practice has been provided here http://www.walkgroveonline.com/LCFT2/Final_Release/MECC2_ACE_V1_00/index.htm

5.18 The Provider will, where appropriate, use Trauma Informed Care (TIC) and Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) approaches to service delivery with a view to improving the psychological and emotional well-being of people accessing, or working in, their services.

5.19 The Provider will contribute to the delivery of multi-agency support in line with the Lancashire and South Cumbria Children and Young People Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Transformation Plan 2015-2020

5.20 The Provider will ensure that the psychological needs of staff are always considered. Staff operating in the Service shall be supported through reflective practice, comprehensive training and regular supervision to increase their skills, knowledge, resilience and job satisfaction.

5.21 The Provider shall promote staff engagement and ensure that staff meetings take place on a regular basis. In addition to being a forum to inform/brief staff of changes, meetings shall allow staff to collectively discuss operational matters and share best practice. Meeting notes should be recorded and shared with staff members not in attendance.

5.22 The Provider shall develop, or access externally, comprehensive training for staff to embed knowledge of the following as a minimum standard; safeguarding/child protection awareness; managing risk, child sexual exploitation, mental health awareness, substance misuse, prevent training. A record of all training provided is maintained and regularly reviewed. The training programme should be evaluated for effectiveness at least annually and if necessary is updated.

5.23 There is a whistle-blowing policy which is made known to all staff and volunteers. This makes it a clear duty for such people to report to an appropriate authority any circumstances within the service which they consider likely to significantly harm the safety, rights or welfare of any Young Person or Family accessing the Service.
5.24 There is a policy in place that covers staff codes of conduct and behaviour. The policy shall cover areas including professional boundaries and confidentiality. Staff must not share their personal details or contact details with Young People or Families and should not have contact with Young People or Families outside of working hours. The policy shall guide staff as to the types of information that are appropriate to share, to build positive, trusted working relationships.

6. Delivering Outcomes

6.1 The Provider will be aiming high to work towards developing or sustaining the capacity of Young People and Families to live independently within the community and to avoid the use of other more intensive forms of care and support.

6.2 At all times the Provider will ensure that the Service and support decisions are centred on meeting the assessed needs of Young People and Families, seeking to value and promote the identity of Young People and Families as well as improving their well-being, life chances and potential outcomes.

6.3 The Provider shall work in partnership with the County Council to ensure that the assessed needs of Young People and Families are based on relevant and up to date information, that needs are continually monitored and any barriers to achieving the support plan are communicated in a timely way.

6.4 The Provider will be flexible to meet the support needs of Young People and Families as their circumstances change. In addition to direct support the Service shall provide or facilitate, and encourage:

6.4.1 Group working sessions with other Young People or Families accommodated by the Service;

6.4.2 Community-based support;

6.4.3 Peer support. This may be in conjunction with the County Council and/or a commissioned provider.

6.5 The Provider will strive to improve the health and wellbeing of Young People and Families to ensure they receive information, guidance and advice to attain and maintain the highest levels of physical, mental, emotional and sexual health and wellbeing, and will:

6.5.1 Support Young People and Families to gain knowledge about, and to assist and encourage access to, health services to ensure they take responsibility for their health.

6.5.2 Support Young People and Families to develop emotional resilience to prepare them for independent living.

6.5.3 Promote self-esteem amongst Young People and Families

6.5.4 Encourage Young People and Families to participate in a range of positive activities that contribute to their physical and emotional health.

6.5.5 Encourage Young People and Families to manage their behaviour and to develop their social, problem solving, communication and self-care skills.

6.5.6 Engage the Young Person’s family and significant others in promoting the Young Person’s health needs, wherever possible.

6.6 The Provider will support the Young People and Families in staying safe by providing a safe place for Young People and Families to live and ensure that Young People and Families are able to access relevant universal services as and when necessary, and will:

6.6.1 Ensure that the living environment complies with relevant, current regulations, legislation and standards.

6.6.2 Support Young People and Families to positively engage with specialist services, for example substance misuse/CAMHS and all other relevant services and develop joint plans with the Young People and Families and partner agencies to address specific health needs where required;
6.6.3 Provide information and support where applicable in relation to sexual health issues, contraception and pregnancy;
6.6.4 Ensure that the Young People and Families know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and social media;
6.6.5 Engage the Young People and Families in a range of life skills programmes including self-protection;
6.6.6 Provide support and guidance to the Young People and Families in relation to their potential vulnerability and with special regard to issues around living in a safe community;
6.6.7 Support Young People and Families to develop a sense of responsibility and consequence for socially acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
6.6.8 Support Young People and Families to reduce offending behaviour.

6.7 The Provider will support Young People and Families to develop positive relationships, and will:
6.7.1 Actively and practically support Young People and Families to develop and maintain and develop safe and positive personal relationships;
6.7.2 Support Young People and Families to access community and leisure activities to assist in building external relationships;
6.7.3 Support Young People and Families to establish appropriate relationships with authority figures;
6.7.4 Ensure that mechanisms are in place to enable Young People and Families to establish networks in the community into which they will move on to.
6.7.5 Support Young People and Families to develop an understanding of the expectations associated with living in a community.

6.8 The Provider will support the Young People and Families to be happy with their identity, and will:
6.8.1 Provide support and guidance to Young People and Families in relation to their sense of identity to promote emotional well-being;
6.8.2 Consider the religion, racial origin, culture, sexuality and language of Young People and Families at all stages of planning;
6.8.3 Promote establishing or maintaining contact with the Young Person's family and others in line with the Care or Pathway Plan.

6.9 The Provider will ensure that a positive proactive approach is taken to the Young Person's educational placement, training or employment, to enjoy and achieve and will:
6.9.1 Support Young People and Families to access and maintain links with organisations offering literacy, numeracy and work skills training;
6.9.2 Ensure that the Young People and Families receive appropriate and timely education and training advice and guidance, including support to find out about, and to access courses;
6.9.3 Encourage the Young People and Families to attain employment. The Provider will ensure that Young People and Families have:
   a) Been supported to seek and access work through universal services, e.g. Careers and Job Centres
   b) Produced a CV
   c) Been shown how to complete a job application form
   d) Been given various interview tips and techniques;
6.9.4 Support the Young People and Families to sustain their education, re-engage in education and learning opportunities or move out of education into vocational training or the workplace.
6.9.5 Offer structures and activities to help Young People and Families to make meaningful use of their spare time, inside and outside of the Service. The Provider will promote resilience and independence by raising awareness of community and leisure facilities.

6.10 The Provider will promote participation, and will:
6.10.1 Listen to the opinion of Young People and Families and take account of their wishes and feelings in all decisions that are taken about them;
6.10.2 Ensure that Young People and Families are treated as individuals through participation in planning and review procedures, through provision of a flexible Service, and through balancing individual needs within a wider community setting;
6.10.3 Ensure that there are clear links with advocacy and mentoring services to assist the Young Person if they feel their needs and entitlements are not being met;
6.10.4 Promote the participation of all Young People and Families to influence current and future service delivery.

6.11 The Service Provider will promote the Young Person's and family's independence, and will:

6.11.1 Provide direct support to Young People and Families in relation to managing their personal finances. Whilst this support will be specifically tailored to each individual the Provider will ensure that the Young Person or Family have:
   a) Been shown how to maximise income and apply for the correct welfare benefits appropriate to their circumstances.
   b) Been operating a bank account.
   c) Been shown how to access and arrange for the provision of utilities.
   d) Had experience of drawing up a realistic budget for household bills.
   e) An understanding of how to manage and reduce debt.

6.11.2 Support the Young People and Families to develop healthy eating, food shopping and cooking skills. The Provider will ensure that Young People and Families have:
   a) Been shown how to plan, prepare and cook basic meals.
   b) Been given information on nutrition.

6.11.3 Support Young People and Families to develop practical, daily life knowledge and skills, including (but not limited to):
   a) Looking after their own clothes and personal belongings.
   b) Taking responsibility for their own personal hygiene.
   c) How to undertake day-to-day domestic chores e.g. household cleaning.
   d) How to undertake minor household repairs and maintenance.

6.11.4 Give advice and assistance to Young People and Families in relation to house rules and living together, and support Young People and Families to understand and to adhere to their accommodation licence arrangements.

6.12 With specific regard to Care Leavers the Provider shall encourage Care Leavers to access the online Lancashire Care Leavers Local Offer which provides information on the support available to them.

7. Service Standards

The Service must be of a high quality and deliver positive outcomes for Young People. The standards outlined below are the minimum expected of the Provider and a commitment to continuously improve the standard of service delivery should be demonstrated by the Provider.

7.1 Legislation, Regulation and Guidance

7.1.1 The Service will be delivered in line with the County Council's strategic priorities and procedures and in accordance with statutory policies, guidance and frameworks. This list is indicative for guidance only and is not exhaustive and is subject to change:
   a) Care Standards Act 2000
   b) Health and Social Care Act 2012
c) Children Act 1989 and 2004  
d) Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010  
e) Care Planning, Placement and Case Review The Children's Homes and Looked After Children (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013  
f) Sufficiency Statutory Guidance 2010  
g) Children and Families Act 2014  
h) Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018  
j) Homelessness Reduction Act 2017  
k) Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012  
l) Health and Safety at Work Act  
m) Equality Act 2010 amended 2016  
n) The Data Protection Act 2018  
o) Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012  
p) Freedom of Information Act 2000  
q) Lancashire Children's Social Care Procedures  
r) Pan Lancashire Safeguarding Children Procedures  
s) Lancashire Joint Protocol 2017-2020 Joint Working Arrangements – Meeting the Needs of Homeless 16/17 year olds  
t) Lancashire's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018-2022  
u) Lancashire's Care Leavers Local Offer  
v) Lancashire and South Cumbria Children and Young People Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Transformation Plan

7.1.2 The Lancashire Joint Protocol 2017-20 and its additional guidance are the key documents that set out to the Provider how the Service must operate. The guidance, which may be adapted over time, includes (but is not limited to):  
a) Eligibility for the Service (including local connection);  
b) Who can refer into the Service;  
c) The process to undertake for each type of referral;  
d) Prioritisation criteria for access to the Service;  
e) Moving Young People both within and on from the Service.

7.1.3 The sufficiency duty requires the County Council to have regard to the benefit of having a number of accommodation providers in their area and a range of accommodation capable of meeting different needs.

7.1.4 The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a Prevent duty on specified authorities including local authorities, schools, HE and FE colleges, health, probation and the police to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Prevent aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It is considered to be “the only long-term solution” to the threat from terrorism. In providing services to the County Council, the Service Provider will ensure that staff have awareness of the Prevent Duty and follow the procedures for concerns as outlined by the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board.

7.1.5 The Service will work together with the County Council to ensure compliance with the legislation, regulations and guidance, ensuring monitoring of standards; and work towards continuous improvement.

7.1.6 Lancashire's Children's Social Care Procedures can be found on-line at [http://www.proceduresonline.com/lancashirecsc/](http://www.proceduresonline.com/lancashirecsc/) or as otherwise provided by the County Council.
7.1.7 These procedures are currently updated twice a year in May and October. The Lancashire Care Leavers Local Offer can be found at [https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/care-leavers-local-offer/](https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/care-leavers-local-offer/) or as otherwise provided by the Council.

7.2 Corporate Parenting Responsibilities

7.2.1 Corporate parenting relates to the collective responsibility of the County Council, elected members, employees, and partner agencies, for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by the council. A whole system approach to corporate parenting is required whereby the County Council works alongside its partners in order to safeguard but also improve the life chances and opportunities for children who are looked after and care leavers. The Service is expected to promote and support the seven Corporate Parenting Principles:

- To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those Young People;
- To encourage those Young People to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those Young People;
- To help those Young People gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local County Council and its relevant partners;
- To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those Young People;
- For those Young People to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- To prepare those Young People for adulthood and independent living.

7.3 Policies and Procedures

7.3.1 The Provider must have comprehensive policies, procedures and protocols covering the following areas:

- a) Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults (Section 7.4)
- b) Risk assessment and risk management (Section 7.5)
- c) Child Sexual Exploitation (Section 7.4)
- d) Radicalisation (Section 7.4)
- e) Missing Children / unauthorised absences (Section 7.4)
- f) Health and Safety (Section 7.6)
- g) Equality and Diversity (Section 7.7)
- h) Substance Misuse Policy
- i) Fire Procedures
- j) Out of Hours Procedure
- k) Lone Working
- l) Code of Conduct
- m) Complaints and Grievances
- n) Business Continuity
- o) Induction and Training
- p) Recruitment and Selection
- q) Disciplinary / Capability (staff),
- r) Data Protection, Confidentiality and Information Security
- s) GDPR
- t) Serious Incidents
- u) Bullying and Harassment

7.3.2 It is an overarching requirement that the Provider shall review its policies and procedures on a regular basis. Reviews should include partner agencies and/or Young People wherever it is
possible and appropriate to do so. Policies and procedures shall be updated in response to reviews and to reflect changes in legislation and/or to the County Council's policies and procedures.

7.4 Safeguarding

7.4.1 The Provider shall work within the Pan Lancashire Safeguarding Children Procedures and record and report safeguarding issues to the Council. Reporting shall be in accordance with the Council's Notifiable Incidents Reporting Process.

7.4.2 All staff must be aware of their roles and responsibility in relation to the Safeguarding policy and the Provider shall ensure that there is a formal process for recording incidents, escalating concerns and an independent route for raising concerns.

7.4.3 Safeguarding awareness training, to include assessment and recording, is mandatory for all staff. Inductions for new staff must include this training.

7.4.4 A whistle blowing policy is readily available for all staff and is covered as part of the induction process.

7.4.5 An Anti-Bullying Policy for staff is readily available to all staff and is covered as part of the induction process. Staff shall be trained to recognise and understand the types of bullying, to deal with incidents, and to support individuals who are at risk of or being bullied.

7.4.6 An Anti-Bullying Policy is in place and is included in a welcome pack. The policy shall encourage individuals to disclose bullying and shall clearly outline the support that is available from staff and from other organisations/services.

7.4.7 Specific safeguarding policies/protocols are in place for responding to cases of missing children, exploitation, self-harm and radicalisation. All staff must have received training on the policies/protocols have access to the policy/protocols and understand how to respond if a Young Person is missing, exploited, self-harming or being radicalised.

7.4.8 Use of screening tools are in place where a Young Person or Family are at risk of Exploitation.

7.4.9 For Young People subject to, or at risk of Exploitation, the Provider shall work closely with the County Council who will coordinate a multi-agency response in relation to the assessment of risk and required interventions and support to help mitigate such risks.

7.4.10 The Provider will ensure that staff are trained and supported to meet the emotional and physical needs of Young People and Families subject to, or at risk of all types of exploitation. The Provider shall ensure that staff are trained and equipped to identify signs of exploitation.

7.4.11 The Provider shall work with the Authority and involved multi-agency team to develop and implement intervention strategies where a Young Person or Family are at risk of or are the victim of exploitation.

7.4.12 The Provider shall establish a clear pathway of communication between the County Council's Social Worker/exploitation team to ensure information relevant to the exploitation surrounding Young People or Families are regularly shared and updated.
7.4.13 The Provider shall assist the Police and the County Council in building intelligence relative to exploitation risks.

7.4.14 The Child Sexual Exploitation policy must include:
   7.4.14.1 Clear links to local area protocols, and to a Missing from Home/Absence policy;
   7.4.14.2 A named Young Person/Family at risk of sexual exploitation champion;
   7.4.14.3 Inductions for new staff must include Young People and Families at risk of sexual exploitation awareness.

7.4.15 The Missing (unauthorised absences) policy for Young People who are Looked After or who are accommodated under section 17 must include:
   7.4.15.1 Maintaining records of all authorised absences for Young People;
   7.4.15.2 Reporting all unauthorised absences of more than 3 consecutive days to the County Council without delay.
   7.4.15.3 Ensuring that all staff are aware at all times of the Young People who are at risk of, or who have a history of going missing or absconding. The Service will work closely with the County Council to manage the risk. All concerns and/or instances of a Young Person going missing must be reported to the County Council and recorded in the Young Person's support plan.
   7.4.15.4 Support or concierge staff contacting the County Council's Emergency Duty Team without delay when a concern is identified, to seek advice on whether to report the Young Person as missing to the police.

7.4.16 Safeguarding training records are kept, including planned refresher training.

7.4.17 Safeguarding training is delivered by a suitably qualified person.

7.5 Risk and Needs Assessment and Support Planning

7.5.1 The needs of Young People and Families and any inherent risks are assessed on a consistent and comprehensive basis prior to a service being offered.

7.5.2 All Young People and Families have individual outcomes-focused support and risk management plans that address the needs and risks identified through the assessment.

7.5.3 Young People and Families' needs and risks, and their support and risk management plan(s) are reviewed and updated on a regular basis with a view to reducing support over time. Reviews should be undertaken as a minimum every 6 weeks or as agreed within the Care or Pathway. Additional reviews should take place in response to a significant change in the Young Person or Family's circumstances, needs or risks.

7.5.4 Reviews should be undertaken in a multi-agency context which shall wherever appropriate include the Young Person's Social Worker or Personal Advisor.

7.5.5 All assessments, support and risk planning and reviews involve Young People or Families and take full account of their views, preferences and aspirations.

7.5.6 Staff carrying out the assessments, support and risk planning and reviews are trained and competent to do so.

7.5.7 Every pathway plan incorporates a contingency plan in the event that the identified agreed accommodation is no longer suitable or available. Contingency plans will ensure that Young People and Families have access to suitable emergency, or respite, accommodation whenever this is required.
7.5.8 Young People and Families moving into permanent accommodation receive guidance and support.

7.6 Health & Safety

7.6.1 All accommodation provided shall be safe, suitable and shall, as a minimum, comply with all relevant regulations and the minimum standards set out under Section 8.

7.6.2 There is a comprehensive Health and Safety policy with clear written procedures for the management of Health and Safety which comply with all current and relevant Health and Safety legislation, and all staff must be aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy.

7.6.3 Inductions for new staff must include health, safety including fire safety and fire risk assessments.

7.6.4 Policies must indicate what to do in an emergency, which all staff must be aware of.

7.6.5 The Health and Safety policy includes a procedure covering the risks and support for lone workers in the accommodation.

7.6.6 Procedures for managing violence and aggression to staff are in place.

7.6.7 The Provider must undertake and maintain an annual property health and safety risk assessment on the supported accommodation and office premises (where appropriate).

7.6.8 Young People and Families have contact details for emergency, non-critical situations and repairs.

7.6.9 There is a clear policy/procedure on fire risk assessments that identifies roles and responsibilities.

7.6.10 An up to date annual fire risk assessment is in place for the supported accommodation and the person undertaking fire risk assessments must have relevant knowledge, experience and training.

7.6.11 The accommodation must provide fire safety equipment.

7.6.12 Accommodation must have smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms.

7.6.13 Where staff transport individuals vehicles must have a valid MOT and Road Vehicle Licence and be roadworthy and drivers must hold a Full Driving Licence and have Fully Comprehensive Business Use insurance, all of which are appropriate to the type of vehicle used.

7.6.14 The following records must be kept:
   a) Up to date regular Health and Safety checks of the accommodation;
   b) Up to date log of repairs for each property/ accommodation unit;
   c) Up to date fire safety and fire equipment checks;
   d) Health and Safety advice received from external agencies;
   e) Fire Safety advice received from external agencies.

7.7 Equality and Diversity
7.7.1 There is a policy (or policies) in place in to ensure that the Service is non-discriminatory and meets the requirements of all current legislation.

7.7.2 The recruitment and selection policy and processes meet legislative requirements and eliminate discrimination.

7.7.3 Equality and diversity policies and procedures are covered in staff induction and training programmes, and are integrated into staff management practices so that staff understand and are sensitive to the diverse needs of Young People and Families.

7.7.4 Interpreting and translation services are available to ensure that support is equally provided to those whose first language is not English.

7.7.5 All reasonable steps are taken to promote maximum accessibility and equity of provision to ensure all Young People and Families who require the Service are able to access the Service.

7.7.6 Prejudice and/or discrimination against staff, volunteers and young people is actively challenged.

7.8 Participation

7.8.1 The Provider shall promote Young People and Families involvement and empowerment in the development of policies and services that they receive, including an action plan that is developed and regularly reviewed and evaluated, with Young People and Families input.

7.8.2 Young People and Families are consulted on all significant proposals that affect their service, and their views are taken into account.

7.8.3 Young People and Families are encouraged to consider ways in which they can participate in the wider community.

7.8.4 Young People and Families are consulted and encouraged to participate in planning of service delivery including house rules, sanctions and the decoration of the accommodation.

7.8.5 The Provider will ensure that Young People and Families receive training and support to participate in policy development, service planning and delivery, monitoring and evaluation.

7.8.6 Young People and Families are encouraged to consider ways in which they can participate in the wider community.

7.8.7 Young People and Families are encouraged and supported to complete an accredited 'living independently' course (e.g. ASDAN).

7.8.8 Young People and Families are encouraged to attend participation groups (e.g. the County Council's Care Leavers Forum) and utilise the Mind of My Own Application to inform service provision.

7.9 Partnership Working

7.9.1 The welfare of Young People and Families is at all times paramount. All agencies, organisations and individuals working with Young People and Families will work together in partnership and co-ordinate their activities to achieve the best outcomes for the Young Person.
7.9.2 The Provider must operate in accordance with the Joint Protocol which relies upon multi-
agency working with partner agencies, in particular District Councils. The County Council may
amend the Protocol throughout the lifetime of this contract and the Provider will work in
conjunction with the County Council to review and develop this and other protocols.

7.9.3 The Provider will work collaboratively with a wide range of organisations and stakeholders
(including advocacy groups, community groups and other provider organisations) to promote
the on-going development of high quality services and ensure that Young People and Families
can be signposted to wide-ranging community resources.

7.9.4 The Provider has in place a policy of partnership working with other agencies which promotes
the rights and entitlements of Young People and Families to education, housing commitment
to fairness and health, training, employment, policing, justice and finances.

7.9.5 The Provider will engage with other agencies in order to support Young People and Families
to access services to meet additional needs.

8. Accommodation and Housing Management

The call-off will specify whether the accommodation will be named as part of tender or whether the Provider
will be required to source appropriate and affordable accommodation.

8.1 All Accommodation (named in the Invitation to Tender, or sourced by the Provider)

8.1.1 The Provider must ensure that the accommodation meets the standards required under
current relevant legislation.

8.1.2 The Provider will ensure that the accommodation used for provision of the Service is
maintained to a high standard and that buildings are furnished in a non-institutional manner,
with young people being involved in the choice of décor and new furnishings.

8.1.3 The Provider should determine the most appropriate form(s) of tenure and corresponding
occupancy agreement for young people accessing the Service having regard to the following
factors:
- the target length of service;
- the type and nature of properties available to the successful bidder and the requirements
  of any third party landlords;
- the intended use of any individual properties;
- single or dual occupancy.

8.1.4 Any accommodation provided under this contact which is managed directly by the Provider
shall meet the definition of specified accommodation under current Department of Work and
data/file/555002/a8-2014.pdf clauses 1617 & 15- in order to be eligible for the appropriate
level of housing benefit funding required to operate the Service. Any newly identified
accommodation to be used for supported housing by the Provider submitted within the bid
which does not meet this definition will not be permitted to be used as core supported
accommodation and may lead to the withdrawal of the contract award or termination of
contract in due course.

8.1.5 Where the accommodation is not owned by the Provider, the Provider shall set up a "Housing
Management Agreement", with the Landlord(s) of any Supported Accommodation which they
will be managing. The Housing Management Agreement shall set out the terms of the
relationship between the Provider and Landlord(s) of any Supported Accommodation with
8.1.6 Where the use of a Housing Management Agreement is not appropriate, the Provider should agree a Service Level Agreement or formal lease in order to use the accommodation effectively to deliver the support service.

8.1.7 Any Housing Management Agreement or Service Level Agreement should clarify that the Provider is responsible for determining access to and exit from the Service in line with the terms of this Specification.

8.1.8 Any risks, liabilities or costs associated with the Housing Management Agreement, Service Level Agreement, Leases and any associated arrangements lie with the Provider. The County Council accepts no responsibility or liability at all for the arrangements between the parties thereto.

8.1.9 For Young People aged 16 or 17 who are Looked After by the County Council and are accommodated by the Service, the rent and service charge will be funded by the County Council in addition to the Contract value.

8.1.10 The Provider shall make every effort to keep the service charge that is payable by young people as low as possible.

8.1.11 The Provider shall produce an 'About the Service' leaflet and a short video that will provide brief Service information and opportunities to visualise the accommodation(s) for Council staff and for Young People and Families who may be accommodated.

8.2 Applicable only where accommodation is sourced by the Provider:

8.2.1 [The accommodation must meet all of the criteria listed in the Accommodation Suitability Checklist]

8.2.2 [The accommodation must be well-designed, safe and pleasant and of a design and size in keeping with the purpose and function of supporting Young People and Families. The accommodation is in a suitable location that is safe, easily accessible by public transport and have access to local amenities to facilitate access to education, employment, training opportunities, services and community activities by Young People and Families.]

8.2.3 [In determining the location of the accommodation units the Provider should informally approach the district local authority housing lead to ensure that the accommodation is acceptable, suitably located and does not conflict with other strategic priorities].

9. Social Value

9.1 Social Value is the additional economic, social and environmental benefits that can be created when a public service purchases a service from an outside organisation, above and beyond the value of the service itself. Social Value within the Service provided by the Provider should support LCC's priorities:
• **Promote training and employment opportunities for the people of Lancashire** – tackle unemployment and facilitate the development of skills.

• **Raise the living standards of local residents** – working towards living wage, maximise employee access to entitlements such as childcare and encourage suppliers to source labour from within Lancashire.

• **Build the capacity and sustainability of the voluntary and community sector** – practical support for local voluntary and community groups.

• **Promote equity and fairness** – target effort towards those in the greatest need or facing the greatest disadvantage and tackle deprivation across the council.

• **Promote environmental sustainability** – reduce wastage, limit energy consumption and procure materials from sustainable sources.

9.2 To support the delivery of additional social value as part of this Agreement, the County Council requires that Service Providers:

• Provide accessible employment opportunities for people in Lancashire and provide training and development opportunities for their employees.

• Will comply with local labour law and take account of the National Minimum Wage Regulations 2015/621 as amended in 2018 and thereafter.

• Support local businesses and the local economy by considering as a first option goods and Services that can be purchased within Lancashire.

• Use venues within Lancashire County Council boundaries where there is a need to host training, recruitment and information sessions outside of the Provider's buildings.

• Support local third sector organisations.

• Have effective workplace health and wellbeing policies and practices in place to support the health and wellbeing of Staff.

• Support reduction in inequalities by promoting and supporting education, supporting economic wellbeing and promoting healthy behaviours (e.g. supporting staff/ Young People/Families to: stop smoking; increase their physical activity; make healthier food choices).

• Support Young People/Families into work by delivering employability support (CV advice, mock interviews, careers advice) and apprenticeship opportunities.

• Reduce the amount of waste generated and sent to landfill.

### 10. Monitoring and Performance Management

10.1 The Service will be monitored in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Contract.

10.2 The KPIs list is not exhaustive of all the elements which the County Council believe will represent good quality service provision and the expectation is that the Provider will not only meet the targets but will strive to exceed those targets.

10.3 At the end of all placements, the Provider will complete the 'Service Outcomes' tab of the Quarterly Return workbook to evaluate the performance of Service and the outcomes achieved by the Young Person. The views of the Council's Key Worker(s) and the Young Person or Family will also be sought. This information, alongside the other elements of the Quarterly Return, will be used by the Council to monitor the overall effectiveness and quality of service provided.

10.4 All accommodation that is used to deliver the Service will be required to participate in Young Inspections, carried out by trained Young People. The format and content of the Young Inspection has been developed by the Children in Care Council (LINX) and is continuously informed through feedback from both Young People and providers. The findings and recommendations from the Young Inspection will be shared with the Corporate Parenting Board and will used by the County Council and Provider to identify any areas for development. The Provider will be required to develop and implement a plan to address these areas and the plan will be monitored in subsequent
performance management meetings. The Young Inspectors will revisit the accommodation six months after the initial visit to monitor how well their recommendations have been implemented.
Appendix A Outcome Indicators

The Service will be monitored in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Contract. The Service outcomes will be measured against the indicators below.

OUTCOME 1 - Promoting Health and Wellbeing. The Young Person/Family enjoys good physical, emotional, mental and sexual health, has a healthy lifestyle and has access to information about health issues that allows them to make informed choices as they move to independence.

Indicators:
- The Young Person/Family is managing their physical health better
- The Young Person/Family is managing their mental health better
- The Young Person/Family is managing their substance misuse issues better

OUTCOME 2 – Staying Safe. Young People/Family are living in a physically safe environment with appropriate support network to meet their individual needs.

Indicators:
- The Young Person/Family is complying with their statutory orders and/or related processes and does not take part in offending behaviour
- The Young Person/Family is better managing self-harm
- The Young Person/Family is minimising the risk of harm posed to them by others including how to keep themselves safe using the internet and social media

OUTCOME 3 – Develop Positive Relationships. Young People/Family are supported in developing peer, family and working relationships to aid their development and promote emotional well-being.

Indicators:
- The Young Person/Family is establishing and/or maintaining contact with friends / family
- The Young Person/Family is developing a support network in preparation for independent living

OUTCOME 4 – Promoting Identity. The Young Person/Family feels secure and proud of their identity and is able to choose his/her religion.

Indicator:
- The Young Person/Family is able to follow their chosen religion, culture, gender, sexuality and feels that their beliefs are acknowledged and respected

OUTCOME 5 – Enjoy and Achieve. The Young Person/Family:
- has access to employment, training or education and receives encouragement and recognition for their achievements;
- achieves academically in line with their ability
- participates in social, cultural and leisure activities;
- makes positive friendships.
### Indicators:
- The Young Person/Family is participating in their desired training and/or education
- The Young Person/Family has achieved their desired qualification (if applicable)
- The Young Person/Family is now in paid work
- The Young Person/Family is participating in their chosen work-like activities
- The Young Person/Family takes part in a variety of social, recreational, leisure and cultural activities

### OUTCOME 6 - Promoting Participation. The Young Person/Family:
- positively participates in the local community;
- is actively involved in making decisions about their future;
- develops self-confidence is are able to deal with change and other life challenges;
- understands the effects of all acts of discrimination and is able to challenge their own perceptions on this

#### Indicators:
- The Young Person/Family feels their views are listened to and taken account of
- The Young Person/Family feels in control of their circumstances
- The Young Person/Family has a sense of responsibility and understands the consequences of socially acceptable and unacceptable behaviour

### OUTCOME 7 – Promoting Independence. The Young Person engages in further education, employment or training, develops independence and money management skills and is supported in the transition to independent adult life.

#### Indicators:
- The Young Person/Family is maintaining their accommodation
- The Young Person/Family has maximised their income and is managing their finances and living within their budget
- The Young Person/Family has obtained an appropriate tenancy or suitable accommodation at the end of the service.
Lancashire Joint Protocol - Joint Working Arrangements for Meeting the Needs of Homeless Young People

Additional Guidance

Guidance for Providers Managing Access to Block Contracted Supported Housing Schemes

16th March 2018
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1. Introduction

1.0 As stated in LCC’s joint protocol, “It is widely recognised that young people are generally best placed living with their families. Every effort will be made to assist young people to remain in their family home through a range of interventions. However, it is acknowledged that there are situations where a young person cannot remain at home and alternative accommodation and ongoing support must be provided”. See separate guidance relating to the prevention of homelessness.

1.1 Where mediation has not facilitated a return home and alternative accommodation is being sought, then Children's Social Care (CSC)/Access to Resources Team (ART), district councils and providers will follow the Lancashire Joint Protocol 2017-2020.

1.2 Where looked after children are seeking a planned transition to independence from care and are seeking to access supported accommodation, the process to be followed is outlined in section 7.3.

1.3 This document provides guidance for providers of supported accommodation, in relation to managing initial access to supported housing schemes which are block funded.

1.4 Some providers offer crisis beds, short term supported and move on provision within the one service or building, often as a core and cluster model. The prioritisation criteria relates to initial access into the service. Once an applicant has moved into the service, the provider can transfer residents between flats in line with the needs of the individual and the service. (see section 10 regarding implications for payments)

Where providers are seeking to make referrals to a different supported housing service as part of a move on plan or owing to other reasons, then the priority bands (see section 6) will apply in order to ensure equity and transparency.

1.5 Whilst the general eligibility and prioritisation policy applies to initial access to all services, it has to be recognised that services vary in terms of level of staffing, service model and design of buildings. ART and providers will work together to ensure that there is an understanding of the service models and the needs of people who can safely be accommodated in individual services.

2. Eligibility

2.1 The service can be accessed by:

- Young people aged 16-21 who are homeless or threatened with homelessness* (see note below)
- Children who are looked after and are in transition to leaving care
- Care leavers (see section 6 for definition)
2.2 When determining if a young person is homeless regard should be had to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and associated guidance. This details the duties that a district housing authority is required to consider when determining its statutory responsibilities towards a young person. The social worker/provider should liaise with the district housing authority in determining this. Where it is safe and reasonable to do so, the main focus should be on working with the family to prevent homelessness or to reunite young people with their parents, carers or family. Further guidance / direction will be available through local launches/joint meetings.

2.3 Applications will be prioritised in line with the criteria outlined under Section 6 below.

2.4 As outlined under point 1.5 above, whilst the general eligibility policy applies to initial access to all services, it has to be recognised that services vary in terms of level of staffing, service model and design of buildings. ART and providers will work together to ensure that there is an understanding of the service models and the needs of people who can safely be accommodated in individual services.

3. **Local Connection**

3.1 **Care leavers**

The draft Homelessness Reduction Act Code of Guidance for Local Authorities includes the following proposals:

"A young person owed leaving care duties under section 23C of the Children Act 1989 will have a local connection to the area of the children services authority that owes them the duties. If the children services authority is a county council and not a housing authority, the young person will have a local connection with every housing authority district falling within the area of the children services authority.

Where a care leaver is aged under 21 and normally lives in a different area to that of a local authority that owes them leaving care duties, and has done for at least 2 years including some time before they turned 16, the young person will also have a local connection in that area."

3.2 The above definition has been used to define local connection within this guidance.

3.3 Where a looked after child or care leaver up to the age of 21 who does not have a local connection with LCC, as defined by the Homelessness Reduction Act, seeks to access supported accommodation in Lancashire, an assessment of their individual circumstances will be made. The application must be shared with ART and agreement reached regarding the most appropriate response. The young person will only be considered eligible in
exceptional circumstances. Where this applies, low priority would be awarded.

4. **Who Can Refer?**

4.1 The provider shall consider referrals from:

- All 12 district councils within Lancashire
- Lancashire County Council's Access to Resources Team and Emergency Duty Team (EDT)
- VCFS service providers - where an agreement has been established between the VCFS provider and the district council regarding the service to be delivered by the provider on behalf of the district council (see 4.5 below)
- Supported housing providers who are seeking to move existing clients on to other services in order to enable them to step down to less intensive support, or where an individual is required to move to another setting which is better able to meet their needs

4.2 In general, during office hours, providers should only be accepting referrals from the ART. This means that they should not accept referrals directly from social workers.

4.3 It is accepted that there will be exceptional circumstances where social workers will need to place directly during office hours e.g. where a social worker has been an allocated a young person late in the day. Where this occurs, the provider should notify ART that a placement has been made by the county council outside of the normal referral routes.

4.4 EDT can place directly and will advise ART of any placements made. Where this occurs, the provider should also notify ART that a placement has been made by EDT.

4.5 Where a young person **approaches the provider directly**, the Joint Protocol should be followed in order to ensure clarity in relation to pathways and payment for accommodation. This means that:

- 16/17 year olds must be referred to CSC local social work teams unless there are formal local arrangement in place which describe a different approach. (e.g. where an agreement has been established between the VCFS provider and the district council regarding the service to be delivered by the provider on behalf of the district council)
- 18/24 year olds – there must be communication between the district council and the provider. Detailed guidance will be developed locally in each district regarding the communication requirements and the roles and responsibilities of each agency.

4.6 Any referrals received by providers for children looked after and care leavers who do not have a local connection, as defined by the Homelessness Reduction Act, with Lancashire (12 districts) must be shared with ART and agreement reached regarding the most appropriate response.
4.7 CSC are required to use existing CSC forms as the form reflects the format of the IT system. However, district councils and providers can develop a common form for their own use. This action will be taken forward by the Housing Reference Group.

5. **Duration of service**

5.1 Young people who are assessed as high priority or medium priority (see 6.1) can access the service for up to 2 years. However, the actual duration of the support received by people using the service will reflect individual needs and the age in which they enter the service. Providers are expected to move young people on to more independent living as soon as individuals have the skills to maintain a tenancy or live with lower levels of support. In addition, moving back to the family home should continue to be an option where this is considered to be the most appropriate outcome for the young person.

5.2 Young people who are assessed as low priority (see 6.1) will be offered 56 days of accommodation and support, with an option to extend on a weekly basis if capacity is available. Available capacity is defined as accommodation not being required for young people assessed as high or medium priority.

5.3 As priority must be given to young people assessed as high or medium priority, the provider will be required to manage occupation and throughput by young people assessed as low priority band in conjunction with local district councils, and in line with guidance included in this document (see section 11).

6. **Prioritisation**

6.1 The provider must award priority to applicants in line with agreed multi-agency priorities as outlined in the table below. Once an applicant has moved into the service, the provider can transfer residents between flats in line with the needs of the individual and the service. Where a transfer to an alternative flat requires a change in the cost of the provision for a young person being funded by Lancashire County Council, the provider must notify the Social Worker by providing the relevant breakdown of charges and start/end dates in order to ensure payments can be made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs of Individuals</th>
<th>Duration of Service</th>
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| High Priority | • Under 18 year olds who are homeless (16-17 year olds)  
• Children looked after who are in transition to leaving care (16-17 year olds) (eligible or relevant child as defined by legislation – see notes below)  
• Young people in this group may have needs relating to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and may have or previously had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of Special Educational Needs*  
AND  
have a connection with Lancashire |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Up to a maximum of 2 years; however the actual duration of the support received by people using the service will reflect individual needs*.  
Providers are expected to move people on to independent living as soon as individuals have the skills to maintain a tenancy or live with lower levels of support. |
| (as defined by the Homelessness Reduction Act) | Medium Priority  
• Former relevant care leavers aged 18-24 years old who are homeless  
• Qualifying care leavers aged 18-21 years old who are homeless  
• Young people aged 18-21 years old who are homeless and were formerly assessed as a Child in Need/Section 17 as a result of being homeless (i.e. through the Joint Protocol process)  
• 18-21 year olds who are homeless and are eligible for assistance under the Care Act  
• Young people in this group may have needs relating to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and may have or previously had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of Special Educational Needs*  
AND  
have a connection with Lancashire |
| Up to a maximum of 2 years; however the actual duration of the support received by people using the service will reflect individual needs*.  
Providers are expected to move people on to independent living as soon as individuals have the skills to maintain a tenancy or live with lower levels of support.  
Young people are expected to have moved on from the service in a planned way by their 25 birthday, apart from in exceptional circumstances. |
| Low priority | • 22-24 year old qualifying care leavers who are homeless and have a local connection with Lancashire and where a social care assessment identifies a need for supported housing. (Local connection as defined by the Homelessness Reduction Act)  
• 18-21 years old who are homeless and have not been previously known to social care (i.e. don't fall into any of the above categories) and have a connection with Lancashire  
• 16-21 year children looked after or care leavers from other local authorities who are homeless and do not have a local connection with Lancashire as defined in the Homelessness Reduction Act (see section 3) | Initially 56 days and then extend on a weekly basis if capacity available  
Young people are expected to have moved on from the service in a planned way by their 25 birthday, apart from in exceptional circumstances.  
(only exception would be where the design of the building/nature of the occupation means that the minimum term which can be offered is a six month assured shorthold tenancy) |
Young people in this group may have needs relating to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and may have or previously had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of Special Educational (see separate guidance).

*In exceptional circumstances an individual could stay for longer than two years; however this would need to be agreed by the district, provider and LCC and a move on plan would need to be in place.*

6.2 The age relates to the age of the applicant when first accessing the service e.g. if an applicant enters the service when they are 17 years and 9 months then they will be given high priority and an occupancy agreement which reflects high priority. The priority and type of occupancy agreement will be maintained whilst they are receiving support and will not be adjusted so as to reduce the level of security when he/she turns 18.

6.3 Where a young person moves on to another supported housing service either due to stepping down to less support or for other reasons, the age when they first entered the original supported accommodation will determine their priority band.

6.4 Definitions of category of care leaver identified in the above table are as follows:

- **Eligible child** is a child aged 16 or 17 who has been looked after by the LA for at least 13 weeks, since the age of 14 and who is still being looked after.

- **Relevant child** is a child aged 16 or 17 who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who have been looked after at some time after their 16th birthday who has left care. This also includes young people who were detained (e.g. in a youth offending institution or hospital) when they turned 16, but who were looked after immediately before being detained.

- **Former relevant child** is a young person over 18 who was previously 'eligible' or 'relevant'. Councils support this group until aged 21 or up to 25th birthday should they require a service.

- **Qualifying child** is any young person under 21 (or 24 if in education or training) who stops being looked after or accommodated in a variety of other settings, or being privately fostered, after the age of 16. However, they are not relevant or eligible as they don't fulfil the 13 week rule.

6.5 Where a young person aged 18 or over applies for supported accommodation and states that they were homeless when aged 16 or 17 and accessed supported accommodation, but a statutory assessment did not take place then the individual circumstances will be considered and a decision made as to whether medium priority should be awarded. The individual
circumstances would need to be considered by the provider, district council and LCC.

6.6 The homelessness assessment should be based on the legislation, guidance and case law relating to the Homelessness Act 2002. The legislation as at 1st October 2017 defines homelessness as:
- No accommodation available for occupation which the household has a legal right to occupy or threatened with homelessness in the next 28 days.
- Have accommodation but cannot secure entry
- Not reasonable to occupy accommodation available to the individual The legislation will be amended from April 2018 as a result of the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act. Providers will apply the new legislation when implemented, which will be outlined in guidance issued to all providers by the Housing Reference Group.

6.7 There must be a co-ordinated and partnership approach to allocations and prioritisation, consequently the provider is expected to communicate regularly with district council and the county council regarding individual referrals.

6.8 Where it is necessary to prioritise applicants who fall within the same category/band, the provider will take all relevant factors into account which includes but is not limited to:
  • appropriateness of service
  • level of urgency
  • level of vulnerability/need of the individual
  • connection with area where the service is located as defined by the Homelessness Legislation in place at the time

6.9 The level of urgency and vulnerability will take priority over the connection with the area when applications from the same category/priority band are being considered, apart from in exceptional circumstances Where local connection issues are deemed to be more important than urgency or vulnerability/need, ART and the relevant district councils must agree this decision

6.10 Any applicant with high priority who has been provided with supported accommodation in a district to which he/she doesn't have a connection will be given high priority to move to an area in Lancashire to which he/she has a connection.

6.11 Any applicant with medium priority who has been provided with supported accommodation in a district to which he/she doesn't have a connection will be given medium priority to move to an area in Lancashire to which he/she has a connection.

6.12 When prioritising applications, the provider will also give consideration to:
  • the needs of those young people already living within the service
• any alternative options available to individuals whose applications are under consideration

6.13 The provider will ensure that records are maintained of the rationale for decision making to provide an audit trail for decisions made.

6.14 The support provider will ensure that the occupancy agreements used provide the legal basis to enable the young person to be moved on from the service in the period specified above.

6.15 In order to ensure a consistent approach to moving young people on, across Lancashire, where they are low priority and there is no accommodation available within the service, guidance has been included in this document in Section 11.

7. Referral Received by Provider from ART/EDT

7.1 Process for emergency referrals (same day)

7.1.1 ART to have a full understanding of the nature of the support offered by services and the level of need that the services can accommodate.

7.1.2 ART to phone the support provider to check if there are any vacancies available.

(If the provider has already offered a property to a young person on the same day then the property is no longer vacant. However, in the case of low priority applicant, an offer of accommodation should not be made by the provider until after 2pm, so that a young person assessed as high priority or medium priority can be considered for the vacancy up until 2pm)

7.1.3 If a vacancy is available, ART/EDT to send referral form received from the social worker to the provider. This includes name and contact details for both the social worker and the young person.

7.1.4 Provider to make initial assessment from information available on the form and decide if the referral is appropriate and the young person should be interviewed. If the young person is not going to be offered an interview then the provider should notify ART/EDT of the decision and reason for the decision.

7.1.5 The provider makes arrangements for the young person to visit the service for interview/assessment on same day. This can be arranged via the named social worker or by contacting the young person directly. It is preferable that the social worker is present at the interview. However, if this has not been possible, the social worker must see the accommodation on the day that the person moves in.

7.1.6 If the young person doesn't turn up for interview/assessment, then the provider must notify the social worker and ART/EDT. After reasonable attempts have been made to make contact with the young person during that day, the
provider may decide to consider other applicants for the vacancy. The provider must notify the social worker and ART/EDT of this decision.

7.1.7 If there is more than one referral being sent to a particular provider by ART/EDT on the same day then ART must prioritise applications which fall within the same band

7.1.8 Provider to apply the prioritisation criteria outlined under Section 6 to any referrals received.

7.1.9 Following interview, the provider must notify the social worker and ART/EDT of the outcome and in the event that the application has been refused for same day entry, then the reason must be given.

7.1.10 If a property is offered, the social worker advises CSC Team Manager and seeks approval for payment of rent for up to 10 days pending the outcome of a Joint Statutory Assessment (JSA).

(The JSA will determine whether the young person becomes Sec 20 or Sec 17 or returns home).

See 7.1.13 if the young person is already a looked after child.

7.1.11 SW to process CLA and placement status on LCS, which will automatically alert ART that the plan is updated. ART to add the costs onto LCS.

7.1.12 Social worker to email ART to confirm that the team manager has agreed the placement for up to 10 days whilst the JSA is being undertaken.

7.1.13 Where the JSA is not required as the young person has already been fully assessed as a child looked after under Section 20 then the guarantee will be for the period that they remain a looked after child.

7.1.14 ART to confirm placement costs with the provider.

7.1.15 ART to send email to provider confirming rental payments for an initial period of up to a maximum of 10 days in order to provide time for the assessment to be completed. This is subject to the social worker having sent confirmation of the placement (see 7.1.12).

7.1.16 If there is no determination as to whether or not Section 20 or Section 17 will apply by the end of the 10 days, then ART must arrange for further written confirmation of payment to be made. The appropriate length of extension will be determined by ART and the relevant Team Manager, following consideration of the reason for the delay in completing the assessment.

7.1.17 The following procedure should be followed by providers when submitting Invoices:

- Providers to send invoices to the Exchequers Team using the following email address: paymentscare@lancashire.gov.uk.
• If the young person has been placed in accommodation under s20, Exchequers will process the invoice.
• If the young person is assessed as s17 and requires financial assistance, Exchequers will forward the invoice on to the Children's Social Care (Finance) Case Support
• Rent will only be paid for a young person who has been accommodated under Section 20, as young people who are assessed as Section 17 can apply for housing benefit
• Invoices can be submitted in accordance with the standard invoicing practice of the provider; however we would not in normal circumstances expect an invoice to be raised for periods exceeding a calendar month (i.e. invoices could be submitted weekly, four weekly or monthly)
• Where providers wish to query the progress of a payment for YP with s20 legal status, they should initially email paymentscare@lancashire.gov.uk or telephone 01772 536972.
• If it's a query relating to a young person who has been assessed as s17 then contact cypsupportfinance@lancashire.gov.uk or telephone 01254 220333.

7.1.18 Should these payments not be made to the provider by LCC in a timely manner and contact has already been made to the relevant team under 7.1.17, the provider will in the first instance escalate to the locality CSC Single Point of Contact (SPOC), then if not resolved to the locality senior manager, and then to the district head of service should payments continue to be an issue.

7.2 Referral for young person who require accommodation as a matter of urgency, but not same day

7.2.1 Where a young person doesn't require accommodation on the same day but does so as a matter of urgency, the above process is to be followed with the following exceptions:

7.2.3 Interview with young person will be as soon as possible, but this is not likely to be on the same day

7.3 Children Looked After-Planned transition to independence from care

7.3.1 ART to send referral form to provider giving approximate date when supported accommodation will be required. This should normally be at least three months prior to the accommodation being required, recognising that there will be occasions when the outcome of care planning may result in an earlier referral.

7.3.2 Children looked after who are in the process of leaving care on a planned basis should be considered for access to non-emergency accommodation units on initial entry wherever possible.

7.3.3 Provider to meet with young person and leaving care worker to assess application, arrange visits and facilitate any trial stays requested.

7.3.4 Provider to liaise with leaving care worker and ART.

7.3.5 Application to be considered for planned entry in accordance with any local access arrangements e.g. panel
8. Referral Received by Provider from District or VCFS provider acting on behalf of the District Council

8.1 Process for emergency referrals (same day)

8.1.1 District (including emergency out of hours homelessness officer on duty) to phone the support provider to check if there are any vacancies available.

8.1.2 If a vacancy is available, district council to send standard referral form to the provider.

8.1.3 Provider to make initial assessment from information available on the form and decide if the referral is appropriate and the young person should be interviewed. If the young person is not going to be offered an interview then the provider must notify the district council of the reason for the decision.

8.1.4 The provider makes arrangements for the young person to visit the service for interview/assessment on same day. Ideally this should be completed as early in the day as possible, so that any decisions regarding allocations are made within office hours.

8.1.5 If the young person doesn't turn up for interview/assessment, then the provider must notify the district council. After reasonable attempts have been made to make contact with the young person during the day, the provider may decide to consider other applicants for the vacancy. The provider must notify the district council of this decision.

8.1.6 If there is more than one referral, within the same band, being sent by the district council on the same day then the district must prioritise the referrals.

8.1.7 Following interview, the provider must notify the district council of the outcome and in the event that the application has been refused for same day entry, then the reason must be given.

8.1.8 The provider must have regard to the prioritisation framework and length of stay outlined under Section 6 when making allocation decisions.

8.1.9 Where the young person has approached the district direct and there has been no previous involvement by CSC, then the provider must submit a housing benefit application. Where the district has been asked to assist with finding accommodation by CSC then the CSC financial arrangement will apply (7.1.10) onwards. Where for whatever reason it is not possible to determine the status of the young person because the referral/placement takes place out of hours the provider should aim to establish this the following morning.

8.2 Referral for young person who requires accommodation as a matter of urgency, but not same day.

8.2.1 Where a young person doesn't require accommodation on the same day but does so as a matter of urgency, the above process is to be followed with the following exceptions:
8.2.3 Interview with young person will be as soon as possible, but is not likely to be on the same day (8.1.4 above)

8.3 Self Referrals from 18-24 year olds
Self-referrals to the provider from 18-24 years olds. As stated under Section 4.5 of this document, self-referrals from 18-24 year olds shall be dealt with in line with locally agreed guidelines

9. Referrals Received by Provider from Other Supported Housing Services/Providers
9.1 Process for emergency referrals (same day)
9.1.1 If alternative accommodation is required for a 16 or 17 year old or an 18-24 year old who has a "formal relevant" status then CSC SW, the ART and the district should be notified accordingly.

9.1.2 If alternative accommodation is required for 18-21 year old who has had no previous involvement with social care then the district council should be advised.

9.1.3 Referring support provider to phone the support provider of the service that the applicant wants to move to in order to check if there are any vacancies available

9.1.4 If a vacancy is available, referring support provider to send standard referral form

9.1.5 Provider to make initial assessment from information available on the form and decide if the referral is appropriate and the young person should be interviewed. Referring provider to be advised of decision as to whether to interview is taking place or not

9.1.6 If the decision is to interview, the provider makes arrangements for the young person to visit the service for interview/assessment on same day. Ideally this should be completed as early in the day as possible, so that any decisions regarding allocations are made within office hours.

9.1.7 If the young person doesn't turn up for interview/assessment, then the provider must notify the referring provider. After reasonable attempts have been made to make contact with the young person during the day, the provider may decide to consider other applicants for the vacancy. The provider must notify the referring provider of this decision

9.1.8 Allocations to be made in line with the prioritisation framework outlined under Section 6.
9.2 Referral for young person who requires accommodation as a matter of urgency, but not same day

9.2.1 Where a young person doesn't require accommodation on the same day but does so as a matter of urgency, the above process is to be followed with the following exceptions:

9.2.1 Interview with young person will be as soon as possible, but it is not likely to be on the same day

9.3 Young person placed outside local district
As outlined under section 6.9, any applicant with high priority who has been provided with supported accommodation in a crisis situation in a district to

which he/she doesn't have a connection will be given high priority to move to an area in Lancashire to which he/she has a connection.

As outlined under section 6.10, any applicant with medium priority who has been provided with supported accommodation in a crisis situation in a district to which he/she doesn't have a connection will be given medium priority to move to an area in Lancashire to which he/she has a connection.

9.4. Appropriate level of need
Whilst the general eligibility and prioritisation policy applies to initial access to all services, it has to be recognised that services vary in terms of level of staffing, service model and design of buildings. Providers will ensure that when making referrals to another project, there is understanding of the service models and the needs of people who can safely be accommodated in individual services.

10. Moving Young People within Service
10.1 The provider will award priority to applicants in line with agreed multi-agency priorities as outlined in 6.1. However, once an applicant has moved into the service, the provider can transfer residents between flats in line with the needs of the individual and the service

10.2 Where a transfer to an alternative flat requires a change in the cost of the provision for a young person being funded by Lancashire County Council, the provider must notify the Social Worker by providing the relevant breakdown of charges and start/end dates in order to ensure payments can be made. The Social Worker will then contact the Case Support Finance team to ensure that costs are updated on the system. Failure to provide this information is likely to result in the payments not being processed.
11. Moving Young People on from Service who have been assessed as Low Priority

This process only applies to young people who are being asked to move on because they have been assessed as low priority. Where a young person is required to leave owing to breaches of the occupancy agreement, then the standard processes operated by the provider will apply.

11.1 Young people who are assessed as low priority will be offered 56 days of accommodation and support, with an option for the provider/landlord to extend on a weekly basis if capacity is available. Available capacity is defined as accommodation not being required for young people in the high band or medium band. Given the length of the stay, it is important that the most appropriate option is considered for young people assessed as low priority. For example, where individuals have the skills, it may be more appropriate for a young person to move directly into move on flats or a dispersed supported housing scheme where there is the possibility of a longer stay than moving into 24 hour staffed service. This will need to be discussed at a local level once there is a clearer picture in relation to supply and demand.
11.2 This means that the provider will be required to manage occupation and throughput by young people assessed as being in the low priority band, in conjunction with local district councils.

11.3 If it has been determined that a young person, who has been assessed as low priority, is going to be required to leave the supported accommodation then a minimum of seven days' notice must be given.

However, if the accommodation is not in the end required as the young person who has been assessed as high or medium priority no longer needs the property, then the notice can be withdrawn and the occupancy agreement can be extended or renewed as appropriate for a further 7 days.

11.4 If alternative accommodation has not been secured for the young person who is due to be asked to leave, then a multi-agency risk assessment must be undertaken prior to the notice being issued by the Provider and the District Council using the Provider's current risk assessment processes. This means:

- the assessment must be done prior to day 49 if the young person is being asked to leave at the end of the 56 days
- it is the provider's responsibility to co-ordinate the multi-agency risk assessment process and arrange meetings where required

11.5 In recognition of the difficulties faced by providers when determining which young person shall be asked to leave (and to ensure there is a consistent approach across the County to the process), the young person who has been staying in the scheme for the longest period will be asked to leave the service. This applies to applicants who have moved in to the scheme after 1st December 2017. There are separate arrangements, as outlined in Section 12, for people who had accessed the scheme prior to 1st December 2017.

11.6 Where a young person has been referred for a social care assessment and there are delays in this taking place, the provider should take the following action:

- Where the individual has mental health issues - contact mental health services (see separate guidance for process to follow)
- Where the individual has learning difficulties or is vulnerable, contact LCC's Customer Access Service. (see separate guidance for process to follow)

11.7 Where the multi-agency risk assessment determines that the statutory mental health/Care Act assessment needs to be completed prior to a 7-day notice being issued then the occupancy agreement can be extended or renewed as appropriate.

11.8 Where the multi-agency risk assessment determines that the assessed risk of asking the young person to leave is unacceptably high, then a multi-agency meeting need to be called by the Provider involving the county council, district council and the provider, plus any other agencies involved with the young person, to determine the way forward. See separate guidance regarding LCC representation at multi-agency meeting.
11.9 ART to monitor the activity in relation to 18-21 year olds being requested to move on where no alternative accommodation has been found. (Client Record Data and Outcomes spreadsheet needs to be amended to reflect this).

11.10 It is important that any operational concerns regarding the implementation of this process are immediately brought to the attention of Talha Wadee, ART Manager, especially during the first six months of implementation. As stated below, a review of the new processes as outlined in this document will be undertaken around September 2018.

12. Panels/Local Meetings

12.1 In order to ensure that commissioned services are used effectively, it is proposed that discussions are held locally which will include focusing on reviewing planned applications to the service (i.e. not emergency or urgent), move on from the service, relationships between services in the area. The nature of the arrangements and frequency of discussions will be determined locally to meet local needs.

12.2 This panel/meeting will fulfil a different function from the weekly Joint Statutory Assessment Meeting which will purely focus on assessing the needs of the individual under the Children Act. New Children Looked After will also be reviewed at the CSC Resource Panel. However, it has been recognised that the Resource Panel cannot consider the overall functioning of the service which would include considering the needs of 18-21 year olds.

13. Transitional Arrangements for Existing Clients

13.1 Given that landlords/providers will have a legal obligation to act in line with existing occupancy arrangements and it has been considered appropriate to respect the original offer made to young people, those current clients who fall into the following categories will be moved on to more independent living when they are ready to do so in line with historical practice:
- Young people aged 22-25 years.
- Young people aged 18-21 years old now assessed as low priority

14. Review of Arrangements

14.1 This guidance will be reviewed 6 months after implementation. The review must include obtaining the views of providers, the ART, Children's Social Care and the District councils.

14.2 It is envisaged that there will be sufficient demand to fully utilise services. In the event that there is lower demand than expected in particular schemes or there are delays in the process which is leading to increased voids and rental loss, the provider should contact the ART immediately. ART, children's social care commissioning and the provider will agree an appropriate response.