

Market Position Statement

From 01.04.2019 to 31.03.2020

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

**Introduction**

We have a Placement Commissioning Strategy (PCS) that shapes and informs our service development. This strategy was agreed through data analysis of our looked after population; consultation with stakeholders; research of the process and practices for sourcing appropriate accommodation; and focused decision making on how to improve outcomes for children who are looked after. We are now able to set out our Market Position Statement (MPS) to effectively communicate our vision for the strategic commissioning of placements to the market, which is to meet our Sufficiency Duty by increasing placement choice and enable good matching, through;

* + shaping our internal services;
  + working in partnership with stakeholders, and a range of public and private sector partners;
  + working in collaboration with public sector partners across the Regional footprint where this offers identifiable benefits;
  + co-produce outcomes focussed services acknowledging that there are a range of different methods for strategic commissioning with multiple partners who may be co-operatives, charities or commercial partners:

**Monmouthshire County Councils Vision for Children and Young People who are unable to Live Safely within their own Families**

* Children and young people will be healthy and happy, and feel valued and loved;
* Children and young people will enjoy learning and grow into successful adults who can have positive relationships, positive futures, become responsible citizens and achieve their goals and ambitions;
* Our aspirations for the children and young people that we look after are the same, as any good parent would want for their children. Where they need it, children and young people will receive the very best possible standards of care and support:

The desired outcome of this approach is improved outcomes for our children and young people who are looked after, to achieve best value of the Councils Corporate Parenting functions with children and young people placed in high quality and value for money placements, which safeguard children and young people and promote their wellbeing.

The placement commissioning strategy identifies clear priorities, actions and outcomes the Council will deliver alongside practice improvements and workforce developments, while providing direction on the arrangements we will put in place, and services we will commission to achieve the following commitments:

* to safely reduce the rising number of children and young people looked after;
* to increase the number of children and young people supported to live safely with their families;
* to reduce our reliance on services away from Monmouthshire where these are not in the best interest of the child and young person;
* to increase the numbers of kinship carers within special guardianship order arrangements;
* to increase the number of Council Foster Carers;
* to work positively with Independent Agencies;
* to increase the range of local services to meet the needs of children and young people with complex needs; and
* to improve the way we commission and procure services:

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**Purpose of our Market Position Statement**

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

Our Market Position Statement will:

* + Act as a starting point for discussions between Children’s Services and care providers;
  + Provide data on current placements and forecast demand to inform providers on specific areas of growth or need;
  + Identify priority service areas of development where we want to co-produce, collaborate and commission services from providers:

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

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

# What Outcomes do we want for our Children and Young People?

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

The Children’s Commissioning Consortium Cymru (4C’s) have worked with young commissioners to identify outcomes that are important to children and young people (Young Persons 360 degree Outcomes).

# Carer Skill Set & Training

Our social work practice is Outcome Focussed informed by implementing the Risk Assessment Framework and Collaborative Communication. It is therefore helpful if carers are recruited, trained and supported to work in a consistent way alongside our social work teams. As an Authority we can work with providers to supplement carer and provider training where necessary.

# Resource

# Like most Welsh Local Authorities, we operate within the context of reduced funding and increasing demand pressures. We have been asked to save £10.336M during 2020/21. The Council’s spend for 2020/21 is currently forecast to be approx. £172M as at month 5 (date of publishing this MPS). For 2020/21 the Social Services, Safeguarding and Health Directorate has a provisional efficiency savings target of £1.058M. With approximately 70% of its net budget made up of externally commissioned services, and there is a strong savings focus on the cost and volume of commissioned services.

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

# Current trends – Key factors that are specific to Monmouthshire

# The number of children and young people between the ages of 0-19 years is forecast to decrease from 19,240 in 2017 to 16,880 in 2035, which is a decrease of 13%. (Daffodil).

# The Council has seen a significant rise in the population of children and young people who are looked after over the last 5 years from (108) in 2015 to (219) in 2020 which is a 103% increase.

The changing context within Monmouthshire includes:

* Numbers of children and young people looked after and placed at home with parents continues to increase;
* Numbers of children and young people looked after and placed kinship carers continues to increase;
* Numbers of children and young people looked after and placed in generic in-house foster placements has decreased;
* Numbers of children and young people placed for adoption has decreased;
* Numbers of children and young people looked after and placed in child and parent placement has increased;
* Numbers of children and young people looked after and placed under a combination of interim care orders and care orders continues to increase;
* Numbers of children and young people ceasing to be looked after has decreased;
* There is a strong drive at national level to increase the regional alignment of fostering services through the National Fostering Framework;

**Where we want to be**

**We want;**

Increased local capacity enabling our children and young people to live close to home.

Increased capacity to meet demand for parent and child placements.

Increased capacity to meet the identified needs of children with a disability, including respite/short breaks.

Strong relationships with commercial, charitable and co-operative fostering providers, and work with them to develop services that will compliment those we deliver within the Council.

Services to provide outreach and respite support to prevent crisis/breakdown for children and young people on the cusp of care.

**What we don’t need**

We do not want to compete with independent providers for local carers. We believe this is a waste of our resources.

This can be achieved by independent agencies targeting their local recruitment at the areas where we are not developing our own internal services.

**Where we are now**

**(See current trends and Key factors above)**

Numbers of children and young people placed with IFAs are increasing.

Parent and child placements are increasing.

Lack of fostering provision for children and young people with disabilities.

Children and young people are living further away from their home area.

Not maximising the use of specialist foster placement where it is the best interest of the child / young person.

## Fostering

**Who we need**

Carers who live in Monmouthshire, and can provide step down from residential care, with an outcome based approach.

Carers who can work with MyST and engage in therapeutic services.

Resilient carers who are trained and skilled in trauma informed practice, drug and alcohol misuse, domestic violence, absconding, and exploitation.

Carers who are resilient when faced with the threat of physical violence, verbal aggression, and challenging behaviour, and are skilled in de-escalation.

**Key Statistics**

The number of looked after children and young people with Independent Foster Carers increased by a 65% from 37 as at 31st March 2015 to 61 as at 31st March 2020.

There has been an increase in children and young people who are looked after and are open to the Children with Disabilities Team (3 CYP 31.03.2015 / 8 CYP 31.03.2020)

**Where we want to be**

We want to reduce the number of children and young people requiring residential care.

We want to work collaboratively with local providers to develop local provision to meet the needs of children and young people looked after in Monmouthshire. This includes the ability to accept emergency placements.

We want to work with a provider to develop short-term residential provision that supports children and young people who are on the cusp of care and/or have clear plans for reunification with family.

**What we don’t need**

We have capacity within Monmouthshire, but we would like to work with the current providers in the area to develop appropriate models of care.

**Where we are now**

We have no in-house residential provision within Monmouthshire, therefore we are reliant on independent provision.

There are currently 9 homes (32 beds) within Monmouthshire these include both private and third sector provision. However, the majority of our children and young people in residential care are placed outside of Monmouthshire.

Parent and child placement requests are increasing

There is difficulty in placing children and young people with a disability.

## Residential

**Who we need**

Residential settings with the ability to work alongside our MyST Service and therapists/clinicians.

Residential settings with the ability to provide support to children who are moving across to foster care or to live independently.

Residential staff who are trained in crisis intervention, and can work calmly under pressure.

Residential staff who are trained in managing challenging behaviours, self-harm, CSE or risk of CSE, criminal exploitation, and gender identity.

**Key Statistics**

The number of children and young people in residential settings has more than doubled over the last six years with an increase from 8 children and young people in 2015, to 18 in 2020.

The majority of children and young people placed in residential care are outside of Monmouthshire (4 placed within Monmouthshire, and 14 out of authority as at 31st Mar 2020)

**Where we are now**

Young People in Supported Lodgings placements have increased.

Children and young people may not have the interventions available to support them returning home where possible.

There is a lack of placement options for young people16+ leaving care or are homeless.

**What we don’t need**

We do not need residential providers to expand registered local provision to include transitional options such as semi-independent flats.

We do not encourage expansion in Monmouthshire by residential private providers that duplicate existing commissioned developments at this end of the market. However, we would benefit from expansion of charitable provision experienced in supported housing or RSL provision.

**Where we want to be**

Collaboratively increasing capacity and choice of supported lodgings provision for young people aged 16 + by continuing to work with local Registered Social Landlords and support providers.

Reduce / eliminate use of short-term emergency provision, for our young people due to their vulnerabilities.

Have a clear pathway of accommodation options to meet the range of needs for young people 16+ to assist them into early adulthood with stability and support.

Improve working arrangements with fostering agencies to support When I’m Ready provision where appropriate and in line with the best interests of the child.

## Supported Transitions

**Who we need**

Registered Social Landlords / Housing Providers to provide high quality affordable accommodation for young people.

Support providers who are committed to supporting transition within a flexible timescale.

Support Providers who are trained and skilled in trauma-informed practice with young people.

Support providers who are skilled as advocates for young people, promoting their independence and self-care while supporting their journey into adulthood.

Support providers who are adept at risk management during transition.

**Key Statistics**

The number of children and young people looked after within the 10-15 year age group has increased by 97% over the last six years from 38 in 2015 to 75 in 2020.

The number of young people looked after within the 16-17 year age group has increased by 38% over the last six years from 21 in 2015 to 29 in 2020.

# How we will commission services

We will continue to use the All Wales Local Authority Frameworks to commission individual placements across a range of placement types. These frameworks deliver strategic level partnerships with providers in fostering and residential services. The frameworks are used where either the Local Authority’s Sufficiency Duty necessitates external commissioning or where best quality, outcome delivery and value for money is achieved through external commissioning rather than internal service delivery. The All Wales Frameworks are managed by the 4C’s.

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

For bespoke or larger tenders we use Sell 2 Wales and actively require our market providers to be registered on this site to respond to tenders that are published <https://www.sell2wales.gov.wales/>.

# Support we will offer in service development

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

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

We will facilitate events for existing and potential providers and use forums, events at regional and national level to engage with providers. Monmouthshire County Council, the 4Cs, or Regional Partnership Boards may facilitate these events, and we encourage providers to attend these events, which are valuable to information sharing and networking.

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

This MPS is a live document and will be updated bi-annually or whenever there are key changes that you need to know about.

# Contact us

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