

## APPENDIX 2

### 'Invest to Save': Transition Support, Housing Associations and Innovative Partnerships for Children Leaving Care

#### Executive Summary

- 1.1 There is a clear need to find a sustainable solution for managing demand on the Council's Children Services. Crisis management is more expensive in the short term and less effective in the long-term. Ensuring successful transitions for children leaving care is an important part of this.
- 1.2 Providing accommodation for children leaving care through private agency placements is prohibitively expensive. In 2016, the cost of private placements for 11 children aged 16+ was £32,780 per week., £ 1,704,560 annually
- 1.3 A pilot bedsit program with Jigsaw Housing Trust was created in 2016, offering 7 people at any one time an opportunity to move into independent living. The support is high quality, initial results have been excellent, and the annual cost is dramatically reduced .i.e. an estimated annual cost of £ 57,690. **(per Table 1)**
- 1.4 The Service is now in a position where it can expand. We are working with a number of housing association partners to develop an agreement whereby the number of bedsits available will increase from 7 to 17 over a staged period. Tameside Children's Services will use their expanded staff resource to support the children placed into these properties.
- 1.5 The annual cost for 17 young people in the bedsit programme is estimated at £.140,090 **(per table 1)** The alternative via semi-independent units would equate to an estimated annual cost of £1,024,560 (using the current average weekly cost of £ 1,159).
- 1.6 'Invest to Save: Transition Support' will help Tameside Council fulfil a vital function in its role as a Corporate Parent more effectively, whilst also ensuring dramatic improvements in value for money.

**Table 1**

No Of Properties	Estimated Cost Per Week - Maximum	No Of Weeks	Maximum Total
£	£	£	£

#### Existing 7 Properties

Tameside Trinity - Existing 7 Properties - Including 15% Management Fee - Service Level Agreement In Place				14,010
Rent (16 and 17 Year olds) - Universal Credit claim from age 18 - or via Wage if in employment	7	100	52	36,400
Utility Costs (16 and 17 Year olds) - Universal Credit claim from age 18 - or via Wage if in employment	7	20	52	7,280
<b>Total</b>				<b>57,690</b>

**Additional 10 Properties**

Furnishings / Re-instatement / Damage Repairs	10	2,000	0	20,000
Rent (16 and 17 Year olds) - Universal Credit claim from age 18 - or via Wage if in employment	10	100	52	52,000
Utility Costs (16 and 17 Year olds) - Universal Credit claim from age 18 - or via Wage if in employment	10	20	52	10,400
<b>Total</b>				<b>82,400</b>

**Estimated Maximum Expenditure**

**140,090**

**Semi Independent Unit - Average Weekly Unit Cost**

17	1,159	52	<b>1,024,560</b>
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**Estimated Net Saving / Cost Avoidance**

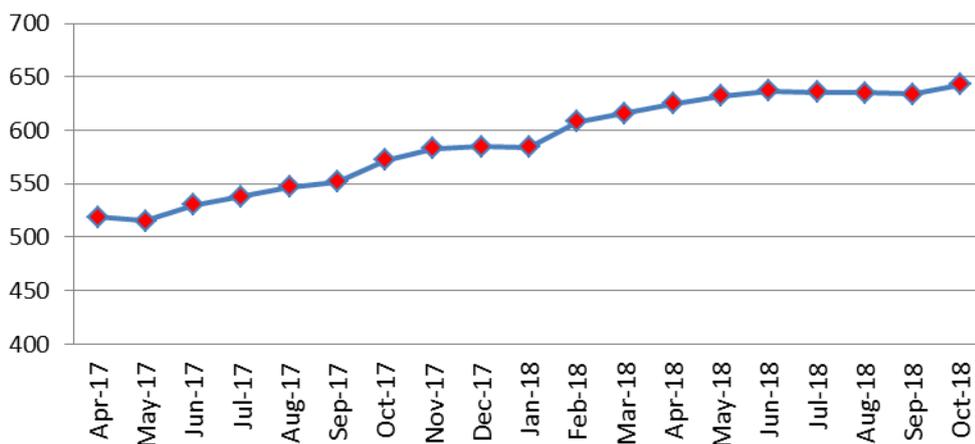
**884,470**

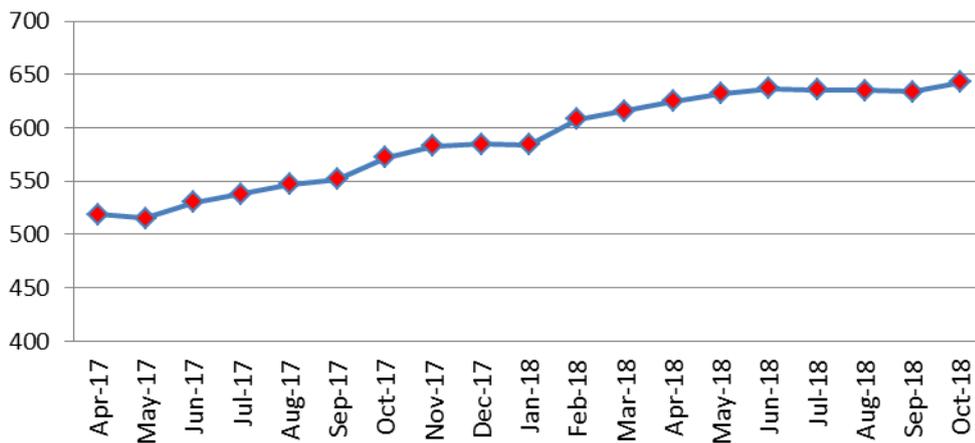
**2 Rationale**

- 2.1 As a Corporate Parent, the Council has a duty to our care leavers which extends in many cases to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. The quality of provision is inconsistent and indeed insufficient in many cases.
- 2.2 Ensuring a successful transition for care leavers is of huge significance. A number of young people leave the care system with mental health difficulties which leads to high levels of vulnerability. This has an impact on Adult Services.
- 2.3 The current arrangement, relying heavily on placements through private agencies, does not provide value for money. As displayed in the tables shown below, with the number of children needing care increasing the current arrangement poses a significant threat to the financial sustainability of Council operations.

**Number of Looked After Children**

The number of looked after children who may need residential care is increasingly steadily.





2.4 Working across sectors in multi-disciplinary teams aligns with regional initiatives to do more by innovative partnerships. By working more closely with key stakeholders we have the ability to pool resources and improve life chances for our looked after children and care leavers.

### 3. Expected Benefits

3.1 This project will address Value for Money in providing Transitional Support for Care Leavers, particularly with regard to the significant costs currently incurred . This is also particularly important in priority areas such as the cohort of young people aged 15-17 who are in high cost residential units (with an existing average cost of £4,004 per week, £ 208,210 per annum).

3.2 These children can be ‘stepped down’ into semi-independent units (with an average cost of £1,159 per week); and the cohort of 17-18 year olds already living in semi-independent units who can be stepped down into independent living without support.

3.3 It is important to note that the staff resource for enhanced Transitional Support is already in place. Expanding the number of bedsits will allow value to money to be realised over the course of this project.

3.4 Expanding the pilot from 7 to 17 bedsits is an opportunity to proactively build relationships with key housing association partners in order to provide a high-quality template for a more sustainable, service-wide solution to accommodating care leavers in the coming years.

### 2. Timescale

2.1 The Transition Support Team is well-staffed and in a position to expand support services. Housing Officers are currently working with Children’s Services and Housing Association partners in order to prepare a draft management agreement.

2.2 Once agreements have been finalised and approved at a Corporate level, a staged expansion of the program can occur over a staged 12 month basis.