

## Manchester City Council Report for Information

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 13 October 2023

**Subject:** Supported accommodation registration with Ofsted

**Report of:** Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

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### Summary

Manchester has a cohort of 304 young people aged 16 or 17 years who are care experienced, to whom we have a duty to support them develop skills, begin to think and prepare for their transition into adulthood and ultimately to be successful adults. As part of the transition process some young people choose and are supported to live independently in supported accommodation.

Currently 71% of our young people aged 16 and 17 live in a supported accommodation setting with various levels of support according to their needs.

The DFE describe supported accommodation as follows;

*As children grow up and approach adulthood, they gradually gain more independence from their parents. The care system seeks to replicate this transition to independence for children. While most children in the care system will be best placed in foster care or a children's home, from the age of 16, a looked after child can leave care (becoming a 'care leaver') and/or move to supported accommodation if they are ready for it. This provision can be appropriate for some older children where it is what they want and it can meet their needs and keep them safe as part of a carefully managed transition to independence. The aim of supported accommodation is to support young people to develop their independence in preparation for adult living while keeping them safe in a homely and nurturing environment. (Supported accommodation Regulations March 2023)*

There is a requirement for all providers to submit an application before 28<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and then from April 2024 all Supported Accommodation settings will be subject to inspection from Ofsted.

There will be 4 categories of Supported accommodation when the regulations come into effect and will be eligible for a regulated inspection.

Manchester has been reviewing and tracking the preparedness of externally commissioned provision whilst at the same time planning and have submitted an application in respect of local authority services.

Category (Regulation 2)	Description
1. Supported accommodation in a self-contained unit, where the accommodation is for the sole use of the child or for the child and other individuals living with the child as agreed by the accommodating authority or the supported accommodation undertaking. (Regulation 2(1), para (a))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The accommodation is designed for the sole use of the young person placed there, or for the young person and others that may live there as part of their family unit, for example, their partner, sibling and children.</li> <li>• Includes bedsits under a licence agreement and self-contained flats, which may be at the same location, or within the same building.</li> </ul>
2. Supported accommodation in a shared or group living situation in premises used to accommodate only looked after children and care leavers. (Regulation 2(1), para (b))	<p>Shared accommodation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people have their own bedroom, and may have their own bathroom, and share communal areas (e.g. living room/s, kitchen).</li> <li>• Provision may include foyer-type accommodation that combines support with opportunities for education, training and employment.</li> <li>• This provision may accommodate care leavers aged 18+</li> </ul>
3. Supported accommodation in a shared or group living situation in premises which are not limited to accommodating looked after children and care leavers. (Regulation 1(2), para (c))	<p>See description for 2 above, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to being registered to support looked after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17, this provision may also provide accommodation for people are not looked after children or care leavers.</li> </ul>
4. Supported accommodation provided by an individual or individuals in a private residence which is the main residence of that individual or those individuals. (Regulation 2(1), para (d))	<p>Provided by private individuals who offer a room in their family home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision is typically co-ordinated by a supported lodgings scheme (the registered provider), which recruits and supports a network of supported lodgings 'hosts'.</li> </ul>

The slide set attached to this report highlights Childrens Services response to the Supported Accommodation Regulations (March 2023) and the requirement to register all supported accommodation as defined above with Ofsted.

## Recommendations

Scrutiny Committee members are invited to:

- (1) Consider and explore the robustness of the planning and preparation that has been completed in order to register Manchester's internal supported accommodation provision.

- (2) Note and support Manchester’s approach to encourage and monitor external providers in the registration of accommodation, becoming ‘inspection ready’ and improving the ‘range and choice’ of provision and ultimately the outcomes for our young people.
- (3) Recognise the services response, whilst acknowledging the strength of the partnership work that has wrapped around our young people, living in supported accommodation.

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**Wards Affected:** All

**Environmental Impact Assessment** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

**Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

Manchester internal and external supported accommodation continues to deliver culturally attuned services to all our young people, which includes our Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). Priority is given to linking in our young people into bespoke community activities within Manchester as per an individual’s needs. The services are responsive to ensuring individual needs are being met for example communication aids, use of interpreters, space to be able to express individuality and bespoke support, for example LGBTQ+ friendly spaces.

Consideration is given to how young people where possible are culturally matched to supported accommodation provision, for example we have bespoke contracts for out UASC.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Effective support for young people is critical so they can connect, support, contribute and access a thriving and sustainable City.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Ensuring our young people are given the opportunity to access immediate support enables a timely assessment of need to ensure the right support at the right time is provided.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Building a trusted relationship with young people helps builds their resilience, recover from trauma which is needed to enable their potential to be achieved.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Improving outcomes for young people dispersed across the city helps build and develop communities.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Children's Services and partners have responded to ensuring our young people have a high-quality opportunity to live in supported accommodation that will help them manage the transition out of care and into the adult world, where they will achieve and be an active member and contributor to Manchester City and local communities.

Full details are in the slide set, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

### **Financial Consequences**

Please see below

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 At the end of March 2023 Ofsted published the Supported Accommodation Regulations 2023 as well as its accompanying 'Guide to Supported Accommodation Regulations including the Quality Standards'. This document supports the implementation of the Regulations as well as the guide to the Quality Standards which specifies the outcomes settings will be inspected against.
- 1.2 'The Regulations and this accompanying Guide for supported accommodation are applicable to accommodation in England in which a child is accommodated by the local authority pursuant to section 22C(6)(d) ("other arrangements" for looked after children) or section 23B(8)(b) ("suitable accommodation" for 16- and 17-year-old care leavers) of the Children Act 1989'. (Ofsted – The Guide)
- 1.3 The supported accommodation provision that will be required to register and be subject to regulation provided by Manchester City Council is:
  - The Beehive
  - Supported Lodgings
  - Any floating support arrangements across the service (staying close / agency staff)
  - Provision provided via the House Project (Manchester House Project only).

Manchester currently have 158 young people placed across 25 external supported accommodation.

- 1.4 The supporting slide set will highlight how the service has responded to this regulatory responsibility.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Ofsted began registering providers on 28th April 2023. The Regulations and guidance must be complied with for the purposes of registration and as soon as providers and managers are registered with Ofsted.
- 2.2 The application for registration must be completed before 28th October 2023, it will be an offence to provide a supported accommodation service following this date. It should be noted that the Registration visit, and certification need not be completed by this date, however a complete application must have been submitted, accepted, and a Unique Reference Number issued.
- 2.3 Ofsted state that they aim to visit services to undertake Registration Inspections within 40 days of acceptance of the application. Young people can be supported in the settings in the interim, and it would be advantageous to manage the service observing the regulations during the interim period.
- 2.4 Ofsted have recently opened a consultation relating to inspecting supported accommodation. This states that during the first round of inspections starting

in April 2024. Ofsted will give 2 working days notice of inspection. There will be 3 possible outcomes:

- “Consistently strong service delivery leads to typically positive experiences and progress for children. Where improvements are needed, leaders and managers take timely and effective action”
- “Inconsistent quality of service delivery adversely affects children’s experiences and limits their progress. Leaders and managers must make improvements”
- “Serious or widespread weaknesses lead to significant concerns about the experiences and progress of children. Leaders and managers must take urgent action to address failings”

2.5 Ofsted clarify that they will develop benchmarking criteria from the first round of inspections. From this a statement to describe “outstanding” will be developed.

2.6 Ofsted will inspect at least every 3 years, however in services that do not demonstrate consistently strong services they will be monitored more regularly dependant on the level of concern the service raises.

2.7 Within the service we have a variety of safeguards in place to monitor the quality of support/care provided to young people. All young people are currently placed with providers who are subject of the Northwest Supported Accommodation Framework and therefore contract and commissioning scrutiny. Additionally, all young people are subject of the Pathway Planning process, statutory visits, CLA processes, that all monitor and scrutinise outcomes of young people.

### **3.0 Service Offer**

3.1 Profile of our young people

- 304 young people aged 16 and 17 who following care planning decisions are ‘age eligible’ to move into supported accommodation.
- 71% (218) of young people are currently living in supported accommodation or supported independent living.
- 28% of young people remain in ‘care placements’
- 69% of young people are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (3% are female)
- 60 young people are living in internal supported accommodation.
- 158 are living in external supported accommodation across 25 providers and 3 preferred providers where there are commissioning partnerships in place.
- Of the 218 young people
- 84% (183) are male
- 16% (35) female
- 3% (7) 18 year olds
- 80% (174) 17 year olds

- 17% (37) 16 year olds

### 3.2 Internal provision

- 3.3 Manchester's Children Services have been actively planning and preparing to apply and readiness for inspection by Ofsted in 2024. The Project Plan is attached in Appendix 1 – see separate document. The plan highlights the activities that are being undertaken in order to ensure the service(s) comply with the Regulations, and address the documentation required to achieve registration.
- 3.4 Manchester is going to make two registrations separating the Supported Lodgings Service from the other services. Recruitment for both registered managers has been successful.
- 3.5 Manchester will be registering its provision week beginning 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- 3.6 The Registered Managers are required to make an application in their own right alongside the application made by the service and Responsible Individual, which will be DDCCS – Sean McKendrick. Ofsted will not consider applications in isolation.
- 3.7 The Regulation of Supported Accommodation has provided an opportunity to reassess the structure of the Supported Accommodation services available for 16- and 17-year-olds in Manchester. This has led to a recruitment campaign to attract additional supported lodgings providers. There has been some interest, with 8 enquiries, 3 progressing to assessment. The team have targeted their recruitment towards mosques in Manchester. The mosques the team have been working with have committed to continuing to offer the team a platform, and links have been made with a number of other mosques. This work continues.
- 3.8 This project also provided the opportunity to rethink and redefine the service user group that The Beehive will cater for. The proposal is that The Beehive focusses on supporting 16- and 17-year-old young people. The young people should be supported to move on around their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, but certainly prior to them becoming 18 ½ years of age.
- 3.9 The Registration has also prompted consideration of Manchester's role in relation to the GM House Project. A pragmatic decision has been made that Manchester will not provide a Registered Manager across Greater Manchester. Instead, each Local Authority will retain responsibility for the registration for their own service.
- 3.10 Manchester in its preparation for being 'inspection ready' will mirror Regulation 44 visits as per Children Homes regulations with its internal supported accommodation. Via our successful team of Care Consultants we will be implementing a 'young inspectors' model, we will also include our external 'preferred providers' and members of our 16+ Hub in this approach.

### 3.11 External provision

- 3.12 The information for this part of the report has been sourced through both through MCC Commissioning monitoring, the Post 16 Hub and Placements Northwest provider monitoring of Ofsted readiness. As one can imagine there has been much activity across the region in preparation for the registration. There is a MCC presence at the NCB Communities of Practice and we continue to engage with Placements North West to understand market viability.
- 3.13 Manchester have been working with all its external providers where we have young people placed or where we have had young people placed within the last year. Manchester have completed a 'check-list' guide to support external providers knowing what is required to meet regulation requirements, feedback has been that providers have found this helpful, we have had a 75% returned and are consequently satisfied that quality Statement of Purposes and policies and procedures are in place, with an intention to register.
- 3.14 The providers that have not returned this documentation have been written to with a view to starting to plan a move on plan for the young people currently living with them. This amounts to 6 young people. Manchester is clear that we do not wish to disrupt a young person's stability and will do all we can to support the provider ahead of the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2023. On the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023 it will be an unlawful placement to have a young person in a provision that has not submitted its registration application and therefore has its own URN number.
- 3.15 Whilst we have ensured ongoing consultation with providers there is risk that if they do not register, we will have reduced sufficiency. We have been working across the Supported Accommodation and Homelessness provision to ensure the providers such as the Limes, Foyer and Burnage register to ensure availability of the right provision at the right time. Already we know 2 providers across this market have given a position statement that they will not be registering and only accommodating young people over the age of 18.
- 3.16 Some external providers had indicated that they will be requesting uplifts on existing and future placement costs directly attributed to the new registration. In some circumstances they had quoting 20% or to bring themselves in line with existing residential funding models. This has been mitigated in Manchester partly due to the revised post 16 accommodation offer and the relationships with providers we have developed. We have negotiated the funding uplifts with external parties and these have been contained within the revised external placement budget.
- 3.17 Manchester welcomes regulation across the post 16 supported accommodation provision. There is acknowledgement across stakeholders that this is not a straight forward market to regulate. It is extremely flexible and there is risk that regulation could stifle innovation within the sector which can work very well for our young people.



## **4.0 Recommendations**

4.1 Scrutiny Committee members are invited to:

1. Consider the planning and preparation that has been completed to register Manchester's internal supported accommodation provision.
2. Consider Manchester's approach to support our external preferred providers in the registration of accommodation, becoming 'inspection ready' and improving outcomes for the benefit of our young people.
3. Recognise the services response, whilst acknowledging the strength of the partnership work that has wrapped around our young people, living in supported accommodation.