



# Telford & Wrekin Council's

## Commissioning Strategy and Market Position Statement for Children's Safeguarding and Family Support

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2024-2029



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# Executive Summary

Welcome to our Market Position Statement (MPS), which provides information about the care and support market in Telford and Wrekin for both existing and potential providers.

Our providers of children's care and support services are important to us, providing the vital and nurturing care, love and support that will enable our children and young people the best chances in life.

We want to help providers shape their business plans to support the council's strategic vision for the future. This MPS sets out key messages for the services we require in order to achieve our vision for our children and young people. Providing the right help at the earliest opportunities is the driver of these provider messages, setting out how we will develop a buoyant, high quality market to meet the needs of families in Telford and Wrekin. Like many local authorities, Telford & Wrekin Council faces significant financial challenges and demand-led pressures. We will provide regular updates and provider engagement events, to ensure the market can respond and contribute positively to a sustainable future for Telford and Wrekin.

We hope you, our provider partners, gain clear messages about the local care and support market we wish to work with in the future along with our intention to commission based on individual and personalised needs, strength and outcomes.



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# Introduction

This document encompasses jointly our Commissioning Strategy and Market Position Statement (MPS), providing information regarding the types of services that need to be commissioned during 2024 – 2029 to achieve the Council’s vision for our children and young people.

It outlines how we intend to meet our obligations under the Sufficiency Duty which requires each Local Authority to set out its understanding of demand for care and support and how that demand may change over time. The Council must also explain our current supply issues and challenges – which includes the significant financial pressures in Childrens Social Care and wider post Covid impact. This statement sets out how we will ensure that children and young people can be supported to meet their social care needs, to secure the best possible outcomes, and to support them to achieve independence.

This document is aimed at existing and potential providers of childrens social care and support. It is considered to be the start of dialogue between the Council, families who use the services, parent carers, providers and others about the vision for the future of social care markets.

In Telford and Wrekin we are committed to helping children and young people and their families to achieve the outcomes that matter to them in life. We want to see them living healthy, happy, more independent and fulfilling lives. Through consultation with children/young people and their families we know that receiving the right help at the right time with the right solutions that will match their needs will achieve better outcomes for them. It is significantly influenced by the [Children's Social Care: Stable Homes, Built on Love consultation response \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

We are committed to ensuring that there is a diverse and sustainable market that meets the needs of children and young people and their families to live well. Therefore, we are keen to encourage and engage with micro-providers, community groups, and organisations who can demonstrate how their support/service can meet our sufficiency needs.

This market position statement can be used to evidence our sufficiency needs when developing services or applying for tendering opportunities and reflects our Council vision and priorities.

We will review this market position statement annually taking into account feedback received, analysis of data and any amendments will be summarised in future versions of this market position statement. After reading this market position statement you have any feedback, comments or further queries to make then please contact us by email at [cypcontracts@telford.gov.uk](mailto:cypcontracts@telford.gov.uk).

# SECTION 1

## About the Borough of Telford & Wrekin

The borough of Telford and Wrekin is located in the West Midlands region. The borough is a distinctive blend of urban and rural areas, with green open spaces alongside contemporary housing developments and traditional market towns.

The population of Telford and Wrekin continues to grow at above national rates. As the borough grows, it is also becoming increasingly diverse, particularly amongst our younger residents.

Some neighbourhoods and communities in the borough are among the most deprived areas nationally, with other communities amongst the more affluent in England. There are notable inequalities in the borough which are affecting outcomes for residents, and overall health in the borough is below average.

The Council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment provides further detailed information:

[https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20121/telford\\_and\\_wrekin\\_insight/6599/joint\\_strategic\\_needs\\_assessment\\_jsna\\_population\\_headlinesTelford and Wrekin Insight - Telford & Wrekin Council](https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20121/telford_and_wrekin_insight/6599/joint_strategic_needs_assessment_jsna_population_headlinesTelford_and_Wrekin_Insight_-_Telford_&_Wrekin_Council), however, key findings from the JSNA are -

- ❖ An increasing and increasingly diverse population of 185,842, where 22.1% of young people are from a minority ethnic background
- ❖ Overall, the 0-18 population is projected to increase by around 11.3% between 2018 and 2031 (from 42,800 to 47,600). However this varies greatly when looking at different age groups, most notably with larger increases in the number of mid-teenage aged children.
- ❖ Children living in low-income families
- ❖ Nearly one quarter of residents live in areas in the 20% most deprived nationally, around 45,100 people
- ❖ 7.2% of 0–15-year-olds and 14.5% of 16–24 year olds were recorded as having a disability
- ❖ 63% of children achieve a good level of development at 2 to 2 ½ years – worse than the England average
- ❖ Obesity in children increasing
- ❖ Children achieving a 9-5 pass in English and Maths = 43.1% worse than the national average
- ❖ Higher rates of pupils with special educational needs than national
- ❖ Higher rates of children on a child protection plan (rate of 50.4 per 10,000 compared to England rate of 42.1)
- ❖ Higher rates of children who are looked after (rate of 102.0 per 10,000 compared to England rate of 70.0)
- ❖ 41% of our looked after children whose emotional wellbeing is a cause for concern

## Strategic Drivers

The Council's mission is for all our children to feel safe, loved and supported to achieve their full potential. Our vision is to support children to be the best they can be, and the care and support services we use will share these values and aspirations for our children and young people.

Childrens Services priorities 2022 onwards:

1. To create conditions so that every child is safe and feels that they belong in their home and educational setting
2. To promote access to a quality education offer for all children and young people across the borough
3. To focus on the best start in life and work with children, young people and their families as early as possible to avoid issues escalating
4. To develop a system wide approach with key partners to deliver our aspirations for children and young people
5. To ensure the workforce is skilled and develop a professional curiosity to adapt to changing service need
6. Every person has access to opportunities to engage in stimulating activity which will improve their sense of wellbeing
7. To prepare our children and young people for independent, successful adulthood

This MPS is designed to be read alongside the following strategies and key documents:

- Family First Permanence Strategy [Families First Permanence Strategy 2023-2024](#)
- Children's Services – Children's Safeguarding and Family Support Education and Skills 2022 onwards [Childrens Services Core Offer](#)
- Telford & Wrekin Partnership Threshold Guidance – A partnership framework for assessment and support '[Right Help at the Right Time](#)'
- Corporate Parenting Strategy [Corporate Parenting Strategy 2022 - 2025](#)
- Short Breaks Statement [Short Breaks \(telfordsend.org.uk\)](#)
- SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy [SEND & Alternative Provision Strategy - SEND](#)
- Specialist and Supported Accommodation Strategy [Housing Strategies - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)
- Placement Sufficiency: Cared for Children & Care Leavers – A multi-variant analysis of existing trends and future needs 2024 – 2029
- [The Annual Public Health Report 2024](#): The Emotional Wellbeing of our Children and Young People Matters
- [Championing Kinship care](#)

The Government's 'Stable Homes, Built on Love: strategy' is a key driver, significantly influencing the services we will want to purchase to support our children, young people and families. Locally, this is in line with our Family First strategy which sees our services developed to safely keep children in their families - linking with our Family Safeguarding service. The Council is also a pathfinder LA for the Family Network Pilot aimed to unlock the potential of family networks by offering family group decision making as a legal right; and delivering funding directly to family networks for practical support, in cases where there is a barrier to keeping children within the family network that could be addressed through financial help (a Family Network Support Package, FNSP).

The above will emphasise services that can support local families, preventing family breakdown, supporting the inclusion of wider family, provision of care closer to home including an increased use of foster carers, training and apprenticeships for care leavers.

The Council has commissioned a Valuing Care (VCARE) framework with IMPOWER to work with all providers, practitioners, commissioners, children and families to shape care plans according to actual need to focus on improving outcomes and life chances. Individual needs profiles demonstrate what provision, support, training and early intervention is required to best meet and reduce children’s needs. Work to date has provided key insights into our domains of need as:

Highest levels of need:	Medium levels of need:	Lowest levels of need:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Managing Emotions</li> <li>➤ Emotional health</li> <li>➤ Educational progress</li> <li>➤ Understanding identity</li> <li>➤ Family Relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive Relationships</li> <li>• Community Safety</li> <li>• Learning difficulty</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Activities in the Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Health</li> <li>• Sexual Behaviour</li> <li>• Self-care and independence</li> </ul>

The VCARE framework has enabled the following profile of an ‘average’ child:

They have strengths in physical health, appropriate sexual behaviour and self-care and independence skills. This means they have low needs in these areas which require only limited support that can be delivered in the home. They are physically healthy and fit, and they may engage in physical activities. They have age-appropriate self-care and independence skills which enables them to take care of themselves and prepare for adulthood. They’re able to make safe decisions about appropriate sexual behaviour to keep themselves and others safe.

The average child has moderate needs in emotional health, managing emotions, family relationships, and identity. They have a diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health condition which means they require some level of support for this from outside of the home, and support to manage their emotions, respond to stress and to self-regulate or observe appropriate boundaries. They need some support in understanding their identity, their life story and to develop positive self-esteem, or to maintain safe family relationships.

The VCARE framework has focused initially on children and young people in residential/external placements and a small sample of internal/external foster care placements – as we will complete profiles for other cohorts including children with disabilities, this will present a different picture in terms of high need domains i.e. high needs in terms of physical health.

The recent trend for older children coming into care has implications for providers regarding the type of care and support needed. For example, maintaining online safety, managing aspects linked to mental health, as well as vulnerabilities to exploitation - services that provide these young people with the skills and aspirations to prepare them for adulthood.

The VCARE framework will support Commissioners to proactively manage the market to ensure community support and placements meet the needs being identified. This will support a more relational approach with the market. The framework has identified current strengths within our cohort of young people currently showing in physical health, self-care and independence, active in the community and communication. We want providers to work with the Council in increasing those strengths into core skills moving towards building resilience for our children and young people to reach their full potential into adulthood.

The Department for Education has produced a [An illustrated guide to the Children's Social Care National Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) The National Framework brings together the purpose of local authority children's social care, the principles by which children, young people and families should be supported, the enablers that should be in place so the system is effective, and the outcomes that should be achieved so that children and young people can grow up to thrive. The National Framework puts the voices of children, young people and families at the heart of practice, so they can have a say in how they are supported.

The Council has launched Family Hubs across the borough - one-stop centres where families can get free information, guidance and support on infant feeding, mental health, healthy lifestyles and many other services. [https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20087/healthy\\_telford/6640/best\\_start\\_for\\_life\\_-\\_family\\_hubs/3](https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20087/healthy_telford/6640/best_start_for_life_-_family_hubs/3) Bringing all this support together in one place is a huge advantage for families, to access face-to-face advice and extra help right in their own community, when they need it. This includes free places available on both baby first aid and accident prevention courses run by award winning Mini First Aid, Triple P online for baby, Dad squad peer support group, Meet Me Group 19 and under for moms aged under 19, and Bump to Baby Club or under 1's group and expectant parents.

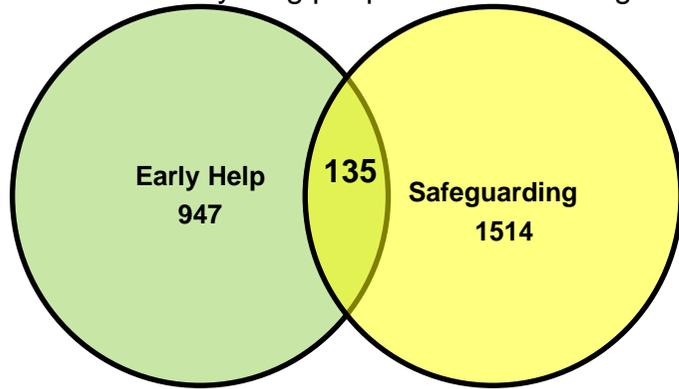
Local and national research shows a large increase in the demand for children and young people's mental health services, with the NHS reporting in 2023, that an estimated 1 in 5 children have a probable mental health condition. The Telford and Wrekin Public Health report 2024 focuses on the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people. The report sets out a series of recommendations to enhance the health and wellbeing for all children, young people and their families and services reflect the rising local need and demand for children and young people's mental health services. National research shows that children, young people and families with mental health needs should be able to access timely and appropriate community care close to home, in local settings including specialist community based treatment and support. Our aim is to integrate specialist mental health services within our community based services offered through the Family Hubs.

Our commissioning intentions are further informed by the Family Safeguarding model working with the whole family with adults practitioners working alongside children's social workers to support issues relating to domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse at the earliest opportunity, working in partnership with children and young people and families to help them improve outcomes and address issues which prevent them from thriving. We seek to understand the relationships between family members, and between the family and their wider networks to help professionals understand why the family works the way it does. This will lead into how commissioners develop our local market and community services to support families to thrive. Co-production is at the heart of commissioning, ensuring that provider stakeholders views and feedback is used to improve services.

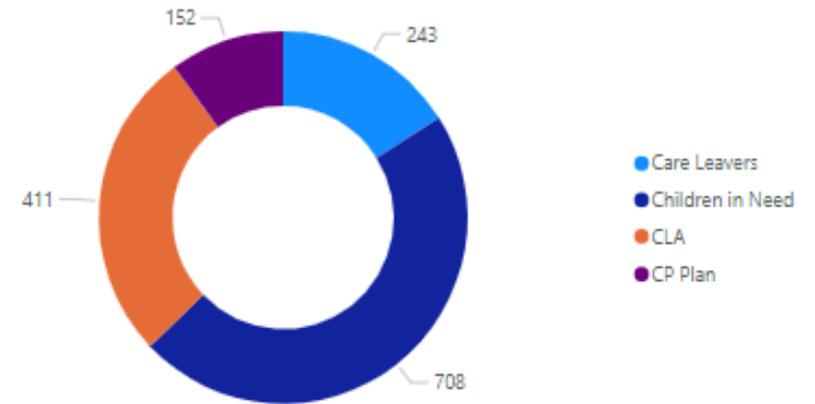
These approaches put the child's voice at the centre of our care and support services, and through listening and working with children and their families will influence commissioning work. This MPS is a calling card to providers to fundamentally see our children/young people first, understanding that the behaviours that the children/young people display are due to layers of emotional trauma and previous negative life experiences. Providers will proactively help children/young people to begin the pathway to sustainable recovery, focusing on the strengths and individual needs of the CYP that we support and therefore will need a more individualised response from providers – whether community provision, respite provision or settled care.

# Current service provision

The children and young people we are working with as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

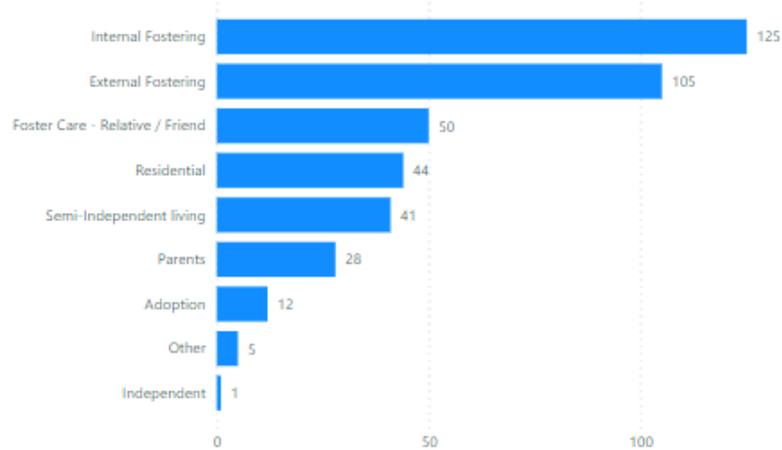


Children/YP open to social services as at 31/03/2024 by intervention type

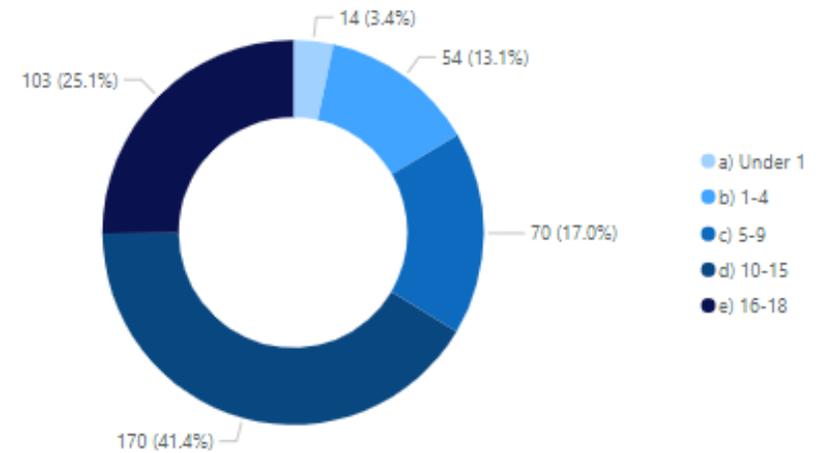


## Children Looked After

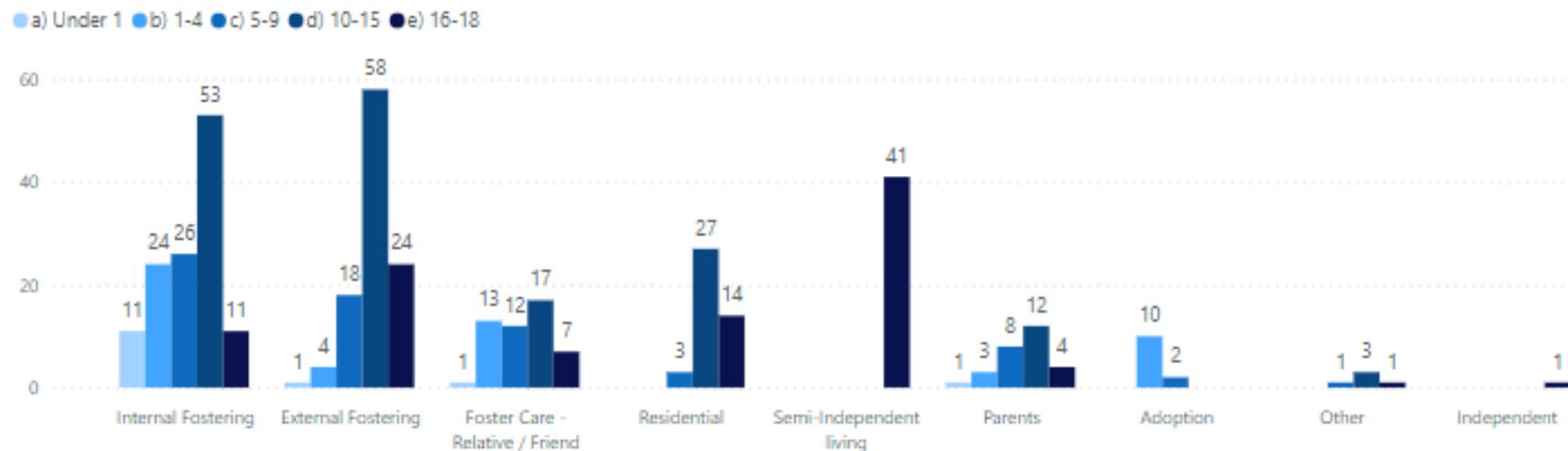
Children Looked After 31/03/2024 - Placement Type



Children Looked After 31/03/2024 - Age Groups



### Children Looked After 31/03/2024 - Placement Type by Age Group

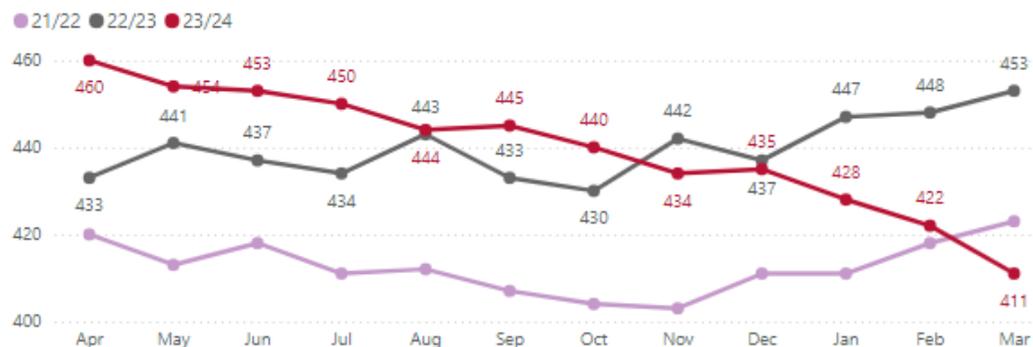


58 children looked after are a child with a disability.

There were 38 unaccompanied asylum seeking children open to Telford and Wrekin Council at the end of March 2024. This leads us to work with providers and foster care agencies that have a diverse pool of cares that can meet the needs of our children and young people.

Through a combination of population change, prevention and a strengths based approach, numbers of children looked after are seeing a decrease. The larger increases in mid-teen children in care will 'age out' of children's services and contribute further to a projected decrease.

### Children Looked After at month end

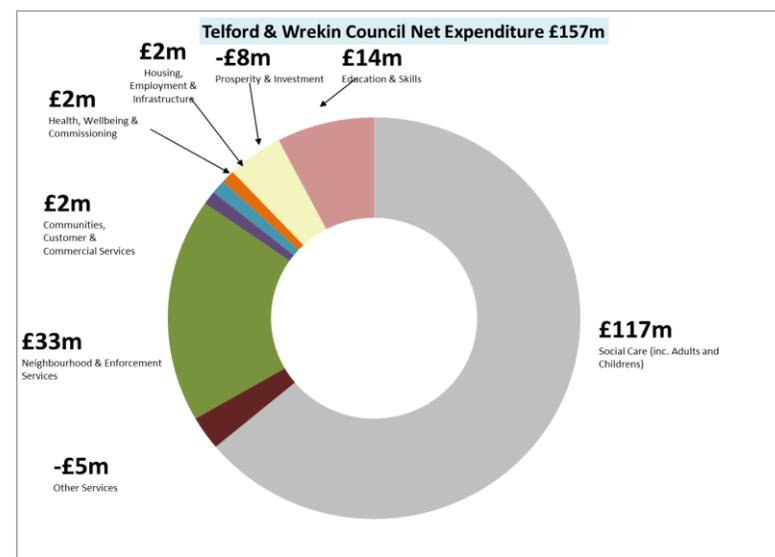


Children with Disabilities with a personal budget **211**, of which 75% male, 25% female. The highest need is learning disability and autism.

## Financial Position

The Council is facing a challenging financial position:

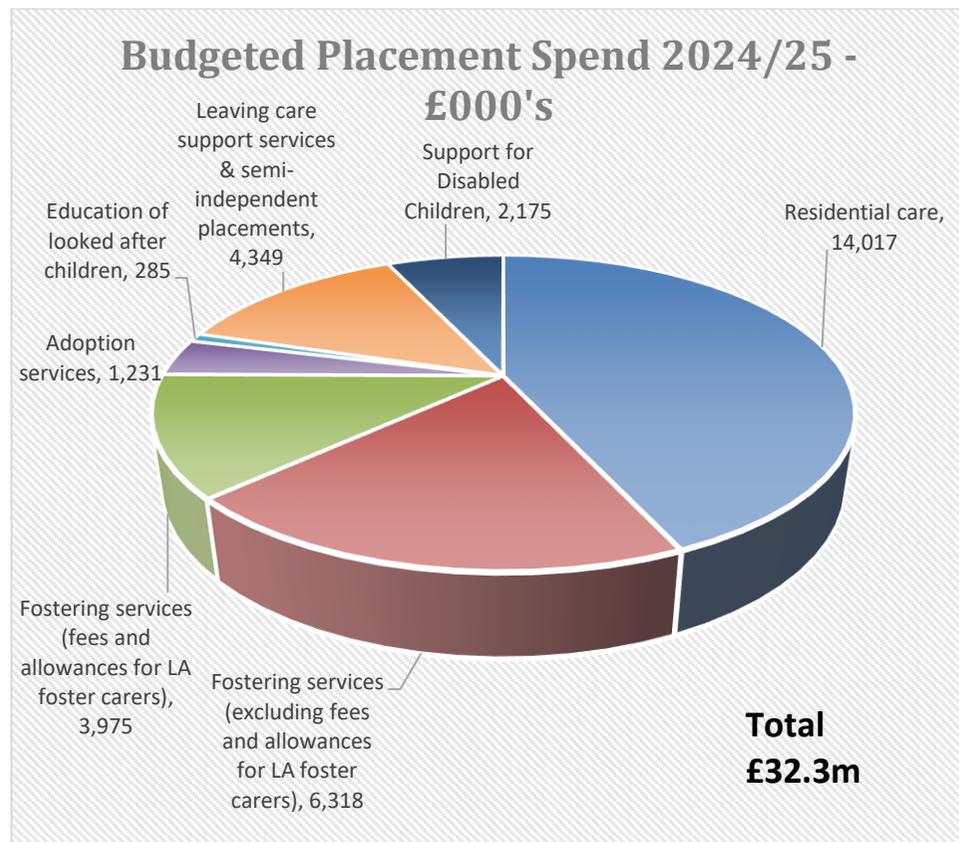
- By 2023/24 the Council will have made £156.9m of ongoing annual budget savings since 2010.
- The 2024/25 plans to make further ongoing savings / additional income of £15.8m
- As illustrated in the chart, over two-thirds of the Council's net 2024/25 budget will be spent on Children's Safeguarding and Adult Social Care
- The Council's net budget for Children's Safeguarding next year will be nearly £49m.  
[https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/26725/mtfs\\_report\\_cabinet - january 2024](https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/26725/mtfs_report_cabinet_-_january_2024)
- The pressures on Council budgets in relation to Children Social care is the subject of national independent review that called for urgent reform and investment of 2.6 billion to address a spiralling crisis in children's social care. [The cost of delaying reform to children's social care | Action For Children](#)



We are committed to delivering the best possible outcomes for children against budgetary challenges, aiming to adopt innovative and preventative measures to stop escalation of need for our children where possible.

The Council will continue to seek services that offer value for money at the highest level of quality and will seek alternatives to unregulated placements and also where cost does not match to individual and positive outcomes.

The Council's net budget for Children's Safeguarding in 2024/25 will be nearly £49m. The majority of that expenditure will be on children's placements, as illustrated below:



#### Current Market purchasing:

- 103 Fostering Placements (commissioning with 80 Providers)
- 45 Residential / Residential Education settings (commissioning with 37 Providers)
- 38 Supported Accommodation settings (commissioning with 13 providers)
- 6 Home care providers (currently expanding this market)
- 5 Supported lodgings/Shared lives provision

*(All external Fostering, Residential and Supported Accommodation is sourced via West Midlands Placements Portal <https://www.placementsportal.co.uk/pp/Default.aspx> whilst a new WM Placements Portal is currently being developed)*

## Identified Sufficiency Needs

A recent analysis of need was undertaken and published in the [Placement Sufficiency: Cared for Children & Care Leavers Report](#). The reports comprehensive analysis addresses key factors influencing the care needs of children and young people in Telford & Wrekin.

This summarises the following trends:

- A greater number of older-aged CYP entering care compared to those ceasing to be looked after
- Children's homes and semi-independent living solutions will be required at a greater proportion than previously
- A strategy of reunification to increase 'placement with parents' given Telford and Wrekin is in the lowest 10% nationally for this type of placement
- Increased recruitment of foster carers
- Kinship care growth aligned to the national strategy [Championing kinship care](#)

This and the above strategic drivers identify areas where we expect to see a growing demand:

- Build the range of quality **community based support services** available locally as we further develop our vision for preventative interventions and offer to keep children out of care through commissioning services in the community. These services will be for all children including children with a disability with an emphasis on mental health and emotional wellbeing, love and care, prevention, family welfare, skills building and community connection.
- This work will recognise, harness and develop our use of local **voluntary and independent sector** providers and partners
- Skilled **Foster Carers** delivering a range of placements and services, both short term and long term, and the development of **Kinship Carers**.
- **Regulated placements** with providers that have the skills to support our children, based as locally as possible. Providers that support our children in care, with love and compassion, that, due to childhood trauma and significant adverse childhood experiences will present with a range of needs.
- **Overnight Respite** to support family wellbeing, including supporting long term foster care placements.  
Respite provision is key to supporting family wellbeing, preventing family breakdown and the subsequent escalation to higher cost provision. At present we are not always able to meet respite need locally, with the resulting additional strain put on families. Respite provision should be locally based with appropriately trained staff that can enable children and young people with various needs/risks. Our need for respite provision is for all CYP but specifically for children with disabilities and children on the edge of care. Overnight respite is usually for a minimum of 1 to 2 nights at a time, although can be for a number of weeks as part of a planned family support plan.

Overnight respite can be delivered in a number of ways and we wish to develop an overnight respite offer that:

- is diverse with a range of offers suitable for different needs, with less matching considerations
- is regulated and high quality
- is as close to home as possible and enables local investment in people and services
- offers as homely an environment as possible
- recognises a different offer for 16/17 year olds in transition to adulthood.

Overnight respite can be provided in a number of ways:

- Within the family home (please refer to the DPS framework described below)
- An Ofsted registered childrens home for overnight respite
- Approved Foster Carers, approved Childminders
- Breaks in specific activity centres that are Ofsted registered

### Market Messages

For children with disabilities, as at January 2024, the required total number of nights respite per year is 1245, which equates to around 3.4 beds per night.

For mainstream children at the edge of care, this is an area of development locally. Due to its nature it is less able to predict, although we do know that during 2023, respite for children would have prevented family breakdown.

➤ For services in managing **high complex/high risks** we need staff to be **trained** to support children and young people with the following needs/behaviours:

- Emotional health and managing emotions
- Positive relationships
- Mental Health
- Absconding
- Behaviours of concern (challenging behaviours)
- Exploitation – e.g. at risk of sexual/criminal exploitation
- Offending behaviour
- Self harm and substance misuse

➤ We have identified that some of our children/young people need a **temporary environment** where they can have 'time out' and feel safe and secure. This temporary environment will have excellent experienced and skilled staff/carers that fundamentally see that they are children/young people first and that the staff/carer understand that the behaviours that the children/young people display are due to layers of emotional trauma and previous negative life experiences. This safe place will proactively help children/young people to begin the pathway to sustainable recovery, de-criminalise and prevent further escalation of behaviours.

➤ For our Care leavers we need good quality affordable **accommodation** within Telford and Wrekin for 16 to 24 year olds who are ready to move on from their care placement/supported accommodation, as well as provision of lifeskills, training and support into employment.

# SECTION 2

## Future Market Requirements 2024-2029

Our Council's procurement policy details how Telford & Wrekin Council achieves best value for the public purse and opportunities that are advertised on our website [https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20185/contracts\\_tenders\\_and\\_procurement](https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20185/contracts_tenders_and_procurement)

Our strategy, is:

- a) to work collaboratively with families and partner agencies in supporting children and young people at the earliest opportunity to provide the right help and support to them and their parents/carers in the community to ensure that children/young people continue to thrive and live well within their family setting (where it is safe to do so).
- b) to provide nurturing accommodation services to children and young people for whom being in our care is the only way of ensuring their safety, protection and development, and working with us to return children home (if it is safe to do so).
- c) to reduce the need for unnecessary or unreasonable high cost services.

We will concentrate on improving outcomes for children and young people by commissioning within these 5 drivers:

1. **Quality** - the services provided meet regulatory standards of our commissioning framework and those of national regulatory bodies CQC/Ofsted/CSSIW
2. **Sufficiency** - We will maximise our use of framework providers
3. **Price** - we will pay a fair market price, ensuring price enables providers to meet individual needs and outcomes
4. **Innovation** - working with our providers and partner agencies we will look for different approaches to meet diverse and developing needs
5. **Outcomes** based commissioning

### Focusing on 4 key services ...

1. Community support
2. Well-being and preventative services
3. Accommodation
4. Transition/Growing up to adulthood services

### In 4 main markets ...

1. Community services
2. Fostering
3. Residential
4. Supported Accommodation/Living/Move on

## Community Services

We are committed to finding sustainable, affordable community solutions to meet the needs and achieve the outcomes for children, young people and their families within our borough. Our aim is to develop local community providers that offer a range of services to support family wellbeing, prevents family breakdown, and supports individual aspirations for adulthood.

### Information advice and guidance within the community

We are committed to ensure that good information advice and guidance is easily accessible to all. This includes advocacy for families, advice regarding independent living and use of equipment and technology.

Whole family advice and guidance for:

- Independent living/Living Well
- Maximising income
- Volunteering opportunities
- Carers assessments and support Independent advocacy
- Emotional health and wellbeing

### Community play and social activities

Access to activities provide stimulation emotionally and physically and improves mental wellbeing for children and young people. Many voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations across the borough provide services and activities that aim to be fully inclusive, and they improve awareness and adapt their practices to achieve this aim. Support is provided to voluntary community and social enterprise organisations from the Council's Community Support team:

<https://www.telford.gov.uk/communitysupport>

We wish to have activities that are:

- easily accessible/ inclusive for all children and young people including those with disabilities, and the
- price to be cost effective for families and that the cost is not disproportionate for children with a disability
- Activities are needed particularly during term time, after school, weekends and school holidays.
- Whole family opportunities
- Opportunities for children with disabilities to purchase play equipment
- Increased activities for 0-5 year olds
- Positive Opportunities/activities in the community for young people aged 13 to 18
- Have appropriate facilities - access the [Changing Places Toilets](#) grant scheme to support inclusion

The Council will commission Short Breaks Targeted Activities for children with disabilities during 2024 to cover: Arts, Sports & Leisure and a Youth Club.

More information regarding organisations that provide activities or services for children, young people and families can be found at [Youth Offer](#)

Telford & Wrekin Council recognised that the school holidays can be a challenge for some families. This can be due to increased costs such as providing meals, childcare and reduced incomes due to reduced working hours. There is growing evidence that this can impact on the health and wellbeing of children. Evidence suggests that holiday clubs work best where there is regular and accessible provision of a diverse range of positive activities which include physical activity and a healthy nutritious meal. The benefits are even better when children and their parents are involved in food preparation. [Happy Healthy and Active Holiday Fund](#)

## **Care and Support Services within the family home/community (Peripatetic)**

Our frameworks will support growth in our use of community support for both families with disabled children and also mainstream families.

We require services that will support families to live well together, for example by:

- Helping in the home with routines/activities/behaviours
- Helping the child/family to partake in activities within the community.
- Support for children with disabilities in the home and community
- Therefore we require providers with expertise in complex health conditions, behaviours of concern, trauma informed support, emotional health support

Providers are directed to the following frameworks:

### **Support and Personal Care Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)**

**Lot 2** (of 4) is for Community based outreach support to children and their families. This could include daytime or overnight support in their own home or in a community setting to support their residential placement or as an alternative to residential short breaks. CQC registration is required regarding the provision of personal care and support.

Signing up to and being approved on the DPS will bring fast access to any available packages relevant to your organisation, a structured approach to contract management. To apply, please follow the link and register as a provider. The Support and Personal Care DPS will then be available to view under the 'Tenders' section. <https://in-tendhost.co.uk/telford.aspx/home>

**Price** - The LA approved framework rate for community support is £20.24/hr (at document date)

## Children and Family Support Services (CAFSS) Framework

This framework encompasses a range of community based services targeted at supporting families and children with timely assessment and ease of access to local support. The framework is led by Telford & Wrekin Council on behalf of West Midlands Local Authorities and published the Tender on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022. This is the link to the information relating to this tender: [Introduction - Procurement news and events - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)

The types of services within the framework:

- Therapy
- Psychological Assessment
- Parenting Assessment – residential and community
- Contact
- Family Group Conferencing
- Mediation and SEND Mediation
- Secure Transport
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Independent Person for secure accommodation review
- Form F Assessments
- Form C Assessments
- SGO Assessments
- Return Home Interviews
- Positive Behaviour Support
- Parental Advocacy
- Mentoring
- Positive Activities

If you deliver these types of services do have a look at the information provided in the link and apply to be on the CAFSS framework in order that our children and young people can get good quality support services.

This framework contract will open periodically to allow new providers to apply for this tender throughout the lifetime of the contract (4 years initially with possible extension of 2 years) – see the link above for the information regarding this.

**Value for money** – Our brokerage process seeks value for money services and providers to be mindful that families may be the purchaser on some occasions.

## **Overnight Respite Breaks**

Overnight Short Breaks for respite in the community may be provided in different ways however requires careful planning to ensure the provision is provided under the correct regulatory requirements. The range of permissible overnight respite is listed in Section 1 and within the community, respite can be provided as the following:

- Overnight respite in the family home. CQC registration is required where personal care is provided
- Overnight respite in a hotel with parental permission and purchased via a direct payment. CQC registration is required where personal care is provided. However, Ofsted may have concerns about this being an unregulated provision where this is a regularly planned provision.
- Ofsted Registered childminders for a child in the childminders own home.

The Local Authority are considering a tender for overnights Short Breaks to meet need within regulated provision.

## **Personal Assistants**

Personal Assistants work with families and social care in ensuring that the child/young person's needs are met as detailed within their support plan. All support from Personal Assistants to be person centred and that the child/young person's wishes and feeling are used to improve the service. Personal Assistants who are trained to provide care/support for children and young people with disabilities, must have the appropriate skills to:

- Communicate and engage well
- To see the child/young person's ability
- To inspire and encourage children and young people to develop well
- Provide a range of support from befriending, improving social emotional wellbeing, engaging with the family and/or community activities, engaging with educational/training activities
- Meeting individualised care and support needs and outcomes

The LA pays £11.44 per hour via a Direct Payment. The Council offer the following resources pages: [Direct payments and personal assistants - Telford & Wrekin Council](#), including access to the Skills for Care offer training for personal assistants

## **Child Minders**

Approved and governed childminders provide a safe, nurturing place whilst away from home for the child/young person, enabling the child/young person to engage in activities that engage/promote their interests and development further, as well as enabling the family to have a short break from caring responsibilities.

The Council's Early Years and Childcare Team [https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20391/working\\_in\\_childcare/643/talking\\_childminders](https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20391/working_in_childcare/643/talking_childminders) recruit and support childminders and we wish to increase these.

Childminders set their own fees, however need to be mindful that families can be the purchaser

### **Innovation opportunities**

- Child minders can be trained in specific specialisms and skills and market themselves on the Council website.
- All childminders can now offer an overnight respite service, as long as they have informed Ofsted and met certain criteria.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers possess the commitment and skills to build positive relationships to help prevent social isolation, support an improvement in their own anxiety/low mood/low or self-esteem. Volunteers may provide peer and befriending support to parents, children and young people. More information regarding volunteering within Telford and Wrekin can be found at <http://www.discovertelford.co.uk/get-involved/volunteering/>

## **Recovery Support**

Telford and Wrekin community based services to help recovery from drugs and alcohol for parents, children and young people and also support to children and young people whose parents are in recovery. Recovery Support services work with our youth offending and mental health services and offer trauma informed care and support.

We are keen for information technology to be explored to aid the ease of access at a time that would better suit the individual e.g. applications for smart phones

## **Independent Living Skills training/social activities for 16 – 24 year olds**

Locally, the transition to adulthood poses difficulties regarding the difference in respective eligibility criteria with many young people who do not meet the eligibility criteria for adult social care, in a situation where they are unable to live independently in the community. We wish to see children and young people being helped to achieve their potential. Key to this are services that provide this practical expertise and support to individuals and families. We require outcome focused services designed to support and promote independent living skills in children that help equip and prepare for adulthood. This to include supporting parents and families to maintain a positive living environment.

**Frameworks** – The LA will purchase these services from the following frameworks, dependent on individual needs: Community Support DPS, West Midlands CAFSS. These frameworks are referred to in the detail above.

**Innovation** - We wish to see local development of services designed to help people gain skills to enable them to as much independence as possible. This may include:

- Small group sessions after school or at the weekend where the child can learn new skills and develop their independence
- To provide assistance to people with disabilities to attend job training and work experience opportunities i.e. employment services, job buddy support.
- Support for independent travel. This could range from providing travel training to allowing people with disabilities to learn the skills and gain the confidence to improve their own independent travel skills. Transport which meets the needs of our children and young people with and without escorts is something that families tell us that they need.
- Support for parents and families with regard to bedtime and sleep routines
- Support to enable children, families and their community, to gain and use relevant communication skills
- Support and training to children and young people and families with relation to positive risk taking, achievement of personal outcomes
- Support and training in the range of disabilities and ways that families, professionals and services can understand and support children and young people.
- Support for children and young people at risk of poor social emotional mental health, including help to families where this is a risk/issue. This may include individualised practical support around maintaining home and good health.

# Fostering

Approved and regulated Foster Carers offer significant potential benefits for our local families regarding the range of services they may offer and we wish to increase capacity in the borough, within the service types described below. If we do not have sufficiency from Internal Foster carers, we will then seek to procure via the West Midlands Fostering framework, however, we may tender for block provision in-borough for certain provisions, particularly overnight respite care. The Council's Foster Care Team provide training, regulation and support and aim to increase the number of local foster carers: [Fostering and adoption - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)

## **Family based Shared carers/ Short Breaks for children with disabilities**

Family based shared carers provide overnight short breaks for our children with disabilities, offering families a choice regarding an overnight respite setting. Foster carers are well placed to work with families, offering a 'home from home' setting. Short breaks can be between 1 and 75 nights per annum per child, with an average length of stay at any one time of 2 nights. Foster Carers may opt for additional training and specialisms to be able to support a range of, or specific needs and diagnosis. Short breaks/ shared would need a target of approx 5 new carers per year.

Short Breaks Foster Carer services should offer value for money, and providers should be mindful that families can be the purchaser of services.

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## **Respite for children on the edge of care/step down from Care to family**

This service is to support the families with their edge of care/return to home plan. The aim would be to sustain a family with regular respite for as long as assessed as being needed, by providing respite support to families, to work with them and not setting unexpected expectations with the child that the family will not be able to meet.

These foster carers must be appropriately trained/ supported and resilient to support children that may be experiencing negative and emotional family situations.

For this cohort we need on average a respite break in this placement type for 13 children per year. Respite breaks can be between 1 and 75 nights per annum per child. With an average length of stay at any one time of 2 nights.

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**Parent/child placement for parenting assessments**

We require foster carers to provide a stay of between 3 to 4 months for the purpose of undertaking parenting assessments. At present we require approx. 3-6 of these foster placements every year. This requires appropriately trained/ supported and resilient foster carers who are good at record keeping and have the skills to support the parent in caring for the child.

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**Foster Carer Respite**

To help support our long-term foster carers with a much needed break we need respite foster carers who can provide a stable respite placement to continue a child's routines and support plan that they are used to with their foster family. Respite foster placements are needed for all types of foster placements: Pre-school; primary school; secondary school aged children.

We would expect that the role of a respite foster carer is to follow the way the child's foster family are caring for the child including routines and behaviour management. The respite foster carer must not raise expectations for the child that their foster family would not be able to achieve.

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**Short term foster carers to provide a stable placement to identify the right type of move on placement**

We need Foster Carers to offer a placement to enable the right move on placement to be found by ensuring the right information is provided on referrals. We anticipate that this type of placement will last between 20 to 90 days. This will enable the child's social worker to undertake their assessments and to have a clear plan around what the next accommodation/ placement/ support needs looks like to meet the child's outcomes. Once the right placement has been found then this foster carer would be expected to support the child/young person with the move on to their new placement.

Experienced foster carers are needed to be able to understand the range of behaviours displayed by the child/young person due to their needs/previous lived experience. These foster carers and the child will work with social workers in developing the referral for the right move on placement. This requires a multi-faceted approach with interventions for the child/ young person from education, health and care.

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**Staying put - Young people remaining with their foster carer after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday**

More and more of our young people are choosing to remain with their foster carers under our Staying Put Policy [Local offer to our care leavers - Telford & Wrekin Council](#) We would like more foster carers to be able to offer this as an option, providing further stability for our young people where they can really develop their independent skills and grow up well as a young adult.

<b>Sibling Placements</b>	<p>Foster carers to work with social care to ensure that the sibling groups needs are met both as individuals and as a family. Foster carers to positively support the review of the children's care plans to ensure that children are achieving their outcomes. We require Foster carers that are supported well to maintain their own emotional health and well being and resilience to be able to look after a sibling group. Sibling groups can range between 2 to 5 same/mix gender. On average we need 24 foster households per year that can look after sibling groups.</p>
<b>Children with additional needs</b>	<p>Where foster carers are experienced at looking after children/young people with additional needs and can support these children/young people well. We also require foster carers to prevent residential placements for children with the following needs: ASD/ADHD, risks of offending/sexual harmful behaviour/exploitation</p> <p>We need between 20 to 30 foster placements per annum. All ages and includes children with disabilities</p> <p>The price should offer value for money which includes a bespoke package of support/training for the foster carers including regular breaks to support their resilience/emotional health and wellbeing to sustain placement stability.</p>
<b>Mainstream Foster care</b>	<p>We require Foster carers to have the necessary skills to support these vulnerable children/young people. These foster carers must be supported well to manage their own mental wellbeing/resilience in order that they can support children and young peoples multi-faceted behaviours stemming from for example: emotional trauma, neglect, poor parenting and no clear consistent boundaries. The foster carers should (wherever possible) have access to their own transport to be able to take children to school, health appointments, activities etc. There are occasions when we need Foster carers without any other child in their home to be able to give our child a solo placement. We need between 170 to 290 foster placements per annum ranging from Pre-school age, Primary school age and Secondary/ higher education age</p>
<b>Emergency Residential Support</b>	<p>On average we need to utilise foster placements for emergencies approximately for 120 nights per year with an average stay of 3 nights per occasion. These will be well trained and resilient carers who can take any child/young person that needs an urgent home. The type of emergencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placement breakdown (this could be from family/another in care placement)</li> <li>• New child into care</li> <li>• PACE transfers</li> </ul>

## Residential Services

Where our children and young people require residential provision, we will first seek to procure via the West Midlands Residential framework, contracting with regulated providers with a 'Good' Ofsted rating. However, we may tender for block provision in-borough for certain provisions, particularly overnight respite care. Below are listed the particular residential services we require:

### **Short breaks overnight for children with disabilities**

For this cohort we need a respite break for 55 children per year equating to around 1250 nights per month for our children with disabilities families to have a short break. This may be provided in other ways i.e. foster carers, childminders. Providers must ensure they are meeting the child/young person's short break support plan. This requires appropriately trained staff to provide positive activities/engagement to promote living well. Providers to ensure the child/young person's/families views are sought regarding their service and use this to support continuous improvement of the service.

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### **Overnight respite for children on the edge of care/ children in need plans**

Providers to ensure that they can help the child/young person form positive relationships with their family that will then re-unify them. Staff to be appropriately trained to:

- Support the child/young person.
- Communicate well with parents/ social care
- Engage child/young person in positive activities

For this cohort need on average a respite break in this placement type for approx 20 children per year

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### **Emergency/ Crisis placement**

Experienced and well trained staff that are trauma informed to intensely support a child/young person immediately. Providers to ensure that the home and their staff are able to provide a comfortable, safe and secure place for children and young people. This home will not be the child/young person's permanent home but a place where they can gain crucial strategies to help them recover and stabilise.

On average we need to utilise 25 beds at any time during the year. The intense support provided by residential staff must be immediate to stabilise a child/young person's emotional health and wellbeing as soon as possible.

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**Solo placement**

Resilient and well supported residential staff to provide 1 to 1 direct support to a child/young person. Providers to ensure that residential staff are supported well with their own emotional, health and wellbeing to ensure that they are resilient and consistent and supporting our children and young people.

On average we need to utilize approx 3 beds per year

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**Placements**

Providers to work with the child/young person and social care to ensure that their care plan can be achieved. This could be to step down to a forever foster family; reunification with family; or to move on to independent living. Well trained and well supported staff that can engage children and young people in positive activities within the home and the community

Annually we are searching for between 40 to 60 residential placements.

## Supported Accommodation / Living and Move on Services

Caring for our most vulnerable children and young people and helping them to achieve their full potential is one of core priorities. Our aim is that all children and young people have access to a homely, nurturing, secure and safe accommodation that provides support to develop their independence in preparation for adulthood. We will work within the legal framework for supported accommodation for 16-17 year olds and utilise services that are registered with Ofsted, as per the Supported Accommodation Regulations 2023. To compliment the local authority registered provision, we will consider procuring additional accommodation from registered services, through the West Midlands Supported Accommodation Framework and occasionally spot purchase. Our supported accommodation requirements are as follows:

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### **Supported accommodation 16 to 24 year olds for looked after children and care leavers**

This service will meet the legislative requirements of the supported accommodation regulations 2023. Providers will offer provision that can meet young people's needs, keep them safe, and achieve the care leavers pathway plan. Working closely with key partner agencies including social care, health, housing and education to prepare young people for independence, offering stability and consistency and enabling access to local services. On average we have 38 young people requiring supported accommodation.

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### **Supported Lodgings/ Shared Lives for 16 to 23 year olds**

The Ofsted registered My Options Supported Accommodation service provides young people aged 16 to 23 in Telford a safe place to live until they're ready to live independently. Supported Lodgings carers within this service offer young people the opportunity to live within their home and provide opportunities for young people to develop the life skills and confidence needed to move into independent living. The Shared Lives service, registered by the Care Quality Commission supports vulnerable people to live as independently as possible in the community. Shared lives support can be to cover short or longer term need, including help with practical tasks as well as social skills and confidence building in day to day living. Shared lives carers are recruited, vetted, trained and fully supported by the Shared Lives Team.

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### **Short term supported accommodation**

The service provides temporary accommodation for vulnerable people who can manage a tenancy with some housing support. Referrals are managed by the internal nominations team, who help assess individual needs in relation to their chosen accommodation. Floating support service aims to maximise independent living for people in their chosen home, regardless of tenure. The service is designed to help individuals access the right housing solutions appropriate to their own needs and personal aspirations.

## SECTION 3

### Developing the Market in Telford and Wrekin

Commissioners will be proactive with current and future providers of care and support to progress the market developments needed to achieve sufficiency. Some of the actions are listed below:

- Commissioners will continue to develop and work with our strength based, needs led approach to care, support and placements
- Commissioners will influence and support the understanding of the Impower Valuing Care Tool to analyse placements, both new and existing to ensure they remain personalised and focussed on individual outcomes that matter to people and place / neighbourhoods, using outcomes to define/inform specifications
- The DPS and CAFSS frameworks will be further developed by working with new and existing community support providers
- Influencing and supporting developments for regional Residential, Fostering and Supported Accommodation Frameworks
- Commissioners will support the internal foster carer service targets
- Presentations to local and regional providers to influence their service provision and quality will be undertaken
- Commissioners will undertake targeted work with independent fostering agencies
- Commissioners will work with the ICS to support and influence their community health provision
- Commissioners work in partnership with internal partners i.e. education, social work teams, brokerage and procurement functions
- Commissioners will further build on their relationships with providers within the voluntary and independent market
- Seek opportunities for regional and local joint commissioning of services
- Examine and challenge existing service provision for efficiencies also gaining value for money and quality outcomes
- Undertake service reviews and ensure commissioned providers are held to account
- Engaging in professional commissioning networks to learn best practice methodologies and current legislation
- Ensuring we know about, and take up funded or supported opportunities to improve or create new services i.e. DfE initiatives

All external placements for fostering, residential and supported accommodation services that we need are sourced through the West Midlands Placement Portal and providers must register their company details and services via this link <https://www.placementsportal.co.uk/pp/Default.aspx>

Our current frameworks we encourage providers to apply to, are as follows:

**Regional Fostering Framework** – Current contract ends 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024, Lead Authority is Sandwell Council. New framework tender opportunity with Coventry City Council as lead Authority. Details in contracts notice link, contract to start 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/notice/6bf152b2-c5a3-4a87-98f6-a47933da8eb0?origin=SearchResults&p=1> For providers that missed the initial tender opportunity, this framework opens once a year for new providers to join the framework.

**Regional Residential Framework** – Current contract ends 14<sup>th</sup> December 2024, Lead Authority is Birmingham Childrens Trust. New framework currently under design with Coventry City Council as lead Authority. Details of current contract in contracts notice link,

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/notice/0ea9199e-fe20-480f-9b85-f1f5ecb9a8e0?origin=SearchResults&p=1> New tender opportunity will be advertised on Contracts Finder early Summer 2024.

**Regional Supported Accommodation Framework** – Current contract ends 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026, option to extend for further two years. This is currently closed for new provider applications.

# Appendix: Commissioning Model

