



Prosperous Communities

11 September 2018

Subject: Youth Housing Protocol

Report by:

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Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

Adoption of the Youth Housing Protocol

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Youth Housing Protocol attached at Appendix 1 be adopted.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:
None arising

Financial: FIN/100/19
None arising

Staffing:
None arising

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:
None Arising

Risk Assessment:
None arising

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:
None arising

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
None

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1 Introduction

- 1.1** Meeting the housing needs of young people is an area of joint statutory responsibility across Children's Services and District Housing Authorities. The legislative frameworks are set out in the Children's Act 1989 and the Housing Act 1996.
- 1.2.** There is long established and effective joint working between Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services and West Lindsey District Council.
- 1.3** The Youth Housing Protocol attached at appendix 1 does not require any additional commitments of West Lindsey District Council, moreover it brings together in one place our existing housing pathway for young people and sets out the current legislative framework that applies to young people in housing difficulty.
- 1.4** The protocol is required to pull together into one document a number of our current areas of joint working. Furthermore by bringing these strands together the protocol seeks to create smoother transitions for young people from homelessness or care, through supported accommodation and on into independence.
- 1.5** The protocol also brings in sign up from Adult Care and Community Wellbeing and the Department for Work and Pensions.

2 The Protocol

- 2.1** As mentioned above the protocol does not make any additional demands of West Lindsey District Council. It sets out our current statutory responsibilities to young which we adhere to in full.
- 2.2** In brief the protocol consists of:
 - Introduction & background
 - Summary of current services across the county
 - Overview of the statutory responsibilities
 - Further detail on current provision
 - Overview of the youth housing single gateway first introduced in 2012
 - Detail of transition processes between Youth Housing and Adult Housing Related Support services both commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council.
- 2.3** The protocol has been jointly written by District Council representatives along with representatives of Children's Services, Adult Care and Community Wellbeing and the Department for Work and Pensions.

2.4 This final version follows discussion and consultation at the Housing Health and Care Delivery Group which has both member and officer representation from West Lindsey District Council.

Appendix 1:

Protocol for Transition from Children's Services to Adult Housing Related Support and (Semi) Independent Living

1.0 Purpose

1.1 Overview

The purpose of this document is to define the arrangements that need to be in place within the Local Authority (primarily between Children's Services, Adult Care and Community Wellbeing, and District Councils but also including other stakeholders such as Department for Work and Pensions [DWP]) in relation to when a young person soon to turn, or already, 18 years of age, or 21 years if a care leaver, is receiving support within the Children's Services Commissioned Youth Housing contract. It should be read in conjunction with the Single Gateway Protocol developed by Children's Services and District Councils covering 16-17 year olds presenting as, or deemed to be at risk of, being homeless.

This Protocol has been jointly developed and agreed between Lincolnshire Children's Services, Adult Care and Community Wellbeing, District Councils and DWP.

1.2 Contents

This protocol outlines the:

- statutory responsibilities of Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and District Councils
- current support available for 16/17yr olds and care leavers up to 21yrs within Children's Services and from District Councils
- provision currently in place and able to assist young people still needing support as they turn 18 (or 21 if a care leaver and up to 25, where applicable), or for those who may be able to go on to live independently
- process in place for 16/17yr olds and care leavers up to 21yrs to access support i.e. The Single Gateway
- transition process for a young person soon to turn 18, or 21 if a care leaver, to access Adult Housing Related Support services already commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council via established referral pathways i.e. The Avenue
- transition process for a young person through District Councils to access alternative accommodation, both private sector and social housing, for those young people who can live independently

1.2 Guiding Principles

Local authorities must have regard to the seven corporate parenting principles identified in section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and care leavers (former relevant children).

The principles are applicable to all local authorities in England whether they are, or were, the local authority looking after a particular child/young person. They apply to the whole local authority and not just to children's services functions. They apply only to local authority functions that are exercised in relation to looked after children and care leavers.

The principles state that in order to thrive, children and young people have certain key needs that good parents generally meet. The corporate parenting principles are as follows:

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

2.0 Contracts and Arrangements

2.1 Children's Services

Support hours are commissioned for young people aged 16/17yrs, or up to 21yrs if a care leaver, via a contract agreement with Lincolnshire Support Partnership (LSP). This contract is in place until 30 June 2020.

This is a consortium contract; Nacro are the lead provider, in partnership with LEAP and Axiom until 30 June 2018 - thereafter, only Nacro and LEAP - with Nacro continuing as the lead provider.

Over 200 young people are supported each year via the LSP contract, around 70 at any one time thus removing the risk of homelessness and helping all Councils within Lincolnshire to meet their statutory requirements.

Historically, almost 92% of young people are supported to move-on within twelve months of accessing supported accommodation, with over nine-tenths of those recording a 'positive' move-on i.e. a planned move helping to move-on to suitable and appropriate accommodation, including returning home.

2.2 Adult Care and Community Wellbeing

Adult Care and Community Wellbeing Housing Related Support Services commenced in July 2015.

The service model comprises of:

- emergency (up to 3 months) and non-emergency (up to 6 months) accommodation-based support for homeless adults (18yrs +)
- a county-wide 'floating' support service for those at risk of homelessness
- a rough sleeper outreach service.

Domestic Abuse refuge accommodation and mental health crisis houses were also tendered for under this commissioned service. Domestic Abuse refuges are only for adults aged 16yrs plus seeking refuge from domestic abuse. Mental Health crisis houses can only be referred to by the Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHT) provided by Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT). Mental health crisis houses are procured and contract managed by LCC on the commissioner's – LPFT - behalf.

As with the Children's Services contract, it is important to note that Adult Care and Community Wellbeing only fund support. Where support is accommodation- based the accommodation is funded through the service user paying rent, often through housing benefit provided by District Councils.

Contracts are in place for this with Framework, LSP (comprising of Nacro and Axiom) and The Salvation Army. P3 provide the county-wide Floating Support and Street Outreach Service while West Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Service (WLDAS) and Nottinghamshire Community Housing Association (NCHA) provide the refuges. Richmond Fellowship provides the Crisis Houses.

A decision has been taken to extend the existing Housing Related Support contracts until 30 June 2019 to enable a full review to take place to ensure the service provision continues to be fit for purpose with current and new changes around the homeless populations and related legislation.

2.3 District Housing Authority's arrangements and housing options

District housing authorities are required to provide a housing advice service to those resident in their area; this is extended to those who may live outside the area but have a local connection.

Each local housing authority in England must provide or secure the provision of a service, available free of charge to any person in the authority's district, providing information and advice on:

- preventing homelessness
- securing accommodation when homeless
- the rights of persons who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, and the duties of the authority
- any help that is available from the authority or anyone else for persons in the authority's district who are homeless or may become homeless (whether or not they are threatened with homelessness), and
- how to access that help.

The service must be designed to meet the needs of persons in the authority's district including, in particular, the needs of:

- persons released from prison or youth detention accommodation
- care leavers
- former members of the regular armed forces
- victims of domestic abuse
- persons leaving hospital
- persons suffering from a mental illness or impairment, and
- any other group that the authority identify as being at particular risk of homelessness in the authority's district.

The service covers a household's housing rights and responsibilities, and the options available. There is a variety of assistance available such as to assist with remaining in their current home, how to access suitable alternative accommodation, support to negotiate with landlords/family members, managing debts, domestic abuse, discretionary housing payments, and rent advance or deposit guarantee schemes etc.

3.0 Statutory Responsibilities

3.1 In accordance with Guidance from Secretary of State Housing Act 1996 – Part 6 Allocation of Accommodation

- s159 a local authority shall comply with the provisions of Part 6 in allocation housing accommodation
- s162 every local housing authority shall establish and maintain a register of qualifying persons (the housing register)
- s166 a local housing authority shall secure advice and information is available free of charge to persons in their district about the right to make an application and any necessary assistance in making such an application is provided
- s167 every local housing authority shall have a scheme (their allocation scheme) for determining priorities and as to the procedure to be followed, in the allocating housing accommodation.

Housing Act 1996 – Part 7 Accessing services

- In accordance with s179, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, to provide an advice service to residents in their area
- In accordance with s184, if the housing authority has reason to believe the applicant may be homeless or threatened with becoming homeless, they will make enquiries as to whether they are eligible for assistance and if so, what duty is owed.

Children Act 1989 – Part 3

- The primary responsibility for a child in need who requires accommodation, including a 16 and 17 year old who is homeless lies with the relevant children's services authority. The Children Act 1989 (section 20) places a duty on children's services authorities to accommodate a child in need, and in almost all circumstances a homeless 16-17 year old would be a child in need.
- A Duty under section 20 of the 1989 Act takes precedence over the Duties of the 1996 Act in providing for children in need who require accommodation.

Children & Social Work Act 2017 - Section 3

- A new duty which requires the Local Authority to offer Personal Assistance (PA) support to all care leavers up to age 25, irrespective of whether they are engaged in education or training. This includes care leavers who return at any point after the age of 21 up to age 25 that request PA support.

4.0 Current Provision

4.1 Children's Services

4.1.1 Support Offer

The LSP contract currently delivers support hours for 16/17 year olds, up to 21 if a care leaver, as laid out in Table 1 below.

There are three main elements:

- General Needs - offering 8 hours support per week per bed-space, plus 'floating hours' to support the young person when transferring to move-on accommodation
- Complex Needs - for young people with more challenging support needs offering 33- 40 hours support per week per bed-space depending on needs of the young person and location
- Young parents - offering 10 hours support per week per bed-space

Access to this support is via the Single Gateway described in more detail within section 5.0 of this document.

District	Number of bed-spaces per District and type of supported hours		
	General Needs	Complex Needs	Young Parent(s)
Boston	6	3	1
Grantham	2	8	2
Lincoln	36	5	7
Totals	44	16	10

4.1.2 Criteria

Lincolnshire County Council has a duty to ensure looked after children are accommodated appropriately and to support care leavers to access suitable accommodation. The Local Authority is committed to ensuring there is sufficient and suitable accommodation across Lincolnshire through regular needs analysis and the commissioning of appropriate services.

The focal points within the contract are:

- effective assessment of need
- care pathway and support planning
- outcomes focused and young person centred support
- collaborative working to support vulnerable young people

- timely, appropriate, and effective move-on

Young people's needs may be complex and/or multiple, requiring joint assessment with other relevant and/or specialist agencies through mechanisms such as Team Around the Child (TAC). For example, the young person could be in the criminal justice system; and/or be experiencing substance misuse; and/or have mental health issues; and/or have a learning difficulty etc.

LSP will provide young people with varying levels of support according to the needs of the individual. All young people help to create and agree their own support plan, which is reviewed as a minimum every 6 weeks. Support is expected to reduce as the young person's skills and confidence increase aiming to deliver agreed outcomes in time for the young person's move-on arrangements. To facilitate this young people are supported to develop independent living skills e.g. budgeting and maintaining a tenancy.

Where a young person will need ongoing housing related support beyond their 18th birthday, or 21st birthday if a care leaver (i.e. as they move from Children's Services towards adulthood), and it is felt that Adults Housing Related Support is the best option for that young person, LSP will help the young person to make an application to Adults Housing Related Support (described in more detail in Section 4.2) by referring directly to Public Health who will co-ordinate the referral.

If it is considered that a young person at this time can live independently and they will no longer require supported accommodation, LSP will help the young person make a Housing Application and consider all their housing options. Applications can be made to all the relevant organisations including the District Council and the private sector. Or, when appropriate and depending on availability, LSP will support the young person to move-on into properties owned by either Nacro or LEAP. These are not commissioned bed-spaces and do not offer any support hours beyond any housing intensive management arrangements the provider may have in place.

Where appropriate, Children's Services will consider, upon request from housing partners, relevant financial support for care leavers up to the age of 21 years in (semi) independent accommodation to help them transition to, and sustain, their tenancy. See Appendix 1.

4.2 Adult Care and Community Wellbeing

4.2.1 Housing Related Support

Adult Care and Community Wellbeing's Adults Housing Related Support is shown in Table 2 and Table 3 below (NB: the unit amounts are for all Adults aged 18yrs plus, not exclusively for young people leaving Youth Housing).

Support can be accessed through 'The Avenue', an electronic referral gateway for professionals. (NB: The service user cannot self-refer through this system, although exceptions are in place for the Domestic Abuse Refuge Accommodation and the Crisis houses.)

Table 2 - Accommodation-based services						
Provider & Area Covered	Units of Emergency	Total hours of service per week	Location	Units of Non-Emergency	Total hours of service per week	Location
Framework – Boston	7	105	Boston	28	168	Boston
Framework – Lincoln	14	210	Lincoln	57	342	Lincoln
Framework – North Kesteven	5	75	Lincoln	21	126	Sleaford and Bracebridge Heath
Framework – South Holland	5	75	Spalding	22	132	Spalding
Salvation Army – East Lindsey	9	135	Skegness	37	222	Skegness
Lincolnshire Support Partnership – South Kesteven	7	105	Grantham	30	180	Grantham
Lincolnshire Support Partnership – West Lindsey	6	90	Market Rasen	24	144	Market Rasen and Gainsborough

Mental Health crisis bed-spaces (commissioned by LPfT)

Access to the service will be based on need, is via referral through CRHT and is between the hours of 8 am and 10 pm, 7 days a week, to prevent hospital admission.

Service Users will be able to access provision for up to a maximum of 7 days (10 days in exceptional circumstances - to be agreed by both the provider and mental health representative).

5 units in both Boston and Lincoln

Table 3 - Street-outreach and Floating support

Contracted amount of units (Floating Support & Street outreach)	Contracted amount of hours of support (Floating Support & Street outreach)	Location(s)
421	4 per week per service user	Countywide
	1684 - Total	

4.2.2 Support Offer

Services will provide housing related support to individuals, in line with an agreed support plan, including but not limited to:

- assisting service users to maximise income through support when dealing with Housing Benefit and other welfare benefit issues, making referrals to specialist advice or debt agencies, where necessary
- providing crisis intervention support, which shall include responding to problems that pose an immediate risk e.g. eviction notices
- assisting service users to access, by signposting and referring to, a range of specialist and general health services, counselling, education and employment opportunities, legal advice, leisure and cultural services etc.
- advising and assisting service users to improve the safety and security of both themselves and their accommodation
- Supporting Service users to identify and access move on accommodation

4.2.3 Eligibility

To be eligible for these services, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- be living in any housing tenure (floating support)
- be aged 18yrs and above (aged 16yrs and over for Domestic Abuse Accommodation)

- have a local connection to Lincolnshire (Non-emergency accommodation based only)
- have recourse to public funds
- have a clear need for housing related support
- be willing to engage with the service

4.2.4 Criteria

Although the duration of service will be variable and dependent upon the individual's specific needs, the emergency accommodation can offer a 24/7 service for complex individuals with an expected duration of up to 3 months. This accommodation does not require a District level local area connection for access.

Non-emergency can offer a 5 days per week service with a lower level of support for up to 6 months. This accommodation does require a District level local area connection for access.

For cases open to Children's Services, local access will apply as the young person is open to the upper tier Authority. Transfer between the two types of accommodation (emergency and non-emergency) is expected to support an individual to move-on effectively, utilising floating support to settle into independent accommodation.

Countywide floating support is available across all housing tenures within Lincolnshire to enable people with a range of support needs to maintain and sustain their accommodation and independence and/ or gain access to independent accommodation. This support is available for up to 6 months.

The Rough Sleeper Outreach Service is available to all verified rough sleepers throughout the County to support them off the streets and into accommodation, The service will support people without a local area connection to Lincolnshire or no recourse to public funds to reconnect with areas they do have a local area connection and will support people to access other service provision. In general, this service is provided to an individual for a possible maximum duration of 18 months.

All of the above durations can be extended, on an individual basis, through agreement by Adult Care and Community Wellbeing, where necessary to enable a positive move either towards or into independent living.

Referrals are sent to all relevant providers via an automated element of The Avenue electronic gateway. For example, if a referral is for someone who requires support to maintain their existing tenancy the referral will be sent to the Floating Support service; however, if

accommodation is required for a rough sleeper or someone about to lose their accommodation imminently the referral is sent if to an accommodation based provider.

4.3 District Council

With regard to 16/17 year olds approaching the District Councils, the decision making process is as follows:

- Young person approaches District Council Housing Options Team
- District Council provides advice on housing options including the housing register and supported accommodation options, and provides a reality check of what is achievable
- If threatened with homelessness within 56 days, a prevention duty will be triggered. Reasonable efforts will be made to prevent the homelessness and a personalised housing plan provided
- If homelessness cannot be prevented a referral will be made to the Early Help team. A Housing Officer will manage the case until homelessness has been prevented by either the Early Help team or the Housing Officer
- If already homeless, a Relief duty may be triggered if the child is not a child in need; reasonable efforts will be made to secure accommodation with family or friends if safe to do so. A personalised housing plan will be provided and a referral will be made to the Early Help team. A Housing Officer will manage the case until homelessness has been prevented by either the Early Help team or the Housing Officer.

Social housing is provided by a range of providers in Lincolnshire, not just District Councils. To access social housing, households need to join the Housing Register; it is important to note that it is usual for applications to be prioritised by a confirmed local connection to each individual's District area.

Lincolnshire care leavers will automatically have a local connection with all Districts within Lincolnshire meaning they should be eligible to go on any of the housing registers. Some housing registers require the applicant to be 18 years of age or over and many housing providers will not offer a tenancy to a minor without a guarantor. District Councils may have a policy framework that enables them to exercise discretion on a case-by-case basis with regard to 16/17 year olds and/or care leavers who are on the housing register in relation to their relative priority status but must comply with housing legislation and code of guidance. Further details can be found within each Districts Housing Allocation Scheme.

Reasonable preference is given to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Availability of social housing is limited and predetermined Lettings Policies balance housing needs local to their area. Tenancy types will vary between providers.

Care leavers up to the age of 25 years will be awarded at least the level of reasonable preference prevailing Codes and Statutory Instruments require when applying to go onto the housing register or presenting as homeless

When a young person aged 16 or over approaches the district council because they are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, the District will follow the steps as outlined in sections 5 and 6 below.

Personal Housing Plans will be directly linked to a care leaver's Pathway Plan through partnership working with Lincolnshire Leaving Care service and the care leaver themselves.

All parties agree that care leavers should be afforded the reasonable preference prevailing Codes and Statutory Instruments define as all local authorities have signed up to promote the seven corporate parenting principles referenced in section 1.2. All reasonable efforts will be made to prevent a care leaver being classified as intentionally homeless through intensive work on the care leaver's personalised housing plan, which shall be aligned with their Pathway Plan. In circumstances where a care leaver is in danger of being categorised as intentionally homeless, prior to any such decision District Councils will request to convene a multi-agency meeting involving the care leaver and/or their key worker to seek to overcome the barriers to the successful implementation of their Housing/Pathway Plan.

District Councils can also help facilitate access to suitable affordable accommodation in the private sector, through landlord liaison and/or financial assistance. Landlords will usually request a copy of support plans to provide assurance that the tenancy will succeed.

5.0 The Single Gateway

Access to support for young people aged 16/17yrs or up to 21 if a care leaver.

5.1 Presentation

A young person presents themselves to a District Council as the first step of 'The Single Gateway'. Where young people approach agencies other than Children's Services, they should be signposted to the

appropriate District Housing Options Team.

At this time they are often not previously known to the District Council or Children's Services. The District Council explores all options and makes every effort to support the young person to return home.

The District Council's Housing Options team will:

- ascertain actual homelessness or risk of homelessness
- explain the options available to the young person and the realities in regards to private rented, Social Housing, and LSP Housing Provision, ensuring the young person is aware of affordability and locality issues
- contact the parent/ carer to discuss the situation and explore the viability of the young person returning to the family home (wherever safe to do so), ensuring that parents are aware of their parental responsibilities
- explore and contact suitable alternative emergency accommodation with family/friends
- if not resolved or if only an emergency arrangement is made, complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) with the young person and submit this to request support from the LCC Youth Homelessness Duty Team, by email at Youth_Homelessness@lincolnshire.gov.uk

5.2 Referral

Where the District Council is unable to support the young person back home (wherever safe to do so) or unable to help the young person find suitable alternative accommodation, the District Council activates the second step of the Single Gateway by completing sections 1, 2 and 3 of an EHA referral and submitting it to the Local Authority Early Help Team via Youth_homelessness@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

On receipt of the EHA referral, Early Help (EH) will also make every effort to support the young person back to their family or help them find suitable alternative accommodation. The EH worker will arrange to meet the young person and complete a risk assessment if not already in place. Consent forms will be completed and the parent / carer will be contacted to establish the current position and to discuss options of the young person being able to stay / return home.

5.3 Placement

If all options have been exhausted by Early Help, including involvement of Family Group Conferencing to try and resolve the situation with the family, EH or Social Care workers are required to seek approval at

Service Manager Level before they submit a referral to Children's Commissioning via

YouthHousing@lincolnshire.gov.uk .

(NB: Young people already known to Children's Regulated Services and Lincolnshire Leaving Care service may refer directly to Youth Housing without going through the Single Gateway.)

The Children's Commissioning team will forward the referral request to LSP together with a list of any current accommodation availability. LSP will confirm the placement and then make necessary practical arrangements for move-in directly with the requester.

The contract with LSP within Children's Services is in place for young people up to the age of 18yrs, or 21yrs if a care leaver. During the 'transition to Adult's provision' phase, if necessary, there is an opportunity for the LSP provider to submit an extension of stay request for up to 2 weeks beyond the young person's 18th birthday.

6.0 Transition from Commissioned Youth Housing to Adult Housing Related Support

6.1 Adult Care and Community Wellbeing Referral Pathway

Adult Housing Related Support services are for people of 18yrs and above who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and have housing related support needs. Full eligibility for this support is already given within clause 4.2.3 of this document.

This support may be accessed through The Avenue electronic referral gateway via referrals from professionals; individual's self-referrals cannot be made through this system. Most referrals for young people are made via the relevant LSP provider.

Adult Care and Community Wellbeing contracts will be reviewed to enable the following:-

- 10 weeks prior to 18th birthday (or 21st birthday for care leavers) appropriate young people eligible for housing related support services should be referred to Adult Care and Community Wellbeing
- Adult Care and Community Wellbeing will request the known providers to confirm a place. All eligible young people in transition will be accepted into the pathway, Adult Housing Related Support providers will seek to offer the support as required within the confines of the overall available provision but if the provider states they cannot meet need, a multi-agency meeting will be initiated to establish what needs to

happen to enable the placement including who might be best placed to help meet those needs.

- Time planning may be needed to manage this element as all residents in Adult Services have binding tenancy agreements, but statutory duties will remain the priority - Lincolnshire County Council must ensure that their statutory obligations in relation to children and young people take precedent. To help facilitate this it is therefore imperative to ensure that sufficient notice has been provided to the service providers to allow for a planned move into the service
- Where a Housing Related Support service declines a young person in transition due to a lack of capacity, and it can be proven that sufficient notice has been given, the following steps should be taken to ensure the young person is accommodated:
 - Review of existing tenants to identify those who are due to move-on into independent accommodation, including the provider's own move-on accommodation, within the timeframes given for the young person in transition entering the service. In this instance, information (i.e. a positive notice that the tenant no longer requires supported accommodation) may be given to the relevant district council to expedite the availability of suitable accommodation
 - Where the provider can give assurances that accommodation will become available within a reasonable time frame, and the young person in transition is in LSP accommodation, a discretionary extension of up to two weeks will be granted for the young person to remain while waiting for the accommodation to become free
 - Where there are still capacity issues within the young person's chosen location the referrer will work with the young person to try to identify suitable supported housing accommodation elsewhere in the county, taking into account key issues such as employment, education, support networks and sufficient travel options available to them
- Young people in transition cannot be refused a place or evicted without a multi-agency discussion, which will be attended by Children's Services and Adult Care and Community Wellbeing. All options to support a placement will be explored
- When transitioning from Children's Service to Adults Housing Related Support, young people will not be considered by LCC or District Councils as being intentionally homeless due to a lack of move on provision.

- In addition, Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service (Barnardo's) will support care leavers where appropriate to ensure the Housing Benefit element of Universal Credit is paid direct to the landlord

6.2 Transition to Housing via District Councils

To align with the timescales for referral to Adults Housing Related Support, appropriate young people in transition to (semi) independent living within Children's Services commissioned accommodation will be referred to the District Council Housing Register preferably 10 weeks prior to their 18th birthday with eligibility prior to attaining the age of 18 being determined by the relevant District Council. In addition, Young Parents aged 16/17 yrs will be referred *at the point where they are ready for independent living* so that parent(s) and children can start family life in long-term accommodation. Where appropriate, young people may be referred simultaneously to The Avenue for floating support services.

Wherever possible, District Councils want to avoid a crisis situation and would like to be involved with households from an early stage to ensure all options for a planned move-on are considered and appropriate to the individual, this may include invitations to TAC meetings for instance.

If there is no TAC arrangement in place, a housing options interview should take place to enable the individual's housing rights, responsibilities and options to be explored. At the housing options interview it will clearly be explained whether or not there is likely to be a housing duty to the individual, should they become homeless i.e. whether the housing authority would be required to provide accommodation or not. Advice and assistance is also available to help individuals access suitable alternative accommodation.

Together with providers it is important there is a clear assessment of ongoing support needs, if applicable, to ensure the right housing options are considered prior to and during the transition to adult commissioned support services and/or (semi) independent living accommodation.

Whilst there is a lot of consistency across local District housing, due to local variances it is important to note that the following assistance to facilitate move-on accommodation and/or transition to employment, education and training opportunities may be subject to local eligibility assessments and budget availability. However, District Councils will look to advise and, where possible, support, through their own policy

frameworks, care leavers and 18yr olds in transition wherever possible through:

- Assistance to access private sector accommodation e.g. Tenancy Assistance Schemes, Rent Advance and deposit guarantee schemes
- Discretionary housing payments (if already in receipt of Housing Benefit)
- Homeless prevention payments (may be grants or repayable)
- Assistance to join the Housing Register

As referenced in Section 6.1, Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service (Barnardo's) will look to support care leavers, where appropriate, to ensure the Housing Benefit element of Universal Credit is paid direct to the landlord. Furthermore, and as referenced in Section 4.1.2, where appropriate, Children's Services will consider, upon request from housing partners, relevant financial support for Care Leavers up to the age of 21 years in (semi) independent accommodation to help them transition to and sustain their tenancy.

6.3 Contacts

LCC Children's Services

Youthhousing@lincolnshire.gov.uk

01522 553612

Key contact:

LCC Adult Care and Community Wellbeing

theavenue@lincolnshire.gov.uk

01522 553729.

Key contact:

District Councils

Boston Housing Options Team

housing.dept@boston.gov.uk

01205 314200

Key contact:

East Lindsey Housing Advice Team

Housing.Hub@e-lindsey.gov.uk

01507 613135

Key contact: Shona Malkinson, Senior Housing Officer

City of Lincoln Housing Solutions Team

housingsolutions@lincoln.gov.uk

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Key contact:

North Kesteven Housing Options Team

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Key contact:

West Lindsey Home Choices Team

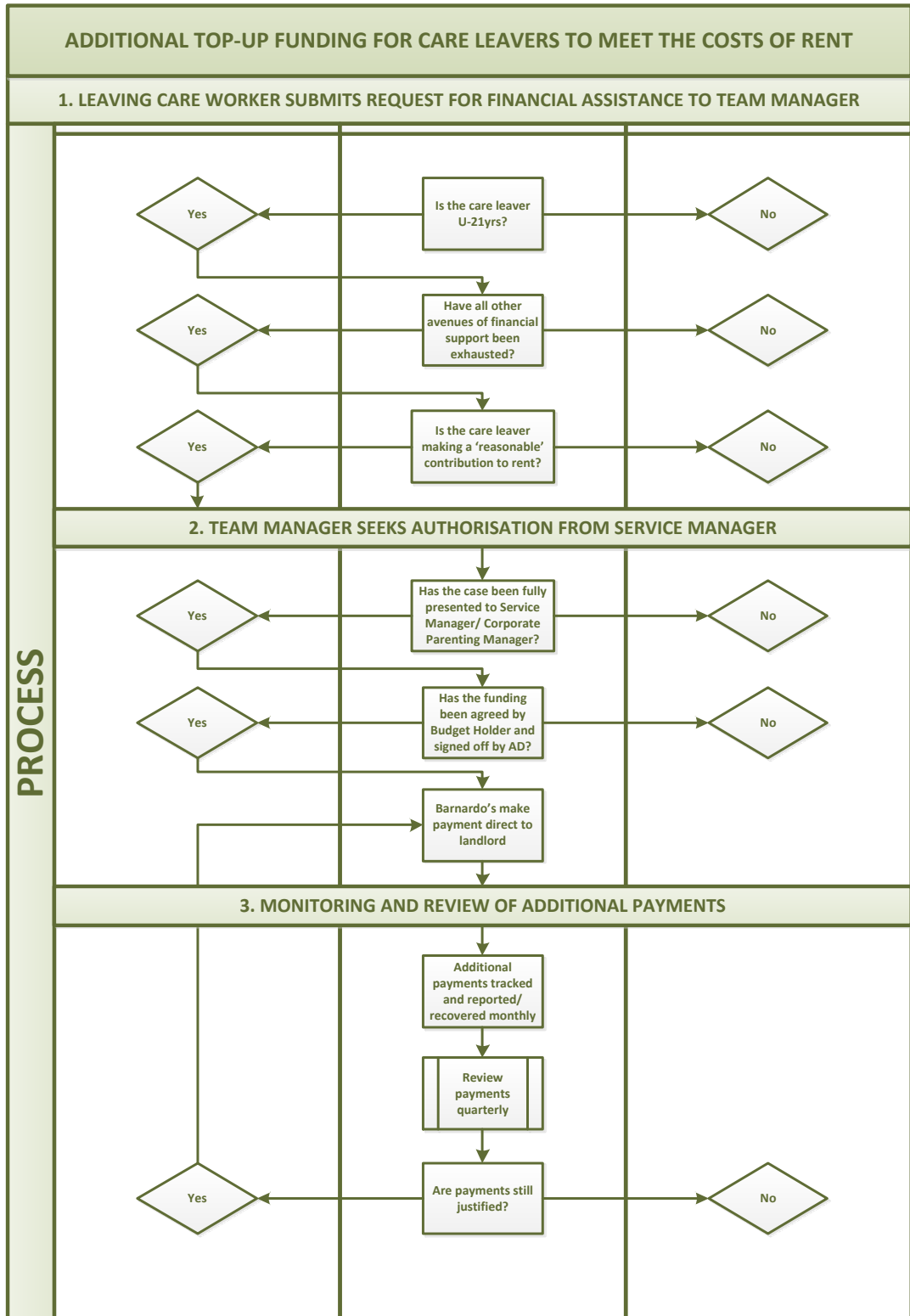
home.choices@west-lindsey.gov.uk

01427 676676

Key contact:

APPENDIX 1

Process for top-up funding for care leavers to meet the costs of rent



PROCESS