

## **Children's Services Growth Proposals 2025/26**

1. £519,000 – Travel Care and Support Demand

Officers have assessed that the proposed budget growth will have a positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics and in particular age and disability, as children and young people are already receiving provision, and this will continue to be provided. Approved growth will allow the Council to continue to respond to growing demands and meet its obligations under published travel care policies.

2. £173,000 – Early Intervention Family Hubs

Officers have assessed that the proposed budget growth will have a positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics, making it simpler for families to access a wide range of council services. The hubs will allow the council and its partners to support all children and young people from pre-birth to adulthood, and their families, through earlier intervention. Family Hubs act as a single point of access to help families navigate and receive the support they need when they need it.

3. £243,000 – Investment in Attendance Services

It is expected that this proposal will have a neutral impact on residents with protected characteristics. Investment in statutory responsibilities to work with school partners to remove barriers to good attendance recognising attending schools is a protective factor for children and young people.

4. £458,000 – Investment in Front Line Social Work

It is expected that this proposal will have a neutral impact on residents with protected characteristics. Whilst the proposal seeks to review the operating model and skills mix, it is not expected that any changes will negatively impact the provision and services available for children and young people. Whilst it may result in a change in worker for a small number of young people and families this is common within business as usual with well-developed processes and controls in place to mitigate the impact on children and young people. Any disruption will be short term. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of any restructure process to ascertain any potential impact on staff.

## **Children's Services Saving Proposals 2025/26**

### 1. £217,000 – In-borough High Support Placements

It is expected that these proposals will continue to have a continued positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics as there will be no change to placements for children and young people because of savings identified. This proposal will particularly impact on young people who are currently looked after or leaving the care system, and young people at risk of homelessness, by providing them with a supportive home whilst they build the skills required to move on into independence.

### 2. £96,000 – Supporting post 19 care leavers to independence (from 2026/27)

It is expected that this proposal will continue to have a continued positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics. There is a clear pathway to independence, providing young people with substantial support including key worker, social care, and housing support. Young people will only be moved to independence when deemed appropriate and will require approval at Housing Panel which considers young people's individual needs. This is because additional floating support will be provided to post 19 care leavers to ensure that their transition into the Housing pathway is successful and to encourage independence.

### 3. £310,000 – Expansion of Semi-Independent Living (SIL) places

It is expected that these proposals will have a positive impact on groups who share protected characteristics as there will be no change to placements for children and young people because of savings identified. This proposal will particularly impact on young people who are currently looked after or leaving the care system, and young people at risk of homelessness, by providing them with a supportive home whilst they build the skills required to move on into independence. We will expect provision to be tailored to meet needs, for example by having female-only spaces and creating LGBTQ-friendly provision.

### 4. £310,000 – Supporting Families to Stay Together and Preventing Family Breakdown

It is expected that these proposals will have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics as there will be no negative impact/change to placements for children and young people because of savings identified. This proposal will provide intensive support for families and young people to reduce conflict or avoid family breakdown, enabling families to build resilience. Support will be tailored to the individual needs of the young people and their families. Support arrangements will be planned in conjunction with

other work being carried out with families and acts as a part of a package of support offered to the family.

5. £116,000 – Shared Service Staffing Efficiencies

It is expected that this proposal will have a neutral impact on residents with protected characteristics. Whilst the proposal seeks to review the operating model and skills mix, it is not expected that any changes will negatively impact the provision and services available for children and young people.

The investment may result in a change in worker for a small number of young people and families this is common within business as usual with well-developed processes and controls in place to mitigate the impact on children and young people. Any disruption will be short term. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of any restructure process to ascertain any potential impact on staff.

6. £200,000 - Travel Care and Support (Bus contract and Travel Training)

Officers have assessed that the proposed savings will have a positive impact on protected groups and in particular age and disability, as creative alternatives to travel care such as the phased transfer of travel training and efficiencies in casework planning will promote independence, aligned to a key priority within our SEND strategy to promote successful preparation for adulthood.