


<p>London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p> <p>CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</p> <p>September 2016</p>	
<p>CARE LEAVER ACCOMMODATION (SEMI-INDEPENDENT LIVING)</p>	
<p>Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Education</p>	
<p>Open Report</p>	
<p>Classification: For review and comment Key Decision: No</p>	
<p>Wards Affected: All</p>	
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Following a review of the local authority's offer of Semi Independent Living (SIL) accommodation in 2014, a procurement was undertaken to commission a single provider who could improve the quality of provision and outcomes for young people while also delivering significant financial savings compared with previous arrangements. Centrepont was the successful provider and was awarded the contract in March 2015, to commence from May 2015.
- 1.2. Whilst there have been some issues during the first year of the mobilisation of the contract, the overall impact of this contract has been positive, reducing the need for young people placed in bed & breakfast accommodation and delivering significant savings. However, the first annual review of the contract has identified areas where Centrepont needs to improve performance.
- 1.3. As a result, a new performance management structure has been implemented and a Performance Improvement Action Plan has been put in place by the local authority. This is currently being finalised in partnership with Centrepont and there are already early signs of improved performance.
- 1.4. The purpose of this report is threefold:

- a) To provide an outline of the Semi Independent Living Accommodation provision for care leavers in Hammersmith and Fulham
- b) To summarise the headlines from Centrepoin't's Annual Contract Performance Review
- c) To outline the future direction for the continued improvement of the delivery of the service and the proposed contract management process

2. SERVICE BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 2.1. Under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000 all Local Authorities have a statutory duty to act as corporate parents to Looked After Children aged 16-18 and Care Leavers aged 18-25. Under this duty, Local Authorities are required to provide care as "good and reasonable" parents would to their own children.
- 2.2. At an operational level, this translates to a provision of Semi Independent Living (SIL) services (accommodation and support) with the aim of helping young people build a range of life skills, enabling them to make a successful transition from being looked after to becoming a 'care leaver' and ultimately living independently.
- 2.3. In 2014, Children's Services undertook a comprehensive review of arrangements of SIL for Looked After Children aged 16+ and Care Leavers. This review was undertaken with a view to developing a consistent approach to the commissioning and utilisation of semi-independent placements, providing a continuum of support for young people leaving care to those living independently in the community.
- 2.4. The review examined demand, current service models and the market for SIL provision. It identified opportunities to improve the service through the development of an integrated block contract arrangement which would blend the care leaver and young people at risk pathways. The benefits of this approach were identified as follows:
 - Greater consistency in the quality and costs of Semi Independent Living;
 - Easier to ensure regulation of the properties utilised in-borough;
 - Greater security to the successful provider, encouraging greater investment in the service;
 - The longer term working relationships of block contracts can improve relationships between all stakeholders;
- 2.5. Additionally, the review identified that new commissioning arrangements could achieve a reduction in cost of £1.16m through:
 - An increase in the number of young people expected to be placed in cheaper block contract arrangements (71 compared to 55 in 2013/14) rather than spot purchase;

- All rent payments to suppliers made net of housing benefit so the local authority does not incur full cost of rent for 18+ users entitled to benefit payments;
- A clearer definition of the entitlement of support hours for Framework placements.

2.6. The resultant Procurement Strategy was agreed by the Cabinet Members for Children and Education and the Cabinet Members for Health and Adult Social Care in November 2014. This would replace the contract that was delivered jointly by Notting Hill Housing and London Cyrenians, which was due to expire on 31 March 2015.

2.7. Following evaluation of existing models and engagement with service leads and young people, the commissioning strategy identified the following core specification requirements for evaluating bids:

- **Personalisation** – Person centred approach to placements; Support planning and delivery; Staffing model and provision of key work support; Qualifications; Engaging young people and Supporting diversity
- **Outcomes** – Young person progressively steps down in the levels of support provided and is prepared for move-on to independent living; Approach to outcomes; Step-down and responding to changes in circumstance; Actions if young person is not meeting outcomes and Move-on preparations
- **Collaboration** – Establish support and manage a stable and resilient placement for the young person; Working with the Contracting Authority and the young person to positively manage any issues, disputes and / or disruption
- **Supporting and ensuring the young person accesses appropriate benefits** - Issuing of Tenancy; Placement resilience; Eviction process; Process for benefit application and Management of complex issues and disputes
- **Safeguarding** – safeguarding a young person while respecting their choice and independence by identifying and managing risks; having a safeguarding strategy; RAG systems; Communication and information sharing; Risk management approach
- **Staff suitability** – Staff recruitment; Staff training; Supervision and scrutiny of staff
- **Accommodation and support** – Property security; Added value support services for the different levels of High, Medium and / or Low support.
- **Placement stability** – Meeting the specification's requirements for move-in; any additional support provided to enable move-in and Prioritisation of initial outcomes.
- **Pricing** – Rent, Support and Discounts

2.8. Four bids were received and following the commissioning and procurement process, Centrepont was awarded the contract on 6 March 2015 to commence on 1 May 2015. This decision was made on the basis that the Centrepont bid

received the highest quality score of 37.87% out of 50%, which was 11.5% points above the then incumbent provider.

- 2.9. In addition, Centrepont was the most economically advantageous tender. The Centrepont bid also received the highest score for its 'Added Value Resource', offering young people access to a wide range of schemes and additional services such as sport, health, arts and employment, which would enhance their experience and improve outcomes.

3. CONTRACT MOBILISATION

- 3.1. As part of their tender, Centrepont submitted a detailed contract mobilisation plan which was facilitated by local authority. This included approaches for managing the TUPE transfer of staff, property management, and assessments of all young people's needs.

- 3.2. Given the scale of the service, the mobilisation was complex and overseen through fortnightly meetings between Centrepont and the commissioning team. A number of challenges identified at the start of the mobilisation have impacted performance in the first year. These include:

- **Service pathways** – The existing service pathway model with natural progressions from high, medium and low support was not fit for purpose. This meant the young people were unable to step down within the service / property. Therefore, a need for a restructure was identified to make the service fit for purpose and achieve improved outcomes for young people.
- **Young people's personal information** – The outgoing provider did not share comprehensive data, including support plans, with Centrepont. This resulted in additional work to assess young people and establish new plans.
- **TUPE** – There were number of issues around the TUPE process that resulted in some staff members resigning whilst others were required to be put on improvement plans leading to number of disciplinary investigations, and dismissals.
- **Repairs and planned works** – Works due to be completed by the outgoing provider in the latter part of the contract were not completed to schedule meaning that a number of the buildings inherited by Centrepont were not fit for purpose. The commissioning service and Centrepont worked intensively with the outgoing provider to resolve some of these issues. Additionally, Centrepont has invested some of its own funding to implement building improvements in the first year.
- **Registered Housing Providers** - The properties are owned by three different Registered Housing Providers - Notting Hill Housing, Shepherd's Bush Housing Group and St Christopher's Fellowship. As the service provider, Centrepont has had to enter into an agreement with the three providers to carry out a share of the housing management and repair duties. The three housing providers work to different timeframes with regards to repairs, which resulted in additional challenges when meeting contractual standards in the SIL contract.

3.3. The commissioning service and CentrePoint have been working closely together in the first year of the contract to manage day to day operational performance and manage the mobilisation issues outlined above. The operational contract management approach has consisted of:

- Weekly placement allocation
- Six-weekly meetings to review individual placement outcomes and wider contract delivery including repairs update and escalation as required
- Regular feedback from social workers and managers
- A joint away day for social workers and managers; Centrepoint managers; commissioning staff and Contracts and Placements Teams to improve working partnerships and practices
- Feedback from young people via a survey and a focus group led by the local authority
- Announced and unannounced visits to all properties by the Contract Team and Operational Service Manager

4. PERFORMANCE TO DATE

4.1. From a financial perspective, the contract has offered significant reductions against both our spot purchasing and framework agreements and as a result of having these arrangements in place we have reduced our reliance on spot purchased provision. For comparison, a low support placement in SIL would cost on average:

- £239 per week through the Centrepoint block contract
- A minimum of £315 per week through the SIL framework
- An average of £850+ per week for SIL spot purchased accommodation

4.2. Additionally, as a result of the extension in block contracting arrangements, we have been able to reduce the use of bed and breakfast. No young people were placed in bed and breakfast in the last quarter of the contract.

4.3. Our contract with Centrepoint also enables access to a range of wider support offered by the organisation which offers additional added value to the cost of services funded directly by the local authority. A full breakdown of this is provided in Appendix 2. In particular, young people have been given access to a range of opportunities to get involved in shaping service delivery – 10 speak out sessions took place in 2015/16 and 6 LBHF young people have been elected to the Centrepoint parliament.

4.4. Following the mobilisation period, there is now a new permanent staffing structure in place and a minimal use of agency staff. This has led to a better relationship with the young people, Registered Housing Providers and the local authority resulting in improvements across the key performance indicators.

4.5. Centrepoint has been actively working with the Registered Housing Providers to improve the timescale and quality of finished repairs so that void properties are

turned around to a satisfactory standard, thus making them homely and easy to re-let, resulting in customer satisfaction and reducing the number of complaints. As a result, there has been significant improvement in terms of the reduced volume of property related matters with ongoing work.

- 4.6. As a result of this increased stability and engagement work, there has been a notable improvement in performance in some areas of the contract in the first quarter of 2016/17 with the majority of performance indicators on target. An area for ongoing development work is around the timeliness of repairs. For the most recent quarter, the service achieved an average of 63% of repairs completed within timescale which is an improvement on the previous quarter but is still below target and is the subject of a Performance Improvement Action Plan provided in appendix 3.

5. FUTURE DIRECTION AND PROPOSED CONTRACT MANAGEMENT OF THE SERVICE

- 5.1. As of April 2016 a new dedicated Children's Contracts Monitoring Team (Contract Team) has been in place to provide specialist contract management expertise. From July, the Contract Team have taken the lead on formal contract meetings with Centrepont, in conjunction with the Operational Service Manager, and have introduced mid-year reviews as well as having oversight of monthly monitoring activity by way of escalation as required.
- 5.2. The contract was reviewed and evaluated by the local authority on 22 June 2016 in-line with the annual performance review. This process used the performance indicators as set out in the service level agreement at the start of the contract award.
- 5.3. The Contract Monitoring Team, in conjunction with the Operational Service Manager, has carried out an initial due diligence exercise which involved:
 - The review of all contract documentation – including specification
 - The review and revision of key performance indicators and nature of the metrics being collected
 - Strategic meetings with the Centrepont Senior Management
 - Site visits
 - Stakeholder engagement including a young people's survey and focus group led by the local authority
 - Designing a Performance Improvement Action Plan
- 5.4. In addition, the local authority has engaged with young people to seek their views via focus group held on 22 August 2016 and a young people's survey. The purpose of these activities is to ensure that the service is delivering the required outcomes for the local authority and young people and / or to identify whether any contract re-adjustments or improvement plans are required to improve the performance, delivery and returns. The initial results from the focus group are

positive with young people speaking highly about many aspects of the Centrepoint service. This concern was echoed by the 32 young people who recently returned surveys on their experiences of the Centrepoint service:

- 64% said that they were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the Centrepoint service overall with the remainder (36%) saying they were fairly dissatisfied
- 86% said that they were either very or fairly satisfied with the support they receive from their support worker
- 53% said that they were very or fairly satisfied with the quality of repair work with 13% saying they were fairly dissatisfied and 34% saying they were very dissatisfied
- Nearly 60% of young people said that they were either very or fairly dissatisfied with how quickly repair work was carried out.

- 5.5. A Performance Improvement Action Plan has been put in place by the local authority (see Appendix 3) in relation to Centrepoint's performance in a number of critical areas. For 2016/17 the action plan focuses primarily on repairs and property maintenance (which was identified as a primary area of concern by our young people). There are also action plans relating to areas of quality improvement for move on and independent living which are included because they are core to the service offer and will therefore form a key part of our contract monitoring meetings.
- 5.6. Revised performance measures and service standards / requirements have been agreed with Centrepoint. The use of these new measures along with the oversight of the delivery of the Performance Improvement Action Plan is expected to achieve a stronger strategic oversight and control of the contract, to ensure that the service continues to be aligned to service needs and that added value and service improvement is driven at a pace, thus equipping young people with sufficient independent living skills and moving them onto their own accommodation (for instance, Social Housing or Private Rented Housing).
- 5.7. Contract management and performance meetings will involve Centrepoint Management, Children's Services Contract Manager, the Placements Team and Looked After Children Team to provide both strategic oversight and operational expertise.
- 5.8. The contracts team will continue to monitor performance and progress against the action plan. Our objective is to continue to work collaboratively to facilitate these improvements. However, we have indicated to Centrepoint through our contracting meetings that if performance does not improve and/or the action plan is not fully delivered we will utilise our contractual levers, including issuing a default notice.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

None.

Appendix 1: Accommodation Portfolio and Housing Management Arrangements

Property ID	No of Units / Rooms	Support Level	Staff Cover	Housing Management Arrangements
1	7	High	Staffed 24hr a day	Notting Hill Housing
2	7	High	Staffed 24hr a day	Shepherd's Bush Housing Group
3	9	High	Staffed 24hr a day	Notting Hill Housing
4	3 (basement)	Low	Some evening cover each week when required but the property is not staffed 24hr a day	Notting Hill Housing
5	6	Medium	Some evening cover each week but the property will not be staffed 24hr a day	St Christopher's Fellowship / Centrepoint
6	1 (basement self-contained)	Low	Some evening cover each week when required but the property is not staffed 24hr a day	St Christopher's Fellowship/ Centrepoint
7	6	Medium	Some evening cover each week but the property is not staffed 24hr a day	Shepherd's Bush Housing Group
8	8	Medium	Some evening cover each week but the property is not staffed 24hr a day	Notting Hill Housing
9	8	Medium	Some evening cover each week but the property not staffed 24hr a day	Notting Hill Housing
10	7	Low	Some evening cover each week when required but the property is not staffed 24hr a day	Shepherd's Bush Housing Group
11	9	Low	Some evening cover each week when required but the property is not staffed 24hr a day	Notting Hill Housing
Support Level		Hours per week		No of placements / beds
Low		17		20
Medium		7		28
High		3		23
Properties previously managed by London Cyrenians			New properties in the SIL block contract	

Appendix 2: No of young people who engaged in EET and various other added value activities in May 2015 – March 2016

- 6 Young people have been elected to the Centrepoint Parliament
- 51 one young people attended Learning Assessment
- 287 attended Keywork Sessions
- 51 referrals were allocated to the Health Worker for healthy living support, psychological therapies and gym access
- 26 attended Specialist Health Assessment
- All NEET young people were referred and assessed by the learning team
- The Mentoring & Volunteering Team have visited all the services
- 24 Young People participated in AQA Accredited Life-wise Workshops
- 4 Young People participated in Healthy Relationship Workshops
- 39 Young People participated in Sports and Dance Workshops
- 34 Young People participated in Other Centrepoint activities
- 10 Speak Out / Young People's Consultation Events took place
- Centrepoint Young People's Survey was carried out in the 4th Quarter of 2015/16 results pending
- 80 Outcomes Stars were completed
- A Healthy Living Advisor post was created solely dedicated to H&F services

Appendix 3: Performance Improvement Action Plan

Issue	Proposed actions	Responsible Person	By Whom and when	Progress update
Overall				
Communication channels and processes for raising concerns are still being applied variably between Centrepoint and LAC teams.	SLA for communication and complaint escalation to be co-designed including briefings for all LAC staff. Progress and compliance to be monitored via contracting meetings.	Adam Webb (CentrePoint) Sukhi Thiara (Commissioning) Adam Davis (LAC)	End of October 2016	
Increasing young people's engagement and participation in decision making. Whilst not a direct result of our performance monitoring, Centrepoint have identified engagement with young people as a core priority, particularly as a number of concerns have been raised by young people regarding the quality and timeliness of repairs during our engagement work,	Participation Plan to be drafted for all LBHF Centrepoint services and rolled out into services.	Adam Webb (CentrePoint)	End of September 2016	
Implementing revised performance KPIs	New Performance Framework to be incorporated into Quarter 2 PI Workbooks. Centrepoint and Commissioning Team to hold a meeting and agree upon reports, deadlines and quality.	Adam Webb (CentrePoint) Sukhi Thiara (Commissioning)	Quarter 2 By End of October 2016.	
Maintenance				
There are a number of concerns with the current quality of properties from both Centrepoint and commissioners. There is	Joint Visits to be arranged for the whole portfolio of properties including commissioning, LAC and RSLs.	Nahar Choudry (Centrepoint)	End Feb 2017	

<p>a need to gather a clearer picture of the current issues and have a longer term strategic approach to overseeing maintenance and repairs.</p>	<p>Action plans to be developed jointly for individual properties.</p> <p>Centrepoint Property Management Team to carry out monthly check of all services.</p> <p>Centrepoint Property Management to send daily and weekly maintenance reports to Service and Regional Managers.</p> <p>All Staff to attend workshops around spotting faults and how to report</p>		<p>From October 2016</p> <p>From September 2016</p> <p>By end October 2016</p>	
<p>One of the issues which young people express the most concern about is the quality and timeliness of repairs. We want to ensure that young people are able to actively feedback and be involved in shaping future decisions around repairs processes.</p>	<p>All YPs to receive satisfaction surveys on completion of repairs.</p> <p>CP will promote how to report repairs and get feedback from YP – promote via website and phone to receive texts</p>	<p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p> <p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p>	<p>Monthly from October 2016</p> <p>From October 2016</p>	
<p>The escalation protocol for repairs with RSLs is not fully developed and needs to be incorporated into repairs and complaints policies.</p>	<p>Centrepoint to review escalation policy with RSLs.</p>	<p>Nahar Choudry (Centrepoint)</p>	<p>End September 2016</p>	

<p>One of the ongoing issues with repairs performance has been associated with the ability of contractors to access buildings which has sometimes resulted in missed appointments.</p>	<p>Application made to Social Innovation Fund to increase staff coverage via use of volunteers for work with young people outside the service. This will mean that support staff can spend longer at the services.</p> <p>All Young People to sign agreement for access in their absence disclaimers.</p> <p>Contractors to have list of staff to contact via phone tree to ensure access</p> <p>CP are recruiting Repairs Manager who will oversee development work</p>	<p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p> <p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p> <p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p>	<p>Tender to be released in October 2016</p> <p>End September 2016</p> <p>End September 2016</p>	
Move on				
<p>We want to see an increase in the number of young people engaging in sustained EET in line with our performance targets.</p>	<p>We will review our existing offer to ensure that take up of all of the opportunities currently being offered is maximised. This includes implementing an early referral system to the skills and employability team so that work can begin in advance of a placement becoming available.</p> <p>Centrepoint will be working to ensure compliance with good practice, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring all young people are assessed and have individual goals and actions - Centrepoint brokers more opportunities for young people - Centrepoint participation in EET referral panel for virtual school 	<p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p>	<p>From September 2016 and monitored monthly</p>	

	<p>- Referrals to astral (apprenticeship company owned by CP) for apprenticeship opportunities.</p>			
<p>We want to see an increase in Young People accessing support that prepares them for independent living money management and budgeting skills in line with our performance targets.</p>	<p>All young people will be expected to engage in Moneywise Modules & Lifewise modules before being put forward for social housing move on.</p>	<p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p>	<p>From September 2016 and monitored monthly</p>	
<p>We want to ensure that all young people have immediate access to benefits advice when moving in to a Centrepoint property.</p>	<p>Link to be made with Job Centre and Immigration Services to provide a support avenue.</p>	<p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p>	<p>By end October 2016</p>	
	<p>YP meet with CP Income recovery worker to assess benefit entitlement as part of the move in process.</p>	<p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p>	<p>From September 2016 and monitored monthly</p>	
<p>We want to increase the range of accommodation options available to young people as part of their move on.</p>	<p>Centrepoint to sit on LAC Accommodation Panel for social housing nominations and ensure that nominations are careful tailored to the needs of young people and the suitability of accommodation.</p> <p>Centrepoint has a number of move through accommodation options. CP will be making links through a social enterprise with a consortium of private sector landlords to facilitate increased access.</p>	<p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint)</p>	<p>From September 2016 and monitored monthly</p> <p>By December 2016</p>	

<p>We want to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to supporting the move on of young people across Centrepoint and social care teams to increase the effectiveness of our approaches and increase performance against our target.</p>	<p>Work with LBHF LAC service to develop a shared approach for move on planning.</p> <p>Incorporate new ways of working into training for both parties and our shared SLA.</p>	<p>Adam Webb (CentrePoint) Adam Davis (LAC)</p>	<p>CP and H&F leaving Care Team</p>	

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