

# Report

Report to:	<b>Social Work Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>1 September 2021</b>
Report by:	<b>Director, Health and Social Care</b>

Subject:	<b>Progress of Throughcare and Aftercare Team</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Provide the Committee with an update on progress of the Throughcare and Aftercare Team
- ◆ Provide an update on priority improvement areas as it relates to Young People in receipt of Throughcare and Aftercare

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the areas of positive progress since the reinstatement of the Throughcare and Aftercare Team in South Lanarkshire are noted.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Impact of Legislation and Inspection - The introduction of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 brought about additional responsibilities for South Lanarkshire Council Social Work Resources in respect the expansion of support to care leavers and rights of Young People to remain in care up until the age of 21 years (previously 18 years).
- 3.2. Part 10: Aftercare - The Act increased the age of Young People entitled to Aftercare Service from 21 years to 26 years. This has required the local authority to provide an increased five years of service to each young adult meeting the criteria for aftercare.
- 3.3. Part 11: Continuing Care of looked after children extended the duty of the local authority to provide consistent care placements to Young People over the age of 16. In real terms this has meant that the availability of placements within internal residential and foster care has reduced due to young people exercising their right to remain within their placement until they reach 21 years. We currently have 36 young people in formal continuing care who remain in their residential and foster placements beyond 16 years up until their 21st Birthday.
- 3.4. The Care Inspectorate's Joint Inspection evaluated services delivered by South Lanarkshire Partnership in autumn 2019. The inspection highlighted that our services to Young People in receipt of Throughcare and Aftercare required significant improvements, they noted that Young people in this group experienced some of the poorest outcomes.

- 3.5. It has been widely acknowledged that the impact of decisions taken over 10 years ago to disband a dedicated Throughcare and Aftercare Service was having a detrimental impact on service delivery and subsequent outcomes for Young People transitioning from our care. In May 2019, a paper was presented to Social Work Resources Committee (SWC) in relation to a proposal to re established a dedicated service for Young People transitioning from care. This was agreed and in June 2020 the Throughcare and Aftercare Service was re-established.
- 3.6. In January 2020 there was a decision by the Strategic Significant Case Review Subgroup (Child Protection Committee) to carry out a Reflective Learning Review into the death of a Young Person. The Young Person was 17 years old at the time of his death and in receipt of Aftercare Services, the Young Person was also subject to Care and Risk Management processes given his level of vulnerability and risk to himself and others. The Young Person was known to be in a state of crisis just before his death with several agencies involved in supporting him. The Review highlighted areas for all partners to improve services offered to this group of Young People.

#### **4. Current Situation**

- 4.1. The Throughcare and Aftercare Service was established during the early part of the Pandemic, (June 2020) this was in recognition of highly vulnerable Young People eligible for Aftercare living alone within the community.
- 4.2. The team consists of 1 Team Leader and 3 Social Workers and 5 Support Workers. The team have been working remotely throughout the pandemic; however, the plan is to locate this service within a community-based hub so engagement with Young People is maximised.
- 4.3. The service delivery model has been developed on strong ethos of Relationship Based Practice within a Children's Rights Framework. The team itself has been empowered within the wider system to champion the needs of Young People who otherwise can become quite invisible across systems.

#### **5. Early Successes**

- 5.1. We now have over 150 young people who are in direct receipt of Aftercare Services. This is significant progress, as previously we were unable to identify numbers eligible and in receipt. The team have been proactively identifying Young People who may have left care and need support.
- 5.2. The team have provided vital support during the Pandemic to Young People who are Care Experienced and living in the community, partnerships with Who Cares and other charities have provided Young People with food vouchers and essential items. The team linked with a local social enterprise to provide Christmas dinner for Young People living alone. The team have received more than 40 laptops and tablets for a significant number of Young People who found themselves alone during lockdown periods. The team have consistently had contact every 2 weeks with all Young People living in the community in receipt of Aftercare and we have reported this in our national returns.

## **6. Focus on Pathway Planning**

- 6.1. The team are also supporting Young People who are currently over 16 years and remain in continuing care placements. The focus has been on planning for these Young People supporting them to either remain in their placement where it continues to be available, positive, and right for a young person. Plans do not drift or remain static as needs change. When young people decide they do not wish to remain in their care placement the team have been proactively supporting Young People to transitioning to either support placement or within their own tenancy. The team have access to two training flats which have been used successfully as a step to more independent living.

## **7. Building Connections and Bridging Gaps**

- 7.1. Collaboration with a wider range of partners and services is required when Young People are transitioning from care. These transitions can be complex, and can fall between child and adult health and social care systems. With similar challenges across the transitioning from education to training, higher education, and employment. Young people finance and living circumstances all play a part in messiness of transitions. The team have been developing positive connections with a wider range of partners across the system. Under the Corporate Parenting agenda, Throughcare and Aftercare Strategic Improvement Plan is represented by a wide range of partners, the improvement plan has four themed priorities for improvement: Pathways Planning, Health & Wellbeing, Education, Training and Employment, Accommodation and Housing pathways. Progress has been made in all areas outlined in the improvement Plan.

## **8. Employee Implications**

- 8.1. There are no employee implications in relation to this report at this stage however, increased demands on the Resource will need to ensure future workforce plans are robust to meet demand of young people who are eligible for Aftercare as more Young People take up the offer of continued support.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **10. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

- 10.1. There are no implications for climate change in terms of the information contained in this report.
- 10.2. There are no implications for sustainability in terms of the information contained in this report.
- 10.3. There are no implications for the environment in terms of the information contained in this report.

## **11. Other Implications**

- 11.1. There are no additional risk implications associated with this report.
- 11.2. There are no sustainable development issues associated with this report.
- 11.3. There are no other issues associated with this report.

## **12. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

12.1. There is no requirement to carry out an impact assessment in terms of the proposals within this report.

12.2. There is also no requirement to undertake any consultation in terms of the information contained in this report.

**Soumen Sengupta**  
**Director, Health and Social Care**

23 July 2021

### **Link(s) to Council Values/Objectives**

- ◆ focused on people and their needs
- ◆ working with and respecting others
- ◆ support our communities by tackling disadvantage and deprivation and supporting aspiration
- ◆ protect vulnerable children, young people and adults
- ◆ deliver better health and social care outcomes for all

### **Previous References**

- ◆ none

### **List of Background Papers**

- ◆ none

### **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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