

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Thursday, 08 September 2016

Time: 18:00

Venue: Meeting Room A

Address: Blackburn Town Hall

AGENDA

Information may be provided by each Executive Member relating to their area of responsibility

Part 1- Items for consideration in public

1 **Welcome and Apologies**

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held on 11th August 2016 4 - 11

3 **Declarations of Interest in Items on this Agenda**

Declarations of Interest 12 - 12

4 **Equality Implications**

The Chair will ask Members to confirm that they have considered and understood any Equality Impact Assessments associated with reports on this agenda ahead of making any decisions

5 **Public Forum**

To receive written questions or statements submitted by members of the public no later than 4.00 p.m. on the day prior to the meeting.

6 **Questions by Non-Executive Members**

To receive written questions on any issue submitted by Non-Executive Members no later than 4.00 p.m. on the day prior to the meeting.

7 **Youth MP's Update**

To receive an update from the Youth MP's along with any issues they would like to raise.

8 **EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORTS**

Verbal updates may be given by each Executive

- Member
- 8.1 **Leader (Chair of the Executive Board)**
- 8.2 **Health and Adult Social Care**
- 8.3 **Children’s Services**
- 8.3.1 **Fostering Quarterly Report - Quarter 1**
- Fostering Service Quarterly Report April-June 2016** **13 - 15**
- Appendix -Fostering Quarter 1 Report - April - July 2016 v1.0 - 18 08 16** **16 - 27**
- 8.4 **Environment**
- 8.5 **Leisure, Culture and Young People**
- 8.6 **Neighbourhoods & Prevention Services**
- 8.7 **Regeneration**
- 8.8 **Resources**
- 8.9 **Schools and Education**
- 9 **CORPORATE ISSUES**
- 9.1 **Development of Extra Care supported housing at Albion Mill Part 1** **28 - 32**
- Development of Extra Care support housing at Albion Mill**
- 10 **MATTERS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

PART 2 – THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

**11 PART 2 – THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC MAY BE
EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE
FOLLOWING ITEMS**

**11.1 Development of Extra Care Supported Housing
at Albion Mill**

**Development of Extra Care supported housing at
Albion Mill Part 2**

Date Published: Wednesday, 31 August 2016
Harry Catherall, Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE BOARD

11th August 2016

PRESENT

COUNCILLOR:

Mohammed Khan
Maureen Bateson
Damian Talbot
Mustafa Desai
Jim Smith
Phil Riley
Arshid Mahmood

PORTFOLIO:

Leader
Children's Services
Leisure, Culture & Young People
Health & Adult Social Care
Environment
Regeneration
Neighbourhoods & Prevention Services

EXECUTIVE MEMBER

John Slater

NON-PORTFOLIO

Leader of the Conservative Group

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Hamza Khan, Youth MP, and Joshua Logan,
Deputy Youth MP

	Item	Action
1	<u>Welcome & Apologies</u> The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mohammed Khan welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillors Andy Kay and Mustafa Desai and the Deputy Youth MPs, Ummah Shah and Joshua Logan.	
2	<u>Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th July 2016</u> The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 14 th July 2016 were agreed as a correct record.	Approved
3	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> There were no Declarations of Interest submitted.	
4	<u>Equality Implications</u> The Chair asked Members to confirm that they had considered and understood any Equality Impact Assessments associated with reports on the agenda ahead of making any decisions.	Confirmed

	Item	Action						
5	<p><u>Public Forum</u></p> <p>In accordance with Part 4 of the Executive Board Procedure Rules for questions/statements by members of the public, the following questions/statements have been received, details of which are set out below:-</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name of Person asking the Question</th> <th>Subject Area</th> <th>Response by</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>John Hall</td> <td>Griffin Lodge</td> <td>Councillor Mohammed Khan</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name of Person asking the Question	Subject Area	Response by	John Hall	Griffin Lodge	Councillor Mohammed Khan	
Name of Person asking the Question	Subject Area	Response by						
John Hall	Griffin Lodge	Councillor Mohammed Khan						
6	<p><u>Questions by Non-Executive Members</u></p> <p>No questions from Non-Executive Members had been received.</p>							
7	<p><u>Youth MPs Update</u></p> <p>The Youth MP and Deputy Youth MPs provided a verbal update on recent activities and events including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at the recent annual MYP sitting at York. • Visits to Youth Clubs and also Greenfields Junior Club – the main issue discussed there was the astroturf/MUGA (multi-use games area) • A visit to KND (Kids Next Door) a youth club specifically for young people on the autistic spectrum. • Attendance at a graffiti project presentation on ‘Risk Taking behaviour’ by Darwen Youth Club. • Darwen Youth Festival attracted 300 people, a great day had by all despite technical hitches with the power to the stage. • The Youth MPs would be attending Youthforia at Wigan in September. • There were more plans to visit youth clubs over the next few weeks. <p>The Youth MP, Hamza Khan, delivered a presentation entitled ‘Lift your Lid’ which had been referred to at the last Executive Board Meeting. The Executive Members discussed the issues raised with Hamza and were impressed by the work that had gone into the project which highlighted the dilemmas facing young people in terms of risk taking behaviours and which outlined the help available to them.</p>	Noted						
8.1	<p><u>Leader’s update</u></p> <p>Councillor Mohammed Khan verbally reported on the recent ‘Good Neighbours’ Awards event at King George’s Hall on 29th July. There had been over 70 nominations, with 9 winners ranging from the ages of 7 to 93.</p>	Noted						

	Item	Action
8.2.1	<p><u>Decision to award following procurement exercise for statutory advocacy services</u></p> <p>A report was submitted recommending that the Executive Board approved the award of the contract for Advocacy from 1st September 2016, to the successful bidder, subject to the agreement of a detailed transfer and delivery implementation plan.</p> <p>A paper was presented to Adults Senior Leadership team in November 2015 requesting permission to go out to procurement, as the existing contracts were coming to an end, and arrangements to commission jointly with LCC were being dismantled. A procurement exercise was undertaken via the CHEST. The successful bidder gained the highest scores for both Lot 1 and Lot 2. There would be benefits to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council consolidating all advocacy services under one contract, in terms of Contract Monitoring and continuity of provision for service users who move from one category of advocacy to another. Through the appointment of a single provider for both contract lots, it would also be possible for the provider to flex its resources to ensure that demand can be managed effectively across the different strands, and also when capacity permits, to deliver a non-statutory advocacy provision.</p> <p>It is intended that the performance and capacity of the provider would be actively managed and monitored. The detail of this performance management would be agreed with the successful bidder prior to the contract commencement. As the successful bidder was not the incumbent provider, a period of planning would be put in place prior to the start date to ensure an effective and appropriate handover.</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the Executive Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the award of the contract for NHS Independent Health Complaints Advocacy to the successful bidder; 2. Approves the award of the contract for Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy, Deprivation of Liberty, Relevant Persons Representative, Independent Mental Health Advocacy and Care Act Advocacy to the successful bidder; and 3. Notes that the Services will commence following the transfer of cases from the current providers, for a period of 3 years, subject to a plan being developed and implemented by the provider, and agreed by the commissioner, for the safe TUPE of staff, and transfer of cases. The level of funding is set for the first year, but subject to renegotiation in years two and three. 	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>
8.4	<p><u>Environment</u></p> <p>Councillor Jim Smith verbally reported on recently introduced recycling sessions for children in the Sudell area of Darwen, led by</p>	<p></p> <p>Noted</p>

	Item	Action
	<p>Finance and IT, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources and the Deputy Chief Executive, on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender.</p> <p>3. Notes that the contract term would be for a period of 5 years with the Council having the option to extend for a further period of up to 5 years.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
9.1	<p><u>Development of Extra Care Supported Housing at Albion Mill</u></p> <p>The Executive Member for Health and Adult Social Care advised that this item would be deferred as more clarity was required.</p>	<p>Deferred</p>
9.2	<p><u>Corporate Budget Monitoring Report 2016/17 –Quarter 1 June 2016</u></p> <p>Members received a report on the overall financial position of the Council, both capital and revenue, highlighting major issues and explaining variations in the first quarter of the financial year.</p> <p>The projected aggregate cost of the Council's capital investment for 2016/17 had now increased from £23.811 million, as approved by Finance Council on 29th February 2016, to £40.902 million. The variation of £17.091 million (detailed at Appendix 2), reflected both the variations to the programme following the finalisation of the outturn position for 2015/16 (£7.090 million) and the variation to programmes made during the first quarter of the year (£10.001 million).</p> <p>As at 30th June 2016, the capital expenditure across the portfolios was £1.476 million (3.6% of the current projected spend).</p> <p>The estimate of capital receipts expected in 2016/17 was £2.1 million. To date £605,000 capital receipts had been received.</p> <p>Actual revenue expenditure at 30th June 2016 in relation to cash limited budgets across all portfolios was £22.447 million, which was 19.9% of the current budget. Details of the forecast year end position for each portfolio were outlined in Section 6.</p> <p>General Fund unallocated reserves of £4.767 million were forecasted for 31st March 2017 subject to the final outturn position and application of earmarked reserves.</p> <p>Earmarked reserves available to the Council were forecasted to be £13.543 million at 31st March 2017 compared with £18.305 million at 31st March 2016, with a further £20.123 million of other reserves largely in relation to schools.</p> <p>RESOLVED - That the Executive Board:</p> <p>1. Approves the revised capital programme as per Appendix 1,</p>	<p>Approved</p>

	Item	Action
	<p>together with the variations shown in Appendix 2;</p> <p>2. Approves the variations to revenue expenditure listed in Section 6 giving rise to a forecast balance of £4.767 million in the unallocated General Fund revenue reserve at 31st March 2017, subject to the final outturn position for 2016/17 and the application of earmarked reserves; and</p> <p>3. Approves the cash limit adjustments outlined in Appendix 3.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
10.1	<p><u>Petition – Review of Cockerels/Livestock on 104-106 Council owned garden sites/allotments</u></p> <p>The Executive Board was advised that further to the receipt of the petition to retain unauthorised cockerels on Tockholes Road Garden site reported to the Executive Board on 10th September 2015. Capita were instructed to undertake a review of the current livestock policy relating to allotments and leisure garden sites within the borough.</p> <p>The petition reviewed by the Council had been signed by 71 local residents residing in 37 properties in close proximity to the Tockholes Road Garden site. The petition highlighted that some of the residents had no objections to the keeping of the cockerels on the site, but there were no details as to how many of the other 200 plus properties in the immediate vicinity of this one site supported or opposed the proposal.</p> <p>In 2012, a similar petition was received from 11 of the tenants of the garden plots objecting to the enforcement of the ban on keeping cockerels. The Executive Board decision dated 13th September 2012 approved the recommendations contained within the report of not allowing cockerels on the garden plots in accordance with the Council's policy on the keeping of livestock on garden areas and allotments.</p> <p>In total there were over 1000 Blackburn with Darwen owned statutory allotments and leisure garden plots across 63 sites within the Borough. All sites are located in or adjacent to populated residential areas and were not considered suitable for the keeping of cockerels due to noise nuisance. There had been an increasing number of noise pollution and nuisance complaints within the Borough. These have risen from 8 in 2009/2010 to 32 in 2014/2015.</p> <p>The statistics had been provided by the Council's Public Protection Service indicated that the number of complaints concerning animals and birds over the last six years had increased significantly. The Council's Senior Environmental Health Officer had confirmed that the majority of the complaints were regarding cockerels.</p> <p>The Council had served statutory nuisance notices on cockerel keepers over this period and that a number of them have had to dispose of their animals due to the nuisance that they caused.</p> <p>The advice from the Poultry Club of Great Britain was that poultry keepers do not need a cockerel unless they are required for breeding</p>	

	Item	Action
	<p>purposes.</p> <p>Furthermore the Public Protection Service had indicated that each nuisance investigation took time to investigate and resolve and that limited resources means that services would be stretched should a relaxation of policy lead to an even greater increase in the number of complaints requiring investigation.</p> <p>Having regard to the proximity of allotments and garden sites to residential areas and the comments of the Public Protection Service it was recommended that the Council retained the existing policy that cockerels should continue not to be permitted on allotments or garden plots.</p> <p>A large number of other authorities across the UK had recently re-affirmed their own no cockerel policies as a result of growing complaints.</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the Executive Board:</p> <p>Retain the existing policy of not permitting cockerels on any of the statutory allotment sites or leisure garden sites within the Borough.</p> <p>AT THIS STAGE OF THE PROCEEDINGS THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC WERE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING</p>	
11.1	<p><u>Development of Extra Care Supported Housing at Albion Mill</u></p> <p>The Executive Member for Health and Adult Social Care advised that this item would be deferred as more clarity was required.</p>	Deferred
11.2	<p><u>Delegation of Authority to award the contract for replacement of the Council's Finance System</u></p> <p>Further to the report submitted at agenda item 8.8.1, an additional report was submitted containing commercially sensitive information.</p> <p>RESOLVED - That the Executive Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the progress of the procurement process to date; 2. Delegates the authority to award the contract to the Director of Finance and IT, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources and the Deputy Chief Executive, on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender; and 3. Notes that the contract term would be for a period of 5 years with the Council having the option to extend for a further period of up to 5 years. 	Noted Approved Noted
11.3	<p><u>Decision to award following procurement exercise for Statutory advocacy services</u></p>	

	Item	Action
	<p>Further to the report submitted at agenda item 8.2, an additional report was submitted containing commercially sensitive information.</p> <p>RESOLVED - That the Executive Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the award of the contract for NHS Independent Health Complaints Advocacy to N-Compass; 2. Approves the award of the contract for Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy, Deprivation of Liberty, Relevant Persons Representative, Independent Mental Health Advocacy and Care Act Advocacy to N-Compass; and 3. Notes that the Services would commence following the transfer of cases from the current providers, for a period of 3 years, subject to a plan being developed and implemented by the provider, and agreed by the commissioner, for the safe TUPE of staff, and transfer of cases. The level of funding is set for the first year, but subject to renegotiation in years two and three. <p style="text-align: center;">Signed at a meeting of the Board on the day of (being the next ensuing meeting of the Board) Chair of the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed</p>	<p></p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN
ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

Members attending a Council, Committee, Board or other meeting with a personal interest in a matter on the Agenda must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and, if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an Other Interest under paragraph 16.1 of the Code of Conduct, should leave the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.

Members declaring an interest(s) should complete this form and hand it to the Democratic Services Officer at the commencement of the meeting and declare such an interest at the appropriate point on the agenda.

MEETING: **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

DATE: **8TH AUGUST 2016**

AGENDA ITEM NO.:

DESCRIPTION (BRIEF):

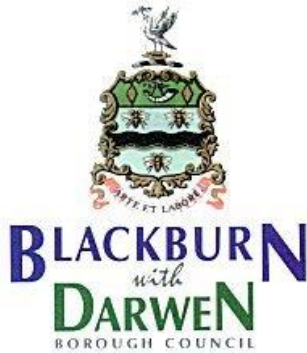
NATURE OF INTEREST:

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/OTHER (delete as appropriate)

SIGNED :

PRINT NAME:

(Paragraphs 8 to 17 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Council refer)



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF: Executive Member for Children's Services

LEAD OFFICER: Director of Children's Services

DATE: 1st August 2016

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Children's Services

WARD/S AFFECTED: All

KEY DECISION: YES NO

SUBJECT: Fostering Service Quarterly Report April – June 2016

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information to the Council's Executive Board on the management and performance of the Local Authority's Fostering Service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:
Notes the quarterly report which is available on the Council website.

3. BACKGROUND

The Fostering Service Regulations 2011 and the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services requires the Council Executive to:

- a) Receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the Fostering Service every 3 months;
- b) Monitor the management and outcomes of the services in order to satisfy themselves that the Service is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children; and
- c) Satisfy themselves that the provider is complying with the conditions of registration.

The report has been written to address the issues identified above. It will be taken into account by OFSTED in inspecting the Service.

This report is for the first quarter of 2016 - 2017, covering the period from 1st April to 30th June 2016, and provides an overview of the Service.

4. KEY ISSUES

The number of children coming into the care system in Blackburn with Darwen has been steadily increasing over the last 12 months and currently stands at 351 representing 90.34 per 10,000 population. In the first quarter of 2016/17, 10 children were admitted to care all aged 11 to 15 years,

which is a particularly difficult group to accommodate. With the number of cases open to Children's Social Care also increasing by 260 in the last year, this trend seems likely to continue placing the Fostering Service under considerable pressure to recruit foster carers willing to take these children. In addition, the Court continues to make decisions about very young children in care proceedings, which has stimulated an increased demand for mother and baby placements which will be difficult to meet.

Despite high levels of recruitment activity, which has generated interest, the Service is unlikely to recruit a sufficient number of carers to meet the demand and reduce reliance on commissioned placements.

The recruitment budget is limited and under great pressure. The cost of events is significant and targeted recruitment for specific groups creates further expense – publicity materials, advertising on the radio etc.

Foster carer attendance at training has been poor in Quarter 1 and meetings have been held to consider the future of delivery especially given the need for greater efficiency and effectiveness. The conference style model will commence in September and KEEP and Nurturing Attachment courses will run annually.

Placement stability continues to be an issue and whilst there are some dedicated resources to provide additional support to fragile placements, this resource has been reduced to make efficiencies with much of the funding for the 11 years Plus project being short term. As the offer has been extended to the younger age group, it is anticipated that the Service can impact on stability rates further this year.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

No policy implications identified.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications identified.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is required to meet statutory requirements as outlined in section 3.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

No resource implications identified.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

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10. CONSULTATIONS

None.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	1.0
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Alyson Hanson – Service Leader, Placement Services
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DATE:	1 st August 2016
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	Fostering Service Quarterly Report April to June 2016
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Fostering Service Quarter 1 Report

1st April to 30th June 2016

Executive Report



Quarterly reports to the Executive Board are a requirement of the Fostering Service to meet Standard 25.7 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services. They are a key part of the documentation considered by OFSTED when conducting a Service inspection.

Introduction

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's Fostering Service aims to ensure that:

- The best foster carers are recruited for our children.
- All placements receive high quality support, effectively targeted according to need.
- Children are found permanent families without delay.
- Children and young people in foster care achieve the best possible outcomes.

Children in our Care in Foster Placements

67% of children in our care are in foster care representing 233 children. Of these, 63% are placed with in-house foster carers. The number of children in our care has steadily increased in the last 12 months and in Quarter 1, 10 children were admitted to care in the 11 to 15 years age group, which presents the Fostering Service with the challenge of identifying placements for this 'hard to place' age group. Court decision-making has also led to an increased demand for mother and baby placements.

	30th June 2016
Number of Children in our Care (CioC)	346
Number of CioC in Foster Care	233
Number of children in in-house foster care placements	148
Number of children in family and friends foster care	32
Number of children in independent fostering agency placements	48
Number of BwD children placed with other local authority foster carers	5

In House Placements

Male	95
Female	53

Age breakdown of in house fostering placements

Babies and very young children generally require short term placements as they proceed to legal permanence relatively quickly. Fostering for adoption and concurrent placements are also used for babies, therefore the turnover of placements is high and availability of foster carers for this age group is good. The older age groups require permanent placements, the throughput is slower and the need for carers is greater.

Age Breakdown of In-house Placements

	30th June 2016
0 to 4 years	33
5 to 9 years	33
10 to 14 years	53
15 years +	29

New Referrals in Quarter 1

It was a busy Quarter for referrals to the Fostering Service. June was the busiest month with 23 children referred for foster placements, although 10 of the children referred did not come in to care either because of decisions made by the Courts or because family members came forward to care for the children. The largest number of referrals came from 0 – 5 years and 12 years +. The majority of children were placed with in-house foster carers.

Month	No children	No sibling groups	Age 0 to 5	Age 6 to 11	Age 12+	In house placement	Fostering agency placement	Residential placement	Short breaks	Didn't come in
April	10	0	5	2	3	6	1	2		1
May	11	3	5	3	3	8	1			2
June	23	1	7	6	10	6	4			10
Total	44	4	17	11	16	20	6	2		13

3 children in short term placements referred for permanent placements in June were not placed until Quarter 2.

Matching for long term fostering

1 long term match was agreed at the Fostering Panel in Quarter 1 with the young person attending the Panel and verbalising his happiness. The foster carer's own child also attended and was able to say how their relationship is 'like brother and sister'.

Feedback from children in foster care

The feedback received from children in foster care is positive. Their views are obtained from:

- Participation in the Voice and Junior Voice groups;
- The work of the Participation Champions in the Service;
- Participation in staff recruitment (interviews) and foster carer training;
- Contributing to the annual review report of the foster carers looking after them;
- A support group for birth children and grandchildren;
- Social worker feedback for foster carer reviews.

Children, young people and their social workers made the following comments about placements when contributing to foster carer reviews:

Two boys in long term placements with experienced carers completed the comments form but with ticks and one word answers. However, both indicated that they are very happy in placement and enjoy doing lots of different things with their carers. The social worker for the boys commented about the carers:

'They are not judgemental and take each child as they are; they have really helped R develop his self-confidence.'

One little girl drew happy pictures on her consultation form rather than express in words how she feels about her foster carers. She calculated in hours and minutes how long she has been with them. Of the same foster carers, the social worker of a child previously in placement commented:

'S loved living with W and M, she loved all the family celebrations, especially those held on the anniversary of when she moved in. She felt very much part of the family.'

One social worker wrote:

'C has made a huge difference to L (child) who has responded positively to the care, guidance and boundaries afforded by C. L has now returned home to her mother but C continues to provide support.'

3 siblings in placement had mixed views. One of the children expressed his desperation to return home whilst his siblings are very happy. One indicated that he 'wants to live with the carers 'forever'.

Promoting Children's Health, Emotional Development, Education & Leisure

Foster families are provided with pre and post-approval preparation and training on the importance and availability of health, education and leisure services to enable them to help children achieve their potential and enhance their emotional wellbeing.

Looked After Children and young people are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities in which they can succeed and are supported in achieving better outcomes. All local Looked After Children and care leavers are provided with a Be Active card, which enables them to access free sport and leisure activities within the Borough.

Children in foster care have regular medicals at the statutory frequency appropriate for their age. There is a designated Nurse for Looked After Children, who takes an active role in following up health issues and assisting with health promotion work. Foster carers have a Health Passport for each child they care for in which they or the child records all of the child's health details. Public Health funding for 18 months has enabled the appointment of a specialist nurse to work with 'hard to reach' Looked After Children and care leavers.

As well as mandatory First Aid training, foster carers also receive training on a variety of health related issues including 'Infectious Diseases in Childhood' and 'Managing Medicine.' Phase 1 of a 'Healthy Homes' training package for carers has been developed.

In line with Standard 8 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services, the Department has, and implements, a written education policy prepared in partnership with the Education Manager for Children in Our Care. The Virtual Head's role is to oversee that the educational needs of all Children in our Care are met and that levels of achievement and aspiration among our children and young people are raised. The Pupil Premium allowance previously paid to schools to support Children in our Care to achieve in school is now managed by the Virtual Head and a system is in place to administer and ensure the money is spent appropriately to further their educational achievements. The Virtual Head quality assures all Personal Education Plans (PEPs). The virtual school is in place and the governing body has been established. 2 hours a week of additional tuition is offered to all young people in Year 11 to promote GCSE improvements.

The Education Manager sits within the Children in our Care Social Work Service and where necessary, actively intervenes with schools to promote the needs of children in foster care. As part of the preparation and assessment process and through the Foster Carer Agreement, foster carers are set a clear expectation that they will promote and support children's educational attainment. The ways in which foster carers meet children's educational needs are monitored through the foster carer review process and supervisory visits. Foster carers regularly receive training on 'The Education of Children in Care.' Whilst a number of children sat important examinations including SATs during Quarter 1, the results of these will not be available until Quarter 2 and will be included with GCSE results in the Quarter 2 Report.

In relation to emotional wellbeing, Looked After Children have access to Clinical Psychology and related services through the East Lancashire Child and Adolescent Service (ELCAS) also known as Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). As from 1st April 2016, the SCAYT (Supporting Carers and Young People Looked After Together) Psychological Service for Looked After Children ended. The make-up of in-house psychological services to support the emotional and mental health of Looked After Children is about to be changed and will be outlined in the Quarter 2 Report.

Engagement with Children & Young People

Two members of staff from the Fostering Service continue to promote the participation agenda and set a number of priorities throughout the year. One member of staff attended the Leapfrog Research Project in conjunction with Lancaster University, which aimed to provide a range of tools to support the work and explore different ways of communicating with young people, gaining their wishes and feelings and ensuring their voice is heard. Members of the 'VOICE' group continue to attend foster carers preparation training where they lead an activity with applicants and provide feedback, which contributes to the applicants' assessment.

The Foster Carers Sons and Daughters group is in place and frequent consultations are held between the Participation Champions and Sons and Daughters Champions to discuss changes and design new consultation forms for foster carer annual reviews. Communication tools have been created for the use of life story work and for reviews. Foster Carers Sons and Daughters remain involved in 'Skills to Foster' preparation training alongside members of the 'VOICE' group for applicant foster carers and their feedback from the training is incorporated within the fostering assessment.

VOICE Group

The Junior VOICE group (8 to 12 year olds) and the main VOICE group (12 to 16 year olds) now meet monthly at Knott Street Community Centre and the majority of children who attend are in foster care. This venue was chosen as the facilities allow part of each session to be activity-based. Both groups have been involved in a number of consultation activities to inform and shape services. Members of the groups have been involved with a research project with Lancaster University to design tools to improve how adults communicate with children and young people.

There is also a Care Leavers Forum, which is well attended. A number of young people have undertaken Peer Mentoring training and are mentoring others through the 'Getting Ready for Adult Life' pack. Additionally, a Young Advisors Group which a number of care leavers attend has been working on a project on the impact of social media on young people. Members of the group have delivered Total Respect training to a multiagency audience of practitioners, councillors and foster carers. Two care leavers recently received awards for their campaign work to improve the lives of children in care and care leavers.

Transitions

Children and young people in foster care are supported to make a positive transition to adult life and foster carers attend training on 'Transitions' which focusses on their role in developing young people's skills to live independently as they progress towards adulthood. They are allocated a Leaving Care Worker at the age of 15½ years, who supports their decision making about post-16 education, training and employment and their future accommodation needs and wishes. The Children in Our Care Team and the Fostering Team encourage carers and young people to consider 'staying put' and the Leaving Care Service has delivered 5 courses for foster carers in recent months about this to develop their understanding of the implications. The training has been positively evaluated by carers and most indicate a willingness to work with 'staying put'. Although finance causes carers the most concern, some are willing to receive housing benefit as part of their financial package and will consider changing their status to landlord. The Service has started some work to develop a 'staying close' option, which may be more suitable for a number of care leavers.

In Quarter 1, the Leaving Care Service achieved an increase in the number of supported lodgings providers, which increases choice for young people leaving foster care and residential placements in favour of semi independence. The Service has worked well with training providers in the Quarter and achieved 5 Apprenticeships. Participation levels continue to be good with young people delivering the Total Respect training and training for foster carers. One young person's feedback about delivering the training was:

'There's more passion because it comes from us. We run it and we get loads of positive feedback from everyone at the end. I love doing it and I'd do it for a job if I could.'

Care Planning

The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015 provide a revised definition of 'permanence' for Children Looked After including for the first time the definition of a long term foster placement. The responsibilities of the local authority in assessing the ability of the foster carer to meet the needs of the child now and in the future, and identifying any support services needed to achieve this are also set out. Local authorities are required to achieve long term matching within reasonable timescales. The Regulations introduce new duties for ceasing to look after a child. One long term match was approved in Quarter 1.

The Fostering Service

The Service comprises the Mainstream, the Family and Friends and Short Breaks Teams. A Foster Placement Support Service is in place comprising a Fostering Support Officer (principally for Family and Friends support), part time Therapeutic Family Worker, an 11 years Plus worker and 1 Foster Placement Support Officer for 7 to 11 year olds.

Foster Carer Resource

The overall number of carers has increased slightly during Quarter 1 compared to the last Quarter. The breakdown is broadly similar with 3 new approvals in the Quarter; 2 short breaks and 1 mainstream.

	Total number of foster carers	Mainstream	Short breaks carers	Family and friends carers
Quarter 4 Jan to April 2016	117	88	12	17
Quarter 1 April to June 2016	119	89	14	16

Matching and Ethnicity

2 placements were made in Quarter 1 where an ethnic match was unavailable. A child of Portuguese / Angolan heritage who experienced an Independent Fostering Agency placement disruption in Scotland was returned to Blackburn with Darwen as an emergency and placed with white British Independent Fostering Agency carers. A White British child was placed with an Asian carer in an emergency. A culturally appropriate agency placement was identified and the child was moved the following day.

Foster Carer Recruitment

Initial Enquiries

April	May	June
5	12	8

Numerous recruitment events were held in Quarter 1

- April – 2BR Radio Lancashire (2 week campaign), social media articles, Poem by Valda Creech, foster carer, published online.
- May – Foster Care Fortnight ‘Big Selfie Launch’ outside the Town Hall followed by various information events in Blackburn and Darwen. The Lancashire Evening Telegraph attended the launch and the Service received full page coverage. A fun day at the end of the first week was popular with members of the public.



- June – The Team set up a cheer point supporting members of staff participating in the Race for Life at Witton Park. A short video was produced of the event and shared on social media. The Team also attended the Flower Festival at the Cathedral.



Approvals

There was 1 new mainstream approval between April – June and 13 households were in assessment at the end of the Quarter and attending the Panel in Quarter 2 for approval.

End of Quarter 1

Enquirers at Initial Visit Stage	Applicants at Stage 1	Applicants at Stage 2
6	2	5

Regional Campaign

The regional ‘You Can Foster’ recruitment campaign idea is being developed by an agency looking at wants and needs of children and young people with the following captions:

- Josh wants to make the team
- Olivia wants to be a chef
- Maya wants to be a vet

- Zak wants to be a superhero
- Jack and Emilie want to be Rock stars
- Chloe wants to go to college

Fostering Service Managers and the Strategy Officer have been involved in the development of this campaign to ensure that Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council derives full benefit from it.

The campaign is prioritising recruitment at a local level through targeting of PR and digital marketing and additional local activity. Universal priorities include:

1. Brothers and sisters – including sibling groups of 3 or more children/young people;
2. Older children/young people – over half of all Looked After Children are now aged 10 years or older;
3. Children from BME communities, in particular black children and increasingly those from new migrant communities;
4. Long term foster carers; and
5. Children with complex/additional needs including behaviour that challenges.

Foster Carer Retention

Retention of foster carers remains good based on a strategy of good support, including a financial allowance scheme, and a wide and varied programme of training. Foster carer satisfaction with the Service appears high and there are regular meetings with foster carers via the Foster Care Association (FCA) where issues can be raised.

In 2015, the Service developed a strategy for children aged 11 years plus, which enhances support for foster carers looking after young people in this age group. Research about foster carer recruitment indicates that support is a key issue and a factor in their ability to maintain placements and continue to foster when things become challenging.

A telephone-based on call service is in place and the 11 years plus Fostering Support Officer has a caseload of carers and young people requiring additional support. The initiative is based at the Adolescent Support Unit (ASU) and those young people participating are able to join groups and activities and / or enjoy one-to-one sessions. In addition, a monthly multi-agency drop-in has been introduced to give carers the opportunity to seek advice from specialist workers. On 1st April 2016, this support offer was extended to support placements from aged 7 years and over as the Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care Programme ended and a number of staff became part of the fostering support offer. Fostered children in this age group will be able to access activities and support offered by the 'Challenge to Care' Team, which is to be based at the Limes. Placements needing short breaks will be referred to short break foster care.

During this Quarter, one mainstream fostering couple have retired after fostering for 37 years. They have cared for many children during this time and are a significant loss to the Fostering Service. There have been three friends and family carers who have resigned in this period - two have gone on to gain Special Guardianship Orders and one has resigned following a placement break down.

Assessment

Statutory guidance for fostering assessments is that they should be completed within 8 months and this is generally achieved. The quality of assessments remains good and is monitored by the Fostering Panel.

Foster Carer Training

The Foster Carer training programme currently provides a range of short training courses covering the Mandatory Fostering Standards, specialist training on relevant topics, safeguarding training, Health and Safety training and Support Groups for Carers. In the last Quarter, courses have included KEEP Refresh, Life Story Work, Managing Allegations, Moving Children On, Paediatric First Aid, Positive Care and Control and Risk Assessment.

New proposals for training 2016 – 17

In response to feedback from Carers and to ensure maximum utilisation of training places, a Conference Model for training where several topics are covered on one day is to be introduced in September. Three conferences will

take place each year and have been designed to ensure the Mandatory Standards are met. It will be mandatory for carers to attend at least two conferences depending on their training needs and record. An additional optional conference will also be developed around adolescence and placement stability issues. The Paediatric First Aid course has been updated and support groups continue to be offered and facilitated from within the Service.

Attendance at training continues to be an issue for the Service. Of the 168 places commissioned on various courses over the Quarter, 62 places were booked but only 48 places utilised, which was a utilisation rate of 35%, which is a significant reduction from the previous Quarter and a concern for the Service. However, attendance at KEEP and Nurturing Attachments is excellent and is not factored into this percentage. It is expected that moving to mandatory conferences in September will improve this rate significantly. The draft programme is due to go out to carers before the end of July with the first conference scheduled for September. Attendance at training is monitored by the Review Panel and can affect carers' band payments should they not comply.

The 6th Programme of KEEP ends on Wednesday 20th July 2016. The group has been the biggest so far with 12 carers including 3 carers from Wigan and Leigh Borough Council, who purchased places on the Programme. Whilst logistics have been challenging for a variety of reasons, the group settled successfully and feedback has been positive. The 12 carers represent 11 children and come from 11 different households. 54 carers have now completed KEEP training. There is a provisional list of 13 carers pencilled in for future sessions.

The Nurturing Attachments course ran from January to May 2016 over 14 weeks with 16 carers attending, 14 local and 2 from a neighbouring authority (Stockport). There were 2 carers, who dropped out due to health and a change in personal circumstances. The course aims to aid carers' understanding around attachment theory and how developmental trauma can affect behaviour and relationships. The course provides carers with a therapeutic approach to parenting that builds relationships and feelings of safety as well as providing an approach to behaviour management.

Overall, the course was very well attended and the carers felt the content met their needs providing better understanding and supported placement stability. Feedback from the course states:-

"This course needs to be available to all carers."

"It was the most useful and relevant training I have completed in 6 years of fostering. It should be mandatory".

"Facilitators very knowledgeable and informative."

"I can see improvements already in the way I deal with **. I cannot praise this course enough"

Fostering Panel

Two Panels were held in Quarter 1; there was no Panel in May. The Panel was quorate on both occasions.

The Panel Advisor has continued to recruit members to the central list now joined by two retired male social workers.

Panel Business

4 friends and family approvals

2 temporary noting of friends and family, one subsequently was in Court and a Section 38.6 order was made

3 reviews following concerns

2 first reviews

2 exemptions

1 match for long term

4 resignations (1 retired after 30 plus years of fostering; 2 Special Guardianship Orders and one disrupted friends and family placement).

Overall, the Panel paperwork presented continues to be of a good standard and Panel attendees' feedback is largely positive.

Review Panel

16 foster carer reviews have been presented to the Annual Review Panel during this Quarter with 8 carers attending their review. The quality assurance for the reports has been consistently good and social workers are now more consistent in providing comments.

Complaints

There was one complaint in Quarter 1. This was from an advocate on behalf of a young person, who was not happy in foster placement and was requesting a move. This young person is placed with his sibling. A meeting was held resulting in further support for the young person as well as support for the foster carers. A sibling assessment was completed and the Single Assessment updated. The young person was offered short breaks with another carer.

Compliments

Four compliments have been made during the Quarter.

The Advanced Practitioner was complimented by a school Head of Careers for her attendance at a careers evening. Two Supervising Social Workers have been complimented on their roles as Supervising Social Workers from the foster carers they supervise. A compliment was also received from an Independent Reviewing Officer for the foster carers' commitment to and attitude in their role.

Allegations

2 allegations were recorded in Quarter 1. Both were allegations of physical abuse.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) was notified in both cases. The first allegation was fully investigated by the child's Social Worker and the child in placement was consulted; the investigation concluded that the allegation was unfounded and no further action was taken. The second was fully investigated and strategy discussions were held that included the Local Authority designated Officer (LADO). The allegation was agreed to be unfounded but it highlighted how the carers were struggling with the child's needs arising from his ADHD and Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. A referral was made to the Fostering Support Service for assessment and the provision of additional support. A number of actions were agreed in relation to the carers including training and development of their record keeping.

Specific Incidents and Restraints

There have been 10 specific incidents involving 6 young people reported in Quarter 1. The incidents included a hospital admission for treatment, a missing from home episode, one of challenging behaviour towards a foster carer by a young person, one incidents of fire starting, one of threatened fire starting. The fire starting incident occurred when a child stole the carers lighter from a pocket and hid it in his bedroom. When he went to bed he lit some paper and his headboard. He put the fire out himself immediately but the carers smelt smoke and responded quickly. A smoke alarm has now been installed in his bedroom.

Serious Illnesses and Accidents

There were 5 serious illnesses and accidents reported during the Quarter. There were 2 attendances at A&E, which involved two young people. One young person was suffering from a panic attack and medical advice was provided, and the second young person was affected by use of legal highs and was admitted for further observation and treatment. One child was suffering from a throat infection, and medication was prescribed and administered by the foster carer. A further two incidents of superficial cuts caused by razor blades were reported in relation to two young people. The carers sought appropriate advice from their Supervising Social Worker, which resulted in their safer care policies being updated and they were advised about appropriate storage of razors within the home.

Bullying

There have been no reported incidences of bullying within this Quarter.

Missing From Home

5 young people (8 incidents) were reported missing in Quarter 1.

In April, there was one young person that was reported missing from home whilst receiving short breaks from the Adolescent Support Unit. The young person went missing with two other young people, and was later returned to their placement by the police.

One young person was reported missing in June, following a disagreement during contact with their parent. The young person later returned to their placement, and the carer provided support and reassurance. During July, one young person went missing on four separate occasions; one involved the young person going to a family member without permission, and there were three further incidents when the young person went missing from placement and failed to maintain contact with the carers.

Exemptions

Five exemptions were in place during Quarter 1; four of these continued from the previous Quarter. The first exemption supports a mother and baby placement, the second a sibling placement of 4 children, the third a short-term placement that was made in an emergency and the fourth a further mother and baby placement. There was one new exemption to support a respite placement, which has since ended.

Engagement with Foster Carers

Blackburn with Darwen has a Foster Carer Association (FCA), which meets regularly and has an Elected Committee. Members of the Committee meet senior managers and the Executive Member on a quarterly basis. The Chair of the FCA sits on the Corporate Parenting Specialist Advisory Group. The FCA has its own website, which has been increasingly used to communicate messages and news. It was recently agreed that the Chair and Secretary will meet every quarter with the Service Leader and Service Managers to discuss operational issues. A forum to consult foster carers on a range of issues is held at least once a year. The Committee meets with the Director of Children's Services and Elected Member for Children's Services every quarter to discuss issues and concerns.

All foster carers are provided with membership of the Fostering Network and foster carers also have access to independent support commissioned from the Fostering Network to provide support and advocacy services in the event of complaints or allegations.

A small group of foster carers meet on a monthly basis; they are recruitment champions helping to drive recruitment forward. They are involved with the planning of events, Skills to Foster preparation training, recruitment stands and events.

Family and Friends Foster Care

There are currently 16 friends and family carers, who look after 25 children. There has been one new approval of grandparents looking after their 4 grandchildren. In Quarter 1, there were 4 approvals and 3 resignations at the Fostering Panel. The Team continues to attend care planning meetings and offer advice and support to child care social workers. Temporary approvals have been extremely complex this Quarter with one set of grandparents living and working overseas. The grandmother travelled to Blackburn to be assessed; unfortunately, after a substantial piece of work, this did not progress to approval because of the Grandfather's health. Assessments of other family members are still being completed. Three other substantial reports have been completed with different plans other than foster carer approval.

Currently, the small team of three assessors and an Advanced Practitioner (AP) are working on 7 SGO reports. The Team provided statements to Court and during Quarter 1 provided advice and written support on thirty cases and travelled to Somerset. There are currently three temporary approvals in progress plus work on four other assessments. The Advanced Practitioner has a full programme of workshops, which are conducted with other APs. The existing friends and family carers have access to training and have an allocated Supervising Social Worker, who is skilled in this area of work. It is acknowledged that friends and family placements are an area of growth, in that family is the first option in care proceedings if an alternative to parental care is required.

Short Break Foster Care

There are currently 14 carers, who have offered 18 placements this Quarter. The 14 carers are a mix of recruited short break carers and mainstream carers, who offer support to parents, other placements and emergencies. Carers are matched to children, who have a wide range of additional and complex needs. The Service is currently campaigning to recruit carers, who could offer a placement for a child in a wheelchair, as this is a service need. There has recently been a support group with training on autism. Other training is available through Newfield School and Appletrees.

Training / Staff

All staff members have individual training and a development plan, which is linked to their annual appraisal and monitored during monthly supervision

Placement Stability

Currently, the Department uses a definition of placement stability based on 3 or more placements in a 12 month period that is calculated on a cumulative basis over the year. At this stage in the year, the percentage stability figures are low but it is clear that placement instability has increased in comparison with the same time last year. By the end of the Quarter, 2.3% of Looked After Children had 3 or more placements compared to 1.8% for the same period in 2015.

Year to date	April	May	June
LAC with 3 or more placements	5	5	8
Total number of LAC	351	353	349
% Stability of LAC placements 2016/17	1.4%	1.4%	2.3%
%Stability of LAC placements 2015/16	0.3%	0.9%	1.8%

Disruption meetings are held in order to identify learning and inform future planning for any child whose placement has been disrupted. A number of managers across Children's Services have been trained to chair these meetings. The Head of Service for Permanence completes an analysis of disruption meetings on a six monthly basis in order to identify themes or trends, and learning for the Service.

In order to improve placement stability, the Fostering Service developed an 11 Plus Strategy in 2014, which has now been extended to provide support for all children in foster care aged 6 years and over. This initiative is described in an earlier section of this Report.

Commissioned

There were 9 new placements in Quarter 1 and a number of placements ended, meaning 66 children were in commissioned placements at the end of June. The majority of these are Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements. Of the 9 new placements, 3 were residential of which one was a very short term arrangement for 28 days. The remainder were IFA placements including one concurrent placement for a baby, who is likely to be adopted. 2 of the 6 IFA placements were moves from one IFA to another as a result of placement disruption.

Budget

Although it is early in the year, the Fostering Service is on target to be within budget for the year. This has required the Service to make a number of efficiencies, which include the way that foster carer training is provided, the loss of a Fostering Support Officer post and the loss of the Deputy Manager role, although this will not come to fruition until the end of Quarter 2.

The demand for foster placements for older children, for children with disabilities and in recent months for mother and baby placements, which have not been available in house, continues to place the commissioning budget under great pressure. The recruitment budget, which is shared with the Adoption Service, is also under considerable pressure.

Priorities for 2016/17

1. To continue to develop the campaign to recruit foster carers for older children in need of permanent placements, children with disabilities, mother and baby and sibling groups.
Update – there has been significant recruitment activity during Quarter 1 as described in the body of this Report. A targeted digital campaign is due to start in September. There have been a number of enquiries through the events and via the website outlined in the body of this Report.
2. To implement the Placement Stability Action Plan to reduce the percentage of Looked After Children, who experience disruption and have more than 3 placements during their time in care. This includes the continued development of fostering placement support services across the full age range.

Update – support services for foster placements are now in place across the full age range, although carers of children in the 0 to 5 years age group rarely require additional support. Support for children aged 11 years + is now well embedded and in the last 12 months, 13 placements have been maintained as a result of the support provided.

3. To implement foster carer training proposals with the aim of improving attendance rates and delivering valuable courses that meet the needs of foster carers.

Update – the new conference style training programme commences in September.

4. Continue to monitor compliance with Fostering Service Regulations 2011 and National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011.

Update – Service Managers are continually auditing compliance with Standards and Regulations.

5. Maintain the Investing in Children status of the Service and ensure that children and young people's participation remains central to the work of the Service.

Update – participation work is ongoing. Investing in Children status will be reassessed by December when the current accreditation expires.

**Alyson Hanson
Service Leader, Placement Services
1st August 2016**

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Health and Adult Social Care Executive Member for Resources
LEAD OFFICERS:	Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) Director of Localities and Prevention
DATE:	8 September 2016

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Health and Adult Social Care	Resources
WARD/S AFFECTED:	Ewood	
KEY DECISION:	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBJECT: Development of Extra Care supported housing at Albion Mill

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council has an opportunity to work in partnership with Verum Victum Ltd. and Inclusion Housing to nominate older residents for a new scheme which will be developed to provide between 90-100 units of Extra Care and Dementia/Mental Health accommodation following an Expression of Interest.

The scheme also includes plans for 12 units of intermediate care that will be developed by Verum Victum at their risk. The intended scheme at Albion Mill has full Planning Permission and Verum Victum will fund the capital development costs. The developer is committed to building the scheme at their own risk provided the Council will agree to Housing Benefit payments, a Nominations Agreement and a risk share agreement on voids in the lead in to full occupancy, as described in the body of this paper.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Board is asked to note the terms of the partnership and agree:

1. To the Council entering into a contract for a nomination agreement to cover the initial commissioning and subsequent re-letting of the scheme to provide Extra Care and Dementia/Mental health housing and that the Council works in partnership with Verum Victum and Inclusion Housing.
2. Delegation of authority to the Director of Adults Social Services, the Director of Localities and Prevention and the Director of Finance and IT in consultation with Executive Members for Health and Adults and Resources to negotiate and agree the terms of the Nomination Agreement.

3. BACKGROUND

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council has identified a need for additional accommodation for older people as a priority within the Older Peoples Housing Strategy 2011-2016. The development of dementia care, extra care and older people's accommodation fits within the broader strategic plans to offer older people a wide range of housing and support options.

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An Expression of Interest was issued in October 2014 to appoint a partner to work with the Council to

develop Extra Care, Dementia Care and Intermediate Care. The successful partner would work together with the Authority to develop the specification for the scheme and deliver a build and housing management programme. The partner would be responsible for pre-construction work, obtaining planning permission, design, construction, operational costs and housing management.

The Expression of Interest was for 90 to 100 units of one and two bedrooled apartments with the accommodation mix:

- 50% of Units are to be allocated for Extra Care
- 15% of the Units are to be allocated to Intermediate Care
- 35% of the Units are to be allocated to Dementia Care

The Expression of Interest required that rental and service costs for extra care units should be affordable and in line with similar facilities within the borough. For a suitable scheme the Council would require 100% Nomination Rights.

Verum Victum, a private developer specialising in supported housing, reached an acceptable threshold for their bid submission which enabled negotiations to start with the Council. Their development finance model is dependent on 100% nominations from the local authority and higher rates of housing benefit to support vulnerable people (exempt accommodation status).

Verum Victum's housing partner Inclusion Housing, a registered provider (housing association), will have a twenty year lease to manage the scheme and act as landlord. The Council has experience of working with Inclusion Housing at Moorgate Mill.

The scheme at Albion Mill received full Planning Permission 18th September 2014

At this stage a care provider has not been identified and will be commissioned during the construction phase. The Council has a block contract for care and support in the remainder of its extra care schemes and Albion Mill, subject to procurement advice, will either be tendered out or accommodated through a variation to the existing contract.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The scheme presents an opportunity to deliver a further quality Extra Care housing scheme within the Borough, providing specialist accommodation for older people including Intermediate Care and units for Dementia /Mental health.

The build period is likely to be 18 months. Verum Victum would require that housing benefit is agreed in principle before construction starts.

There are a number of risks associated with working with Verum Victum:.

The capital costs of development and construction contract risk remain exclusively with Verum Victum.

Verum Victum have now confirmed that they are committed to building the scheme, with no development capital subsidy from the Council, at their own risk provided the Council will cover the Housing Benefit, Nominations agreement and void costs from the handover date of the scheme to it becoming full (which could take up to 6 months). The terms requested are consistent with most recent schemes the Council has commissioned and where the Council has put in subsidy. This now makes the offer from Verum Victum for Albion Mill competitive and offers the Council good value for money and a scheme the authority is now able to support.

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The Council in the capacity of partnership working with Verum Victum would look to assist in

discussions with Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS Acute Trust on agreeing 12 Intermediate care beds either for Dementia or Mental health. Work has started on identifying Mental Health housing needs and there is a market for this product.

In the event of Verum Victum not being able to secure a commission through the CCG and the NHS Acute Trust the Council will provide a safety net for the 12 units to be used for Extra Care or Dementia/Mental Health beds consistent with the main nomination agreement. This will include meeting any revenue gap above the cost Extra Care or Dementia/Mental Health.

Throughout all negotiations it has been made clear to Verum Victum that the decision to go ahead with the development and construction is solely at their risk.

The relationship between the developer and proposed manager of the scheme, Inclusion Housing, is dependent upon the Council agreeing to a nominations agreement. The Nomination Agreement commits the Council to cover:

1. Pre-tenancy voids capped at an upper limit through a contingency fund which will be held by the Council and paid only when the void period has been verified.
2. Subsequent turnover/relet voids. Discussions are continuing with Inclusion Housing to use void allowance that is collected as part of the rent to self-insure turn over voids reducing the financial risk to the Council.
3. Longer term voids of 9 months or more. However need and demand is considered to be strong and this is not a major risk.
4. Any reductions in rental created by changes to benefits. The scheme is highly dependent on higher rate (exempt accommodation) housing benefit for the Dementia part of the scheme. Initial indications are that this may be acceptable but the detail is still to be agreed. Exempt accommodation regulations may in the future be affected by roll out of Universal Credit which could impact financially on the Council.

The basis of this agreement is similar to the agreement in place for Shorey Bank.

Whilst the Council will target the scheme to meet local needs via the 100% nomination rights, there is a risk that at some point we are unable to find sufficient people to nominate to the scheme particular if there is overlap with commissioning of Shorey Bank. Plans will be made to ensure a phased approach to stage supply reducing the need for void cover. Both schemes are based on a balanced mix of low, medium and high demand users. Based on current and projected demand the risk is low, however still needs to be planned for.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The scheme would help to deliver the targets set in the Older Peoples Housing and Well Being Strategy.

At this stage including Shorey Bank in our tracking, Albion Mill development would take us within 27 of our target for Extra care Housing. This figure has been based on the Council's strategy which set out to develop a supply of 515 Extra Care and Dementia units by 2020, and includes latest advice on estimating need from the Learning and Improvement Network.

Given the longer term demographic projections of population growth and older people living longer the Council's strategy is on track and helps mitigate future risks of unmet demand.

The Older Peoples Housing and Wellbeing Strategy is now 5 years old and whilst demand and supply projections are updated annually the whole strategy will require updating to ensure that it reflects the achievements to date and emerging needs/trends to support our older residents into the future.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Additional supply of extra care housing and dementia provision would offset savings in residential care placements in the region of £200k to £240k per year, this is assuming 10% of residents (10 people) at the scheme would otherwise use residential care each year at a cost on an average weekly rate of £461.

There may be a call on the Council to cover rent loss on longer term empty properties depending on the detail of the nominations agreement and the self-funding insurance policy. This has been touched upon in the section on risks. The Council will need to ensure that it manages risk of oversupply.

Changes to Housing Benefit Policy affecting 'Exempt Accommodation' may impact on rental income and the Council may have to cover these costs. In the absence of the Government being able to make a firm commitment this remains an unquantifiable risk. It is certain that demand for specialist older persons housing will remain and therefore the Council has limited choice other than to accept this risk. An agreement has also been made for Shorey Bank along the same lines.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council would need to negotiate and enter into a contract for the Nominations Agreement with Inclusion Housing. Any contract for the nominations agreement needs to ensure that the Council is fully aware of the contractual relationship between Verum Victum and Inclusion Housing and that its interests are safeguarded in the event of any contractual disputes between the parties. Because the Council has been careful to not be involved in the scheme's physical construction it will be expected that there will need to be mechanisms in place that enable the Council to potentially extricate itself if the development is not completed and commissioned within a reasonable period of time. This and other contractual details will be negotiated and agreed in accordance with the delegations set out in the Recommendations.

The Council note the position on housing benefit and the potential legal risks of future policy changes which is noted primarily due to a lack of future certainty.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Significant staff time has been spent in negotiating and assessing the viability of the scheme. Project Management going forward would be from existing resources.

It is proposed that the Council uses Adult Social Care Funding to fund the pre-tenancy voids referred to herein. There is potential for the use of shared Health and Care Better Care fund monies to be utilised for this purpose, which increase significantly through central government funding in 2018-19. It is suggested a schedule of all such similar agreements is regularly monitored and updated to be fully sighted on our residual liability at any time. This would also help inform future commissioning.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

The scheme will have significant benefits to health, well-being and supporting independence for frail older people. The draft scheme has been subject to a local consultation exercise through the planning process and was well received.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	0.3
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DATE:	01 August 2016
BACKGROUND PAPER:	Older Peoples Housing Strategy 2011-2016