

Meeting of:	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Thursday, 19 December 2024</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Healthy Living and Social Care
Report Title:	Appropriation of Two Properties from Housing Stock to the Social Services Directorate
Purpose of Report:	To seek Cabinet approval to appropriate two properties from Housing to Social Services
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health
Responsible Officer:	Director of Social Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	<p>Operational Manager, Children Looked After</p> <p>Head of Children and Young People Services</p> <p>Head of Housing and Building Services</p> <p>Major Project Manager, Regeneration and Planning</p> <p>Operational Manager, Legal Services</p> <p>Operational Manager, Accountancy</p> <p>Team Leader, Neighbourhood and Housing Renewal</p>
Policy Framework:	This matter is for Executive decision by Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This report advises of the intention to appropriate two properties currently within the ownership of the Council’s Housing department to the Social Services Directorate.</li> <li>• Full considerations are detailed in a Part II report on the meeting agenda and Cabinet is requested to consider these reports in conjunction.</li> </ul>	

## **Recommendations**

1. That the contents of this report be noted and considered in conjunction with the Part II report on the meeting agenda.
2. That use of the Council's urgent decision procedure, as set out at section 15.14 of the Council's constitution, be agreed in respect of the recommendations contained within the Part II report.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. To allow the Part I and Part II reports to be considered together.
2. To ensure the Council can deliver the scheme.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Placement Commissioning Strategy April 2022 to April 2025, attached at Appendix A, identifies a significant rise in the numbers of children looked after in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 1.2 The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Market Stability Report (MSR) October 2022 to March 2027 identifies trends and emerging issues across Adult and Children and Young People Services within the Vale of Glamorgan. The report also reflects the challenges and opportunities the Council predict it will face up to 31st March 2027, based on current projections. Where these challenges and opportunities have been set out, analysis is provided on how the Council, alongside partners, plans to address them.
- 1.3 The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Placement Commissioning Strategy, alongside the regional Market Stability Report, identifies the need for the Vale of Glamorgan Council to be able to provide residential accommodation locally in order to meet the needs of our children looked after.
- 1.4 Additionally, Welsh Government has made a policy commitment to eliminate the ability for private organisations to make a profit on children's care. This will require all Councils across Wales to develop adequate sufficiency plans to meet the needs of its children looked after in not-for-profit provision.
- 1.5 The Vale of Glamorgan Council will need to ensure there is sufficient accommodation, services and placements to support this group of children.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1** Subject to Cabinet’s approval, it is intended that the Council appropriates the two identified properties.
- 2.2** Given the need for confidentiality in respect of our children looked after, full details are outlined in the Part II report.

## **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** Long term – this scheme would ensure there would be long-term provision in area, addressing an unmet need in accordance with the MSR. Overall, it would also reduce the ongoing revenue costs associated with placing children with private care providers.
- 3.2** Prevention – the appropriation of these two properties would provide the Council with improved capacity to provide accommodation for its children looked after, resulting in a reduction in the need to place children in out of area provision and in private accommodation in line with current objectives to eliminate for profit options.
- 3.3** Integration – Children and Young People Services intends to work with a not-for-profit provider, potentially in the third sector, to ensure appropriate care is provided to meet the individual needs of each child.
- 3.4** Involvement – the Council will fully consider the individual needs of each child.
- 3.5** Collaboration – Social Services will work alongside the Property Section, Legal department and the Project Management Unit to deliver this project efficiently and effectively.
- 3.6** This project would address a number of the Council’s objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan 2020-2025, including:
  - Objective 1 – Work for and with our communities
  - Objective 3 – Support people at home and within their communities

## **4. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

- 4.1** In 2019, the Council declared a ‘Climate Emergency’ and the Climate Change Challenge Plan was approved by Cabinet in 2021, with Project Zero being established as the Council’s blueprint to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.
- 4.2** As part of the renovation of any properties acquired as part of this proposal, the Council will ensure the homes meet regulatory standards for Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) registered children’s homes to maximise their future use and support sustainability.

## **5. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 5.1 In terms of capital expenditure, a grant application would be submitted for Welsh Government Housing with Care (HCF) funding, via the Regional Partnership Board, to support the acquisition of the two properties, and any renovation works required to ensure the homes are finished to an appropriate standard.
- 5.2 In terms of revenue implications, there are cost savings associated with this scheme.

### **Employment**

- 5.3 Resource implications are set out in the Part II report.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 5.4 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6th April 2016.
- 5.5 The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming Social Services in Wales.

## **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1 Welsh Government Housing with Care Fund (HCF) Guidance 2022-2023:  
[Housing with Care Fund \(HCF\) Guidance 2022-2023 May 2022](#)
- 6.2 Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board – Market Stability Report (MSR), Regulated Social Services Care and Support Market 2022 to 2027.  
[Market-Stability-Report.pdf](#)



# Vale Of Glamorgan Council Placement Commissioning Strategy

From April 2022 to April 2025

**Commissioning is... the process of identifying needs within the population and of developing policy directions, service models and the market, to meet those needs in the most appropriate and cost-effective way.**

*IPC (2016) National Commissioning Board (Wales):*

*Procurement Options in Social Care in Wales.*

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## Section 1

### 1. Executive Summary

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is pleased to introduce its first Placement Commissioning Strategy.

The Strategy should be read alongside the Council's Corporate Strategy for Children who need Care and Support 2019-23 and our Regional Market Stability Report. The Strategy reflects the work of the Council and its partnerships with external partners in Health and the Third Sector.

Children and young people who need care and support, including those looked after by the Local Authority, have often been subject to multiple adverse childhood experiences and are amongst the most vulnerable in society.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 focuses on the importance of identifying and assessing children who need care and support as early as possible, helping them to use the strengths within their families and resources in their communities to provide help and support, and intervening at a stage which prevents needs becoming critical.

In addition, as Corporate Parents of children who do become looked after, where it has not been possible to support them to live safely within their own families, it is our responsibility to keep them safe, to make sure their experiences in care are positive, and to improve the access they have to opportunities for them to succeed in life.

The Strategy highlights the context in which we are working, the inherent challenges, as well as our ambitions and aspirations for children and young people. The Strategy reflects where the Council is doing well, its strategic intentions, and where further developments are required. The Strategy concludes by identifying the priorities for our Internal Placement Service, our Commissioning Intentions and the Priorities for the Service as a whole.

### 2. Introduction

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has a special responsibility as Corporate Parents and is committed to working as effective and trustworthy Corporate Parents for any child or young person who is in our care irrespective of their age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, faith or disability.

Every good parent knows that children require a safe and secure environment in which to grow and thrive. Parents protect and support their children against the dangers and risks of life. Parents are ambitious for them and want them to reach their potential. Parents celebrate and share in their achievements.

A child who is cared for by the Council has the right to expect everything from a Corporate Parent that would be expected from a good parent.

The Vale of Glamorgan's Corporate Strategy for Children who need Care and Support 2019-2023 identifies how the needs of children, young people and their families will be met within the resources available to the Council and its partners during the period 2019 to 2023 utilising an integrated model of services to children and young people.

This involves children and families having, for example:

- access to quality early years' nursery and education provision, which continues through school age and beyond;
- secure and stable housing and living in safe communities;
- access to emotional well-being services;
- access to play, leisure and youth support services; and
- access to targeted help when needed such as direct family support, parenting support, or services designed to prevent offending.

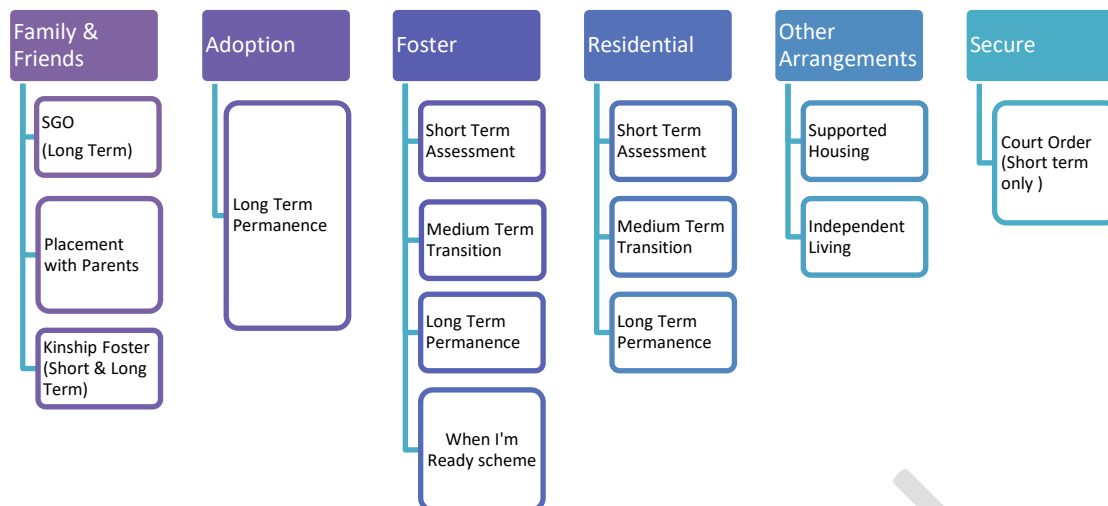
The Vale of Glamorgan Council is committed to take earlier preventative action to support children and their families so that families are able to care for their own children and prevent unnecessary entry or repeat admissions to care. This is a corporate priority. The following **early intervention services** are available or under development, however we will continue to explore and develop additional innovative ideas:

- Information Advice and Assistance (IAA)
  - Families First Advice Line (gateway to early help services, free phone service and face to face surgeries at schools in catchment areas identified in greatest area of need of support)
- Family Support Service
- Families First
  - FACT (local Team Around the Family service)
  - Primary Mental Health Practitioner
  - Vale Parenting Service (providing evidenced based programmes and parenting support for families with children 0 -18 years),
  - Youth Well-being service
  - Young Carers Project
  - Sense of Play (Early Years intervention for young children with additional needs)
- Flying Start (Vale offer includes both midwifery and social work elements in addition to Health Visiting, Childcare and Early Language Development)
- Child Development Fund (Providing childcare to young children whose development has been impacted by Covid19 restrictions)
- Vulnerable Change Project (partnership with South Wales Police, previously known as Early Action Together)
- School Based Counselling
- Youth Inclusion Support Panel working with children and young people at risk of offending.

We will ensure that children are looked after in placements that meet their needs. The Placement Strategy sets out how Vale of Glamorgan will meet the assessed needs of children looked after to enable them to achieve the best possible outcomes by providing them with high-quality, cost-effective placements, when it is necessary for children to be looked after by Vale of Glamorgan Council.

A 'placement' is the term used to describe an arrangement by which a local authority places a child or young person in a suitable home environment in order to safeguard and promote their well-being. Placements are often with a foster carer or in registered children's home, but other settings are possible (See Diagram 1 below).





Children who are looked after have the same entitlements as all children and young people. Under the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014, this is now articulated through the concept of well-being. For children and young people this incorporates:

- Being safe
- Having somewhere suitable to live
- Being involved in decisions that impact your life
- Having friends
- Being part of good, strong communities
- Having every chance to do well in education, training, work-based learning and employment
- Feeling good about your life
- Being able to grow up happily and successfully,
- Being well-looked after
- Have access to appropriate health care

It is our priority to ensure that we find safe and appropriate ways to work with families to help them meet their children's needs, including their need to be protected from harm. We will, whenever it is safe to do so, always look for ways to support children and young people to remain with their birth family or extended family and prevent the need for children and young people to become looked after.

The next best alternative when children and young people cannot live within their own family is a permanent stable family such as a family based foster placement or an adoptive placement. An adoptive placement is a way of providing a permanent home and family to a child who cannot be brought up by their birth family. Today, the majority of adoptions in the UK involve younger children who have been taken into care. Fostering is a family based foster placement which offers stability and security to children and young people, which often provides them with their first experience of positive family life. Today, 80% of children looked after within the UK live with foster families.

Residential placements will rarely be seen as a long-term arrangement, as most children and young people can achieve better outcomes if they can live in a family-based environment. Residential care offers short and long-term care for children with complex needs and behaviours. Children and young people placed in residential care typically arrive as teenagers after multiple foster care placements, but for some children residential care will be an earlier option. Children placed in residential care tend to have complex needs including mental health, emotional and behavioural problems as a result of childhood trauma. According to UK government figures, 30% children and young people are placed as a result of abuse or neglect, while the same percentage has experienced significant instability with five or more different placements. Some 38% of children and young people in residential settings have additional educational needs. They are also more likely to be in contact with the criminal justice system. A residential placement will only be considered when detailed assessments of a child's / young person's needs have identified that a specialist resource is required.

We will always seek to look after children within the boundaries of Vale of Glamorgan in order to maintain their relationship with their family, peers and to enable them to continue to maintain their links with education, health and other services that may be involved with them, unless there is a reason this would not be in their best interest.

We will always aim to return children and young people to their birth family or to a foster family, unless it is explicitly clear that to do so would be detrimental to a child / young person's health or wellbeing.

## **2.1 Purpose of the Strategy**

The agreed approach to the strategic commissioning of placements by Children and Young People Services in Vale of Glamorgan is to:

- shape our internal services to maximise the benefits of public sector provision in terms of quality and value for money;
- to work in collaboration with public sector partners across the regional footprint where this offers identifiable benefits;
- to increase placement choice supplemental to our Sufficiency Duty to enable good matching;
- to commission and co-produce outcomes focussed services acknowledging that there are a range of different methods for strategic commissioning with multiple partners who may be co-operatives, charities or commercial partners.

The purpose of this Strategy is to pull together into one document the identified strands of placement commissioning, ensure there is a clear vision, which underpins our approach to commissioning, and ensure this vision aligns with our Corporate Planning. This Placement Commissioning Strategy builds on the recommendations and actions set out in Vale of Glamorgan Council's, Corporate Strategy for Children who need Care and Support 2019-2023.

This Strategy will inform:

- the shaping of our internal placement services;
- our partnership working approach to placement commissioning with stakeholders, and a range of public and private sector partners;
- our regional Market Stability Report which will be published.

## **2.2 Priorities and Desired Outcomes**

When a child becomes looked after, the role of being a parent becomes the corporate responsibility of the Council. This is known as Corporate Parenting and is the term used to describe how the Council and its partners collectively fulfil their responsibilities to all children and young people who are in their care by seeking exactly the same positive outcomes that every good parent would want for their own children.

Effective Corporate Parenting requires ownership and leadership at a senior level within the Council, including elected members.

As stated above, the Vale of Glamorgan's Corporate Strategy for Children who need Care and Support 2019-2023 identifies how the needs of children, young people and their families will be met within the resources available to the Council and its partners during the period 2019 to 2023 utilising an integrated model of services to children and young people.

The Strategy's key objectives are:

1. To support families to stay together and reduce the need for children to become looked after, by focusing on services which intervene early and prevent greater need arising across all provision.
2. To manage risk confidently and provide support at the edge of care by making sure that need is accurately assessed, resulting in the right children being accommodated at the right time. This includes supporting families to avoid children becoming accommodated unnecessarily and by supporting sustainable family arrangements within their wider family networks.
3. To provide and commission a flexible and affordable mix of high-quality placements which meet the diverse range of children's needs.
4. To jointly develop with children and young people a plan for the next stages of their lives which remains focused on achieving care and support plans, prevents drift, enables them to be reunited with family and friends where possible, to have stable placements and to exit care positively.

These objectives are underpinned by the following principles:

- i) The responsibility for meeting the needs of children and young people looked after or at risk of becoming looked after rests across all services for children, including statutory and Third Sector partners, and is always exercised in partnership with children and their families. (KO1)
- ii) The majority of children are most likely to thrive and achieve good outcomes if they are cared for within their own families. (KO1, KO2)
- iii) Preventative services and early intervention to support children in need and their families should be provided to empower families to stay together. (KO1)
- iv) Where children cannot be supported within their immediate family, families will be supported to achieve sustainable family arrangements within their wider family and friendship networks and, where necessary, to make these arrangements permanent through the use of Child Arrangement Orders. (KO2)
- v) Formal kinship fostering arrangements will be explored in partnership with children and their families as the preferred alternative arrangement where it is necessary for the local authority to share parental responsibility or intervene in managing risk and protecting children, but with clear step-down plans to alternative Orders. (KO3)
- vi) Where a child's needs cannot be adequately met through the arrangements described in goals iv) and v), consideration will be given to the needs of the child and how they can be met in a substitute family, preferably with in-house foster carers and, if not, with independent fostering agency carers, wherever possible living within the Vale of Glamorgan. (KO3, KO4)
- vii) Residential care placements will be made only where the complexity and challenge of a child or young person's care package needs mean they are unable to live within a family setting, or where a young person is subject to a Court ordered secure remand. Efforts will always be focused on stepping down from residential care wherever possible. (KO3, KO4)
- viii) Placements should be local to enable children and young people to remain in their communities, maintain their networks and minimise disruption in their lives. (KO3, KO4)

- ix) Placement requests should be defined in terms of the child/young person's needs. It is the role of the multi-agency Placement Panel to agree that a child should become looked after and consider the most appropriate type of placement to meet these needs, with due consideration given to the views of the child and the available resources. (KO3, KO4)
- x) All children looked after of statutory school age should receive appropriate education provision regardless of their placement and ability to access school. Providing appropriate support to enable engagement in education is just as important as finding suitable care placements for children looked after. (KO3, KO4)
- xi) Placements should support a positive transition to independence, adulthood, education, employment, and training and, where applicable, resettlement back into the community from custodial settings. (KO4)

The desired outcome of this approach is improved outcomes for our children who are looked after, to achieve best value of our Corporate Parenting functions with children placed in high quality and value for money placements, which safeguard children and promote their wellbeing.

This Placement Commissioning Strategy specifically supports the delivery of the key objectives above and will contribute to the delivery of Objective 3.

## **2.3 Methodology**

This Strategy is based on a detailed analysis of the needs and demands of the Vale of Glamorgan's looked after children. This was carried out through data analysis and research of the process and practices for sourcing appropriate accommodation for children who are looked after.

The data analysis was sourced from:

- Population Needs Assessment
- Stats Wales
- Care Inspectorate Wales Self-Assessment (Jan 2018)
- Children Commissioning Support Resource (CCSR)
- Local Authorities Quarterly Baseline data reports
- Internal Reports and relevant strategies.
- Consultation with Team Managers
- Consultation with Children and Young People
- Foster Carers Consultation

## **3. Social Care and Policy Context**

### **3.1 Relevant National Legislation and Guidance**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council will ensure that there is sufficient accommodation for all types of children who are looked after in line with Section 79 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (the Act).

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure placements are made within the local authority's own area (section 81(9) of the Act), unless it is not reasonably practical to do so or there are overriding reasons for placing a child out of authority, the primary overriding reason being safeguarding.

In keeping with the duty and aim of promoting the upbringing of a child by their family, there is a clear emphasis in the Act that, unless it is not consistent with the child's well-being, arrangements must be made for the child who needs accommodation to live with a parent or a person with parental

responsibility or residence / child arrangement order. Where this is not possible, preference should be given to placement with a relative, friend or other person connected to the child or young person.

If neither of these are possible, a range of sufficient alternative provision should be available within the Local Authority, including foster carers and children's homes, supported lodgings and secure accommodation.

Part 6 of the Act includes the Code of Practice on looked after and accommodated children and sets out Local Authorities responsibilities within Chapter 1 – Care and Support Planning. This includes achieving permanence for looked after children and young people as a key consideration from the time a child or young person becomes looked after. The care and support plan should from the outset detail how this is to be achieved.

**It is 'sufficient alternative accommodation' that is the focus of this Placement Commissioning Strategy.**

### 3.2 National Context

Co-production and partnership are at the core of the legislation requiring Local Authorities and Health Boards to work together to assess and plan for the wellbeing of their population. Children must be actively engaged and enabled to co-produce their plans, which includes influencing a preferred model of care or setting.

Placement sufficiency has a national focus as the foster carer population continues to decline and sufficiency of placement types across the spectrum is impacted. The Ministerial Advisory Group on Improving Outcomes for Looked after Children has two key projects considering placement sufficiency, quality and outcome delivery: the National Fostering Framework (NFF) and the Task and Finish Group on Residential Care. The Vale of Glamorgan Council will factor the learning from these projects into local strategy, planning and implementation.

### 3.3 Children and Young People Services Framework for Practice

#### The Vision

The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Social Services Directorate seeks to put people at the heart of their own care, no matter why they need social care support. We want to offer people the right help at the right time to help them be happy, safe and have the best opportunities in life.

'Building on Strengths' describes our approach and the way through which we seek to develop the way that people have choice and control over their own care and support, minimising the need for long-term help, by creating a consistent approach across all teams. People know what to expect, what their rights are and how they will be supported to plan their future.

#### How do we support people?

We understand people's lives are connected to and influenced by their own experiences, as well as their social circumstances and communities. Everybody has different situations, and we try to help children, young people, families, and individuals find safe and positive futures that are unique to them, enabling them to achieve what they want to in life.

- Assessment

We seek to build relationships with people and their significant others, as well as other professionals, to identify and work with strengths and vulnerabilities so we manage risk confidently, reduce the need for care and support and focus on the future. We use evidence-based ways to help children, young people, families and individuals to identify what matters to them and what they want to achieve. This is the assessment.

- Care and support plan

If needed, we help children, young people, families, and individuals to identify what changes they want to make and make a realistic plan. The plan will have specific aims that everyone understands, and that we can review to see whether timely progress is being made, and if the plan is working. We aim to help people to develop their own solutions to problems and build brighter futures for themselves and their families.

### Children and Young People's Services Framework for Practice - The Model

#### Assessment

1. What has led us to do an assessment now?
2. What has already happened?
3. What is working well?
4. What do I want to happen now and in the future?
5. What are my specific needs?
6. What are the risks/vulnerabilities?
7. What my parents/carers think should happen now and in the future?
8. What people around me think should happen now and in the future?
9. What my worker recommends?

#### Care and support plan

1. What needs to be done and why?
2. How and when will we do it?
3. How will we know it is being done?

#### Review

1. Have we achieved what we wanted to?
2. Does anything else need to be done?

## 3.4 Local Context

The Vale of Glamorgan is both a prosperous and a deprived Council with areas of high need. There are approximately 28,596 children and young people aged 0-18 living within the Council's boundary.

Based on the most recent census (2011), the population of the Vale of Glamorgan is 127,685. This number is expected to rise by 0.76% each year to 2023. The age profile of the Vale of Glamorgan's population is also expected to change; the number of children (age 0 - 14) is forecast to rise to almost 25,000 by 2023.

Latest data on the number of children looked after as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 285, is an increase of 14% from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, when there were 250 CLA. The trend of increasing numbers of children looked after is placing increased pressure on placement sufficiency.

The changing context within Vale of Glamorgan includes:

- The number of children looked after continues to increase
- The number of kinship carers continues to increase
- There is a strong drive at national level to increase the regional alignment of fostering services through the National Fostering Framework
- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 has been implemented
- Advocacy services are commissioned regionally.

### **3.5 Existing Strategic Placement Commissioning Partnerships**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council as part of Cardiff and the Vale region is committed to the National Fostering Framework. Priorities include increasing the number of foster carers, regional training of foster carers, developing parent and child placements and increasing respite options.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is a member of the Vale and the Valleys Regional Adoption Service in collaboration with Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil. This regional arrangement delivers all functions related to placements for permanence by adoption endorsed by the Court.

The Vale of Glamorgan is a member of the Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru (4C's) which is a strategic commissioning alliance between Welsh Local Authorities to support placement-commissioning needs in respect of Fostering and Residential placement types. These may be short-term placements or placements for permanence and cover a range of models of care that are outcomes focussed specific to individual children's Care and Support Plans.

The Vale of Glamorgan is a signatory Authority to the All-Wales Local Authority Framework for the Provision of Foster Care Services for Children and Young People (2016) and/or the All-Wales Local Authority Framework for the Provision of Residential Care Services for Children and Young People (2016 and 2019).

These frameworks deliver strategic level commissioning partnerships with independent sector providers in fostering and residential services where either the Local Authority's Sufficiency Duty necessitates external individual placement commissioning or where best quality, outcome delivery or value for money is best delivered through external commissioning rather than internal service delivery. the All-Wales Frameworks are managed by the 4C's.

The vehicle used for re-tendering external fostering and residential placements is the Children's Commissioning Support Resource (CCSR) which offers transparent, and outcomes focussed placement commissioning for both Framework and Non-Framework regulated placements and allows compliance with the relevant procurement guidance and regulation that underpins our commissioning.

The Vale of Glamorgan benefits from regional RIF funding alongside its regional partners in Cardiff Council and the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. Funding is aligned to agreed strategic priorities, one of which is residential accommodation for children and young people with emotional wellbeing needs.

### **3.6 Corporate Priorities**

This Strategy should be read in conjunction with relevant existing Vale of Glamorgan Council strategies and policies, including:

- Strategy for Children who Needs Care and Support 2019-2023
- Statement of Purpose for Fostering Services
- Population Needs Assessment
- Foster Carer Recruitment and Retention Strategy
- Short Breaks for Parents and Carers of Children with Disabilities

- Early Help priorities

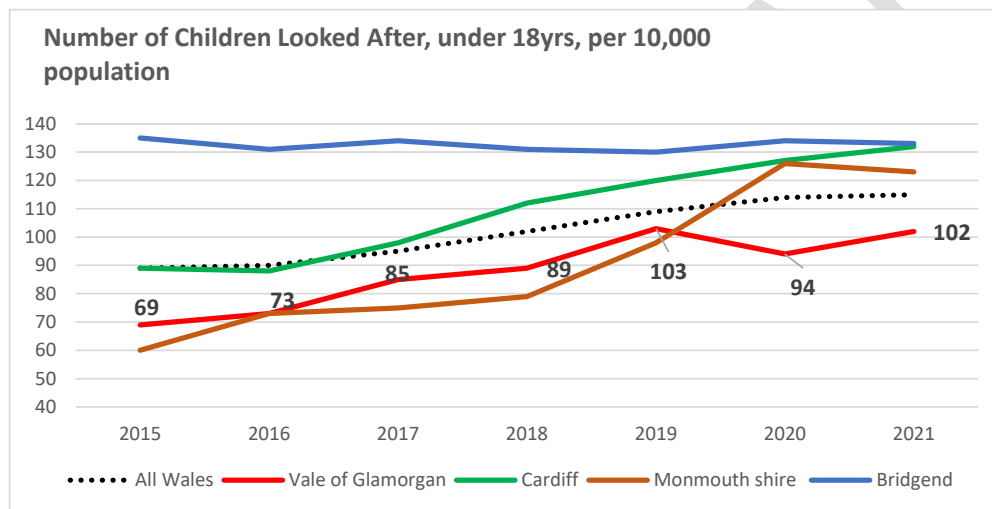
## Section 2

Section 2 considers what the data tells us about Vale of Glamorgan Council, considers comparator local authorities, overall key performance indicators, trends and emerging issues.

### 4. Children Looked After Data and Trends

#### 4.1 The rate of children looked after per 10,000-population aged under 18 across the Vale of Glamorgan region over the period 2015 to 2021.

Graph 1



*Stats Wales: Data rounded up or down to the nearest 5*

The rate of children looked after in the Vale of Glamorgan has been lower than the Wales rate even though this has steadily increased since 2016. Comparisons have been made to Bridgend and Monmouthshire Council, as they are most similar in demographics.

There has been an increase from 69 per 10,000 population in March 2015 to 102 per 10,000 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This is an overall increase of 48% since March 2015.

The number of children looked after by the Vale of Glamorgan has continued to increase and at the end of March 2021 there were 285 cared for by the Local Authority, a significant increase of 54% from end of March 2015.

Consideration has been given to the reasons why the Vale of Glamorgan has seen this significant rise in the numbers of looked after children. Amongst these reasons are:

- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Austerity effecting capacity of universal services;
- Increased level of risk and complexity of cases;
- Increased numbers of children subject to Care Orders placed with parents and kin;
- Low use of Special Guardianship Orders in kinship care arrangements;
- Changes in welfare support effecting families' capacity to support children;
- Increased number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.



## 4.2 Gender and ages

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, there were 285 children and young people looked after by Vale of Glamorgan the gender profile can be found in Table 1:

### Age Profile of children Looked after as at 31-03-22

BOYS							TOTAL
Under 1 Year	1 to 4 Years	5 to 9 Years	10 to 15 Years	16 to 17 Years	18 and over		
5	25	35	60	20	5		145
GIRLS							TOTAL
Under 1 Year	1 to 4 Years	5 to 9 Years	10 to 15 Years	16 to 17 Years	18 and over		
10	20	35	45	25	5		140
TOTAL							TOTAL
Under 1 Year	1 to 4 Years	5 to 9 Years	10 to 15 Years	16 to 17 Years	18 and over		
15	45	70	105	45	10		285

*Stats Wales: Data rounded up or down to the nearest 5*

The table above indicates that the area of highest demand is in the age category 10 – 15 years, which is problematic as there is a national shortage of placements for this cohort.

This indicates that there will be high demand for leaving care services as the high levels aged 10-15 move through care for the next 3-6 years. The changing age profile of the children looked after can indicate the future demand for services and help identify placement requirements.

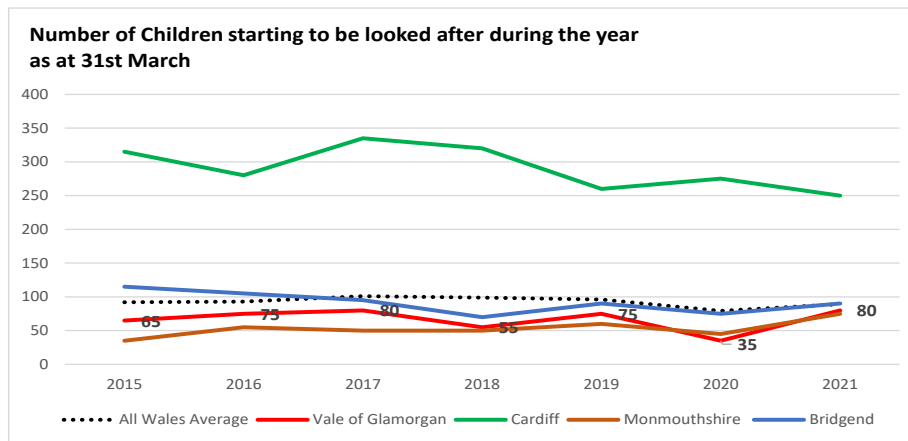
## 4.3 Ethnicity

Stats Wales data, 2016 reflects that Vale of Glamorgan has an ethnic minority population of 4.6% just below the Welsh average of 4.9%.

The ethnic diversity of the children looked after population is reflective of the diversity of the wider population in the Vale of Glamorgan and we are committed to meeting ethnicity, language and cultural needs of the children and young people in our care. We will continue to work with the Home Office in relation to future dispersal arrangements for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children.

## 4.4 Number of children starting to be looked after during the year as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

### Graph 2



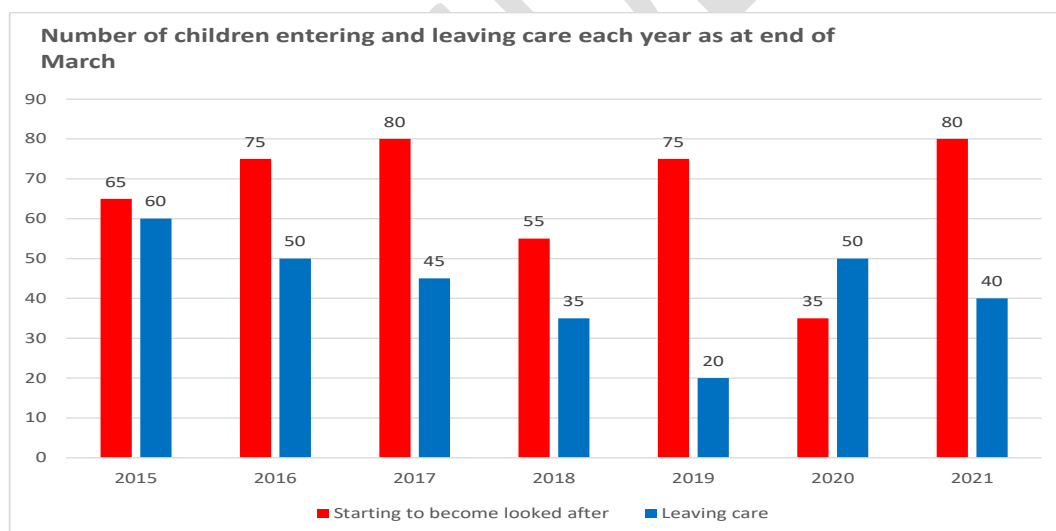
*Stats Wales: Data rounded up or down to the nearest 5*

The number of children starting to be looked after by Vale of Glamorgan (shown in Graph 2) has remained relatively stable from 2015 to 2021, ranging between 65 in 2015 to 80 in 2021. During 2020 the number dropped to 35 during first year of COVID. This was a similar situation as in Monmouthshire, however the number of children becoming looked after by Cardiff Council increased during this period.

The pressure is being placed on in house fostering provision and data indicates that there is a significant increase in foster and residential placements with independent sector providers both within and external to the boundaries of Vale of Glamorgan (see Graph 8 and Graph 10).

### Number of children leaving and entering care each year as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

**Graph 3**



*Stats Wales: Data rounded up or down to the nearest 5*

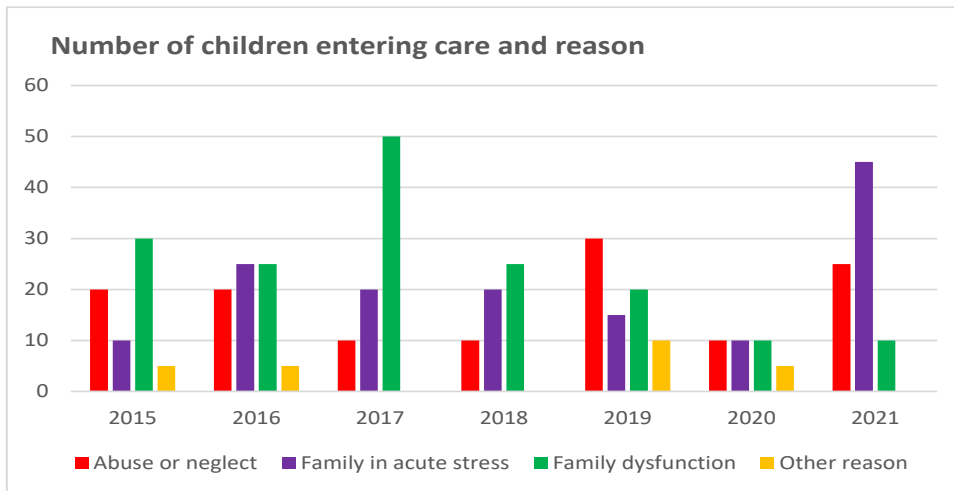
*N/B the figures leaving care do not include those children where an episode of care ended, and another started on the same or next day.*

## 4.5 Reasons for entering care

Stats Wales data shows that the main reason a child or young person entered care during 2021 is due to family in acute stress, in previous years the main reason has been family dysfunction. These descriptions are likely to be used interchangeably and can reflect a range of issues impacting a family.

The number of children or young people entering care due to abuse and neglect has been low since 2015, apart from during 2019.

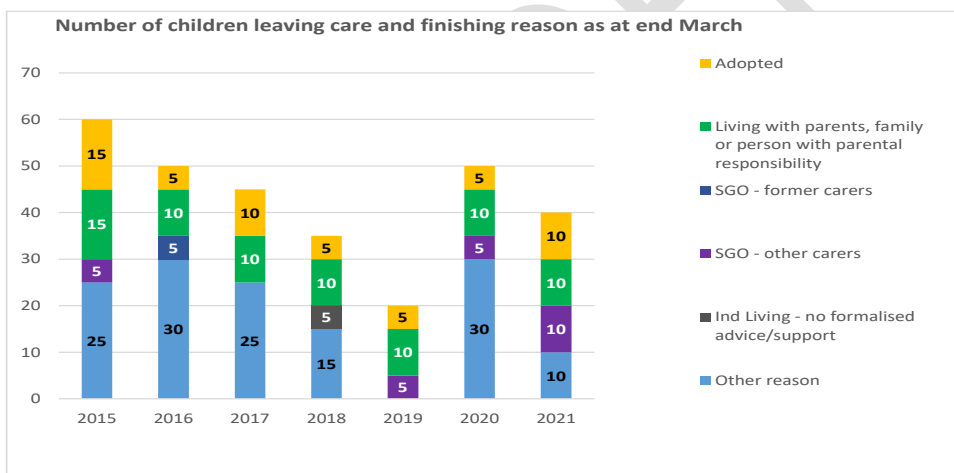
**Graph 4**



*Stats Wales: Data rounded up or down to the nearest 5*

#### 4.6 Reasons for leaving care

**Graph 5**



*Stats Wales: Data rounded up or down to the nearest 5*

Excluding those children whose ‘episode of care ceases and begins on the same or next day’, since 2015 Stats Wales data indicates the majority of young people leaving care were for ‘other’ reasons not listed within the Stats Wales data return. Other reasons include young people reaching the age of 18 when their care episode automatically ends.

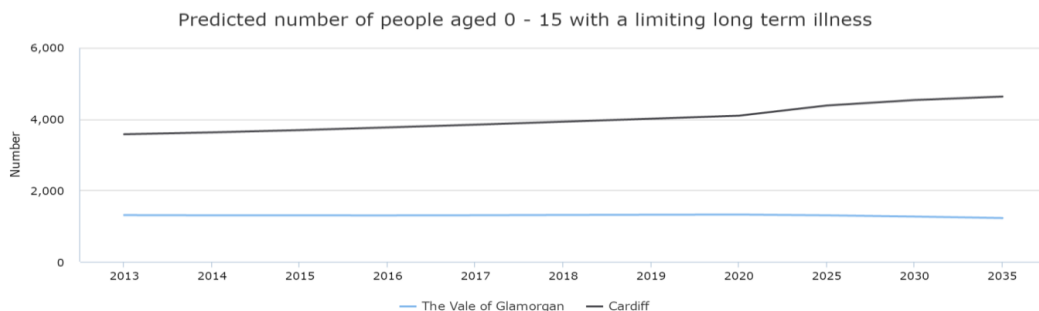
Since 2016, 10 young people returned to live with parents, relatives or other persons each year which has been consistent since 2016.

From the figures provided in Stats Wales, a lower number of children and young people leave care due to a Special Guardianship Order being granted to their carers, independent living with support and When I’m Ready arrangements.

## 4.7 Children with Disabilities

The number of people aged 15 and under with a long-term illness is predicted to remain stable over the next 20 years in the Vale of Glamorgan, so will not likely be an area of changing demand.

**Graph 6**



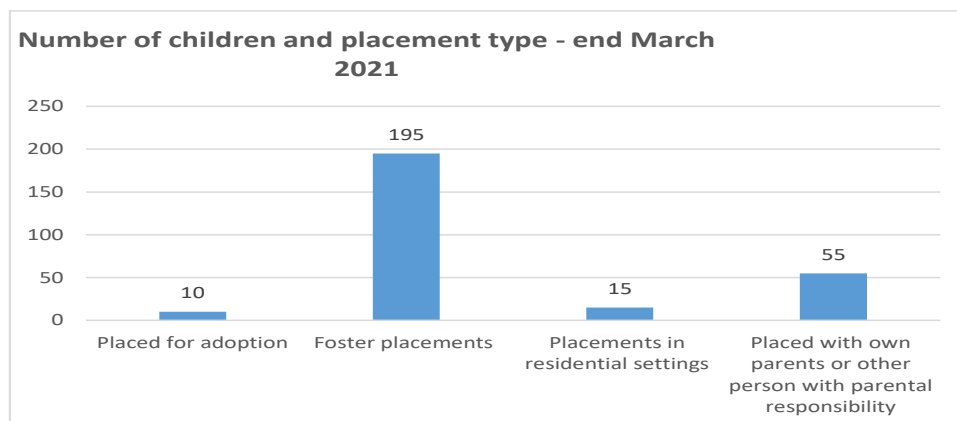
The Disability Index was extended as a regional approach in September 2016 to understand the needs of disabled children and young people in our area.

Direct Payments are made to support children with disabilities to stay safely at home with their families for longer. Direct payments enable increased self-determination of the packages of care and providers of that care by the child and their family.

As of 31st March 2021, direct payments were being paid to 61 children. Direct payments effectively used can reduced demand for looked after placements.

## 5. Placement Profile

**Graph 7**



*Stats Wales: Data rounded up or down to the nearest 5*

The majority of children who are looked after by Vale of Glamorgan at the end of March 2021 were living in a foster home 68% (195 children). This has increased significantly from 45% (126 children) as at end of March 2019. See graph 8 below for more data on children and young people living in a foster home.

There are 15 children living in a children's care home as at end of March 2021 and the Quarterly Baseline Data Returns (QBDR) indicate that since 2017 the lowest number of children and young people living in a children's care home was 10 and the highest was 20. The latest data via QBDR indicate as of 31st March 2022 there were 18 children living in a children's home, which is an increase on previous years. (See graph 12 below)

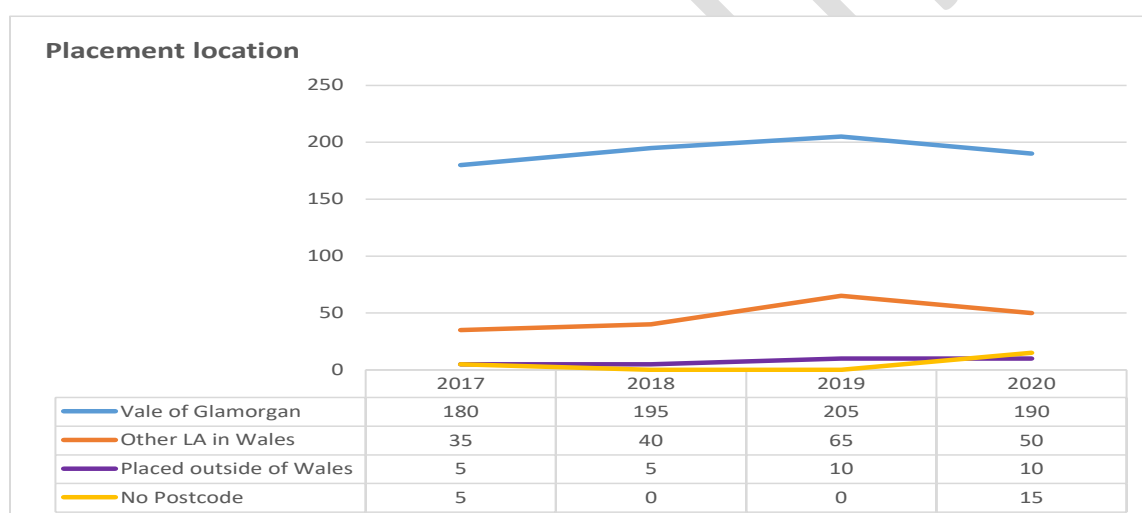
The number of children placed for adoption has increased from 3 as at end of March 2019 to 10 at end of March 2021.

Within the Vale of Glamorgan, placement provision is in keeping with the situation nationally, placement demand is outstripping supply and there are considerable challenges in being able to match children to placements effectively. We will continue to try to provide or commission the right range of placements which provide positive experiences for children, and young people who are looked after.

The Vale of Glamorgan does not have sufficient placements available to meet both demand and the diverse range/complexity of needs. We have an increasing number of children and young people placed out of the area and a small number placed outside of Wales. Graph 8 below indicates that there has been an increase from 45 children and young people placed outside of Vale of Glamorgan to a total of 90 children and young people as at end of March 2021.

## Placements within and outside of Vale of Glamorgan

Graph 8



*Stats Wales: Data rounded up or down to the nearest 5*

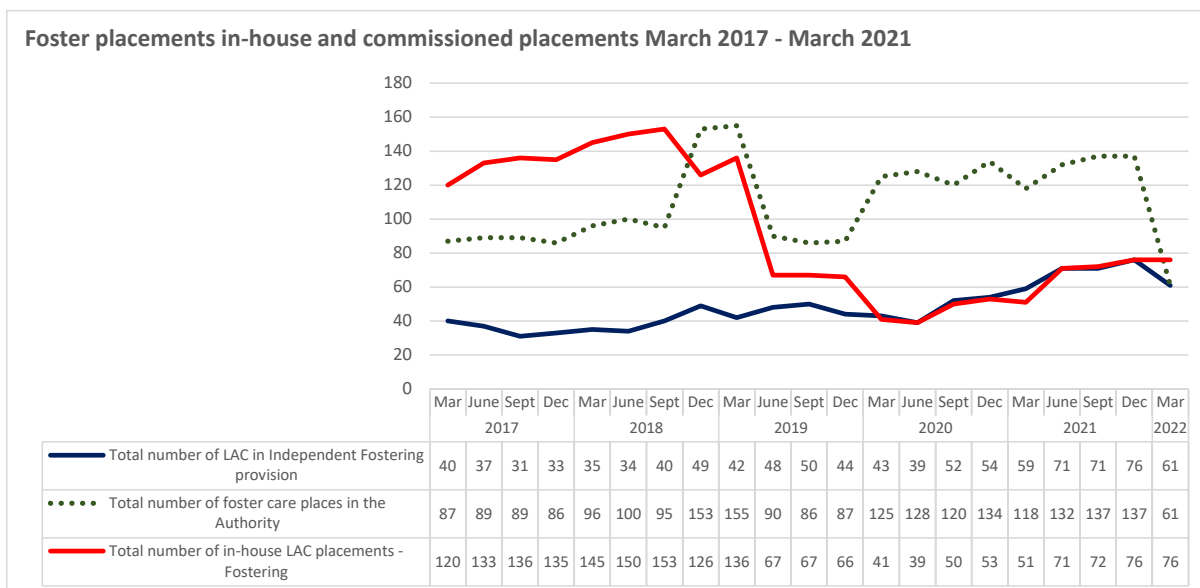
### 5.1 Foster Care Provision

The Vale of Glamorgan is committed to using public sector placements in preference to independent sector placements (see graph 9), on the presumption that due consideration is given to matching and they can meet the needs of the child, whilst offering better value for money.

A consideration when matching the needs of the child, however, is whether the distance of the placement will impact the outcomes of the child adversely and if this a key factor, with an independent placement available closer to home than a public sector placement, the match will be prioritised over the status of the placement.

## Foster Placements commissioned Mar 2017 – Mar 2021

**Graph 9**

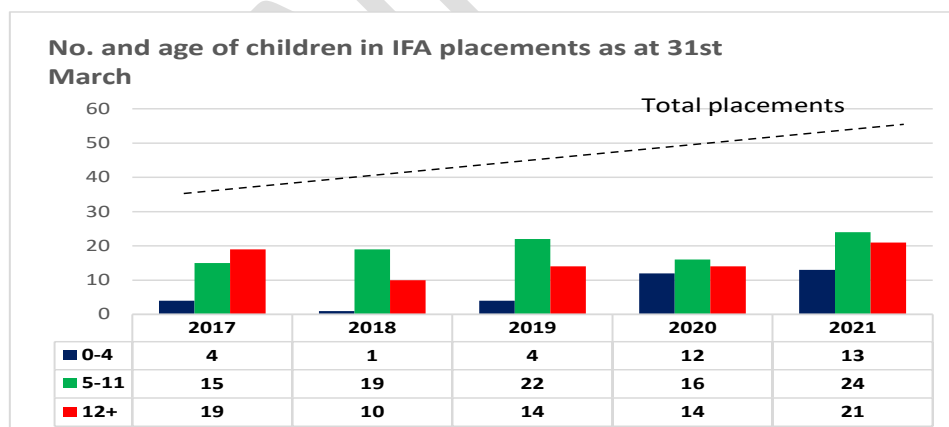


Source: Quarterly Baseline Data Returns

Some of the above data needs to be read with caution as the dotted and red lines do not represent the picture accurately as in some years there are combined figures for kinship and mainstream placements, and in other years the figure only represents mainstream placements.

## Number/age range of children in Standard IFA placements as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

**Graph 10**



Source: Quarterly Baseline Data Returns

There continues to be an increase in IFA placements for standard foster placements from 38 placements as at end of March 2017 to 58 placements as at end of March 2021.

## Non-Standard Foster placements

Year	Number of placements	Age 0-4yrs	Age 5-11yrs	Age 12+
2017	1		1	

2018	3		2	1
2020	1			1
2021				

Source: Quarterly Baseline Data Returns

Non-standard placements for the same period are of low number. Non-standard placements can successfully divert some children from residential care. The QBDR data indicates that there has not been a non-standard foster placement since end of Dec 2021. This may be due to the lack of placement capacity within the foster care provision rather than through choice.

## Kinship Care

The assessment of family members or close friends as a kinship carer for a child or sibling group who cannot remain with either of their parents is a complex assessment. An assessor will generally have a maximum of twelve weeks to complete a full assessment. Sometimes, a reduced timescale is ordered by the Court.

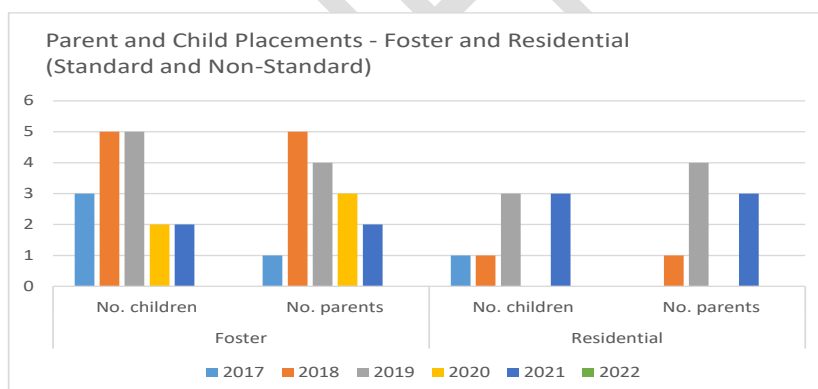
Early identification of family members will enable the Local Authority to comply with Public Law Outline timescales, whilst providing a clear and agreed plan for who will be assessed, how they might be supported, and allowing sufficient time to complete the assessment.

Continued support and training post-Order is also essential to prevent placement instability, help the family to adjust, and to monitor that plan are adhered to, with safeguards for the child being implemented and maintained.

As of March 2022, the Vale of Glamorgan has 64 kinship carers looking after 73 children, which has increased year on year.

## Parent and Child Placements

Graph 11

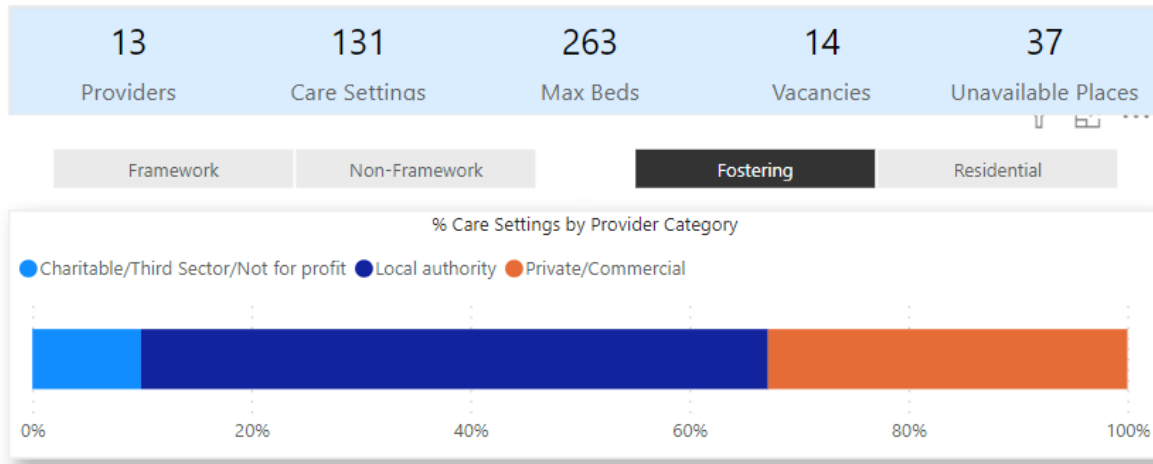


Source: Quarterly Baseline Data Returns

The graph above shows the number of Parent and Child placements that have been made throughout each year, this includes independent fostering agency and residential placements. In addition, the Vale of Glamorgan has developed two of its own Parent and Child foster placements in 2022.

## 5.2 Foster provision within the Vale of Glamorgan

### Foster Provision within Vale of Glamorgan as of June 2022



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There are 13 Foster Care Providers within the Vale of Glamorgan with a total of 263 beds. Within the Cardiff and Vale region there are a total of 16 providers with a total of 913 beds. This includes Framework and Non-Framework provision.

## 5.3 Foster placements – Breakdown of categories

The graph below illustrates children and young peoples' needs where a search was made through CCSR for a foster placement. These were both Framework and Non-Framework searches.

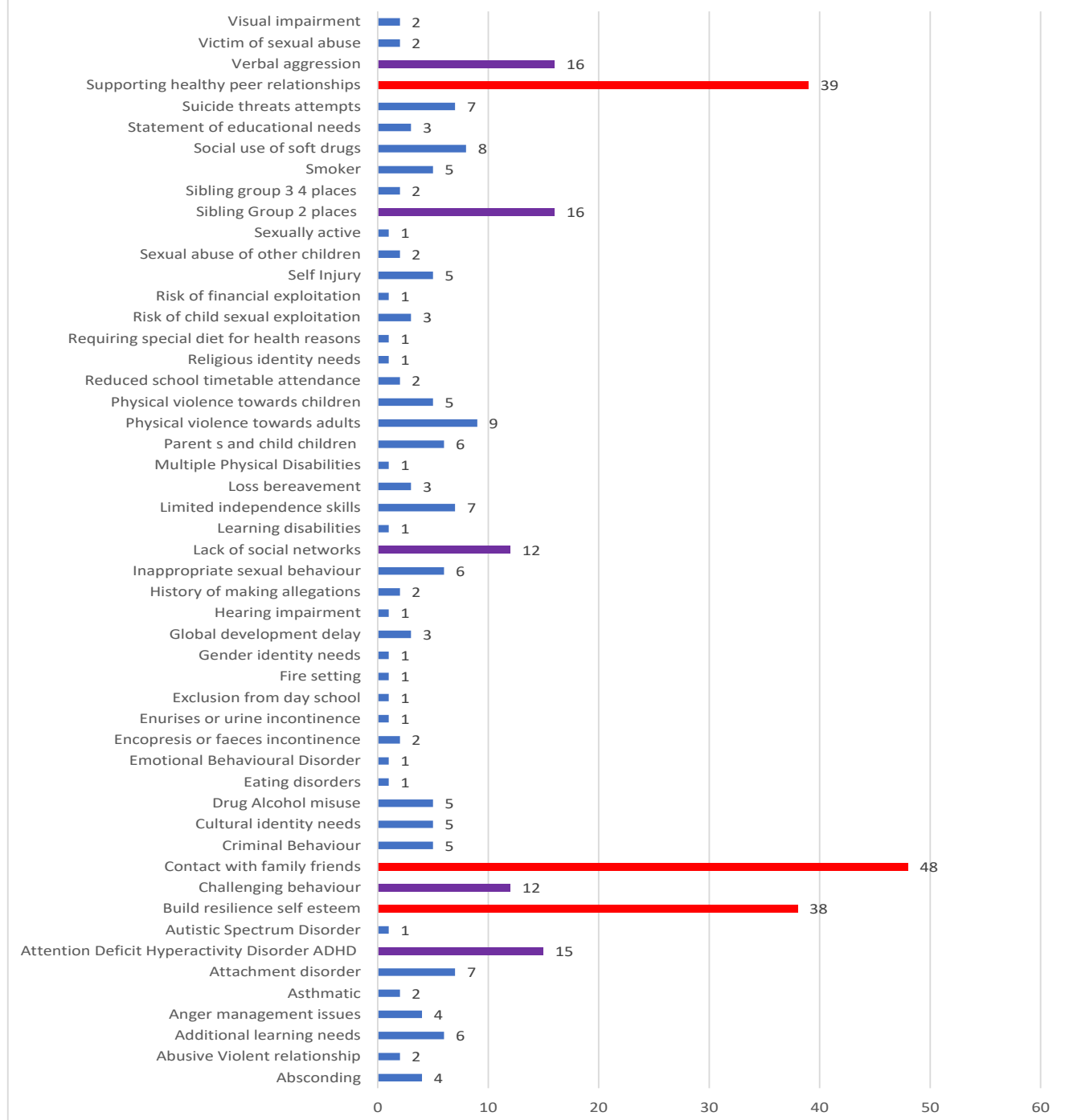
There were 207 searches for placements made between this period, however the needs were not identified for 126 of these searches. The graph depicts the needs and outcomes for 64 searches for foster placements. Please note that there may have been 1 or more searches made for the same young person within this period, so 207 searches do not equal 207 young people.

### Childs needs and outcomes identified through CCSR foster searches

#### Graph 12



Childs needs identified through Foster CCSR seaches between 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022



**CCSR Data report – Note multiple searches could be made for 1 child and more than one need identified.**

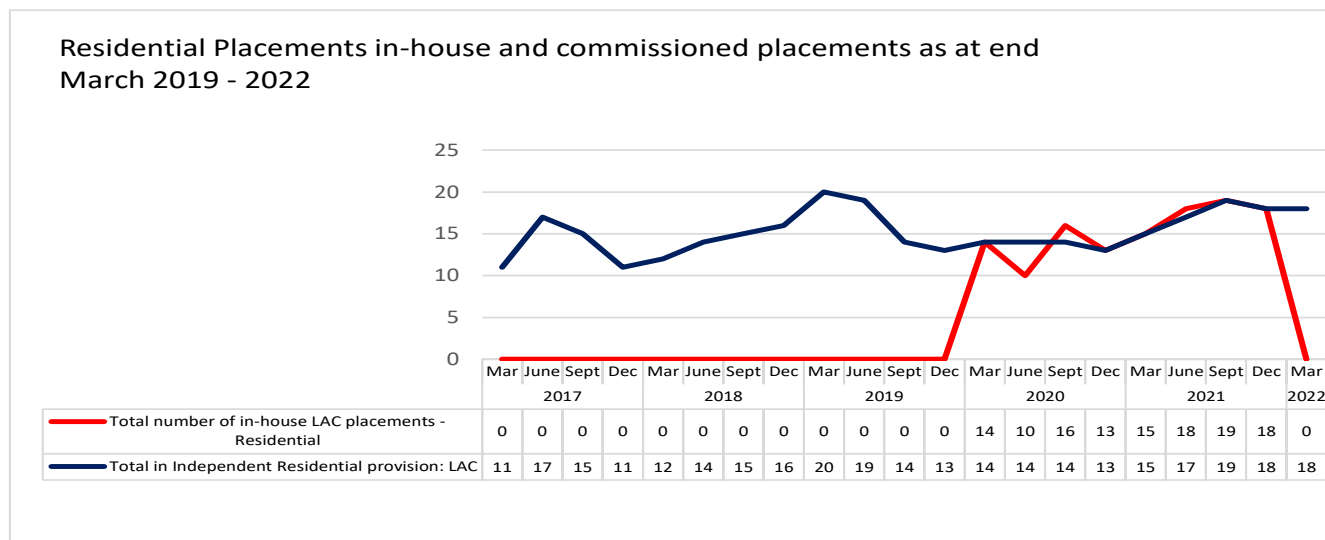
The reason children are looked after is not the same as their need. When searching for placements, the most commonly identified need and/or outcome for a child was:

- maintaining contact with family and friends
- supporting healthy peer relationships
- building resilience and self esteem

## 5.4 Residential Provision

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 18 of the Vale of Glamorgan's children looked after placements were made within a residential setting. This is an increase on 2017 data where 11 of Vale of Glamorgan's children looked after placements were within a residential setting.

**Graph 13**

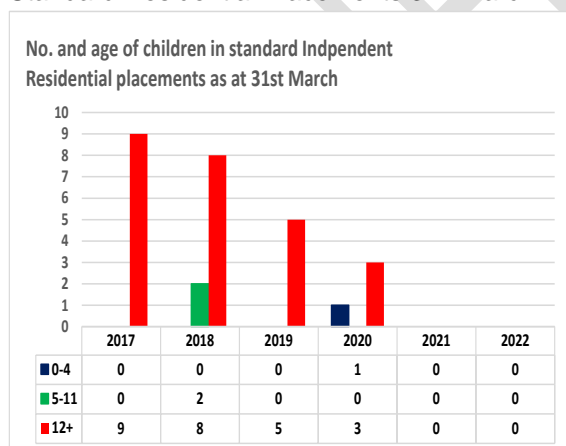


Source: Quarterly Baseline Data Returns

The graphs below provides data on standard and non-standard residential provision broken down into age.

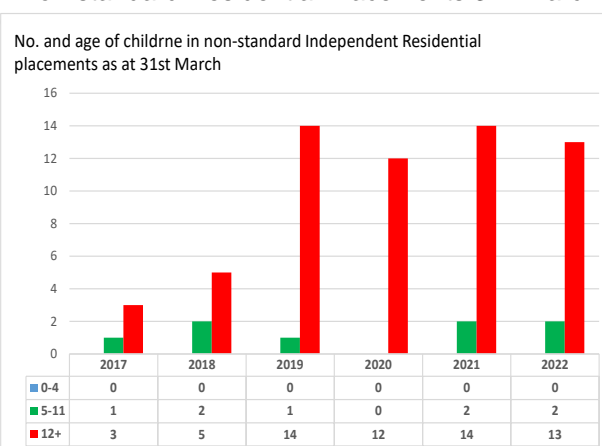
**Graph 14a**

Standard Residential Placements 31<sup>st</sup> March



**Graph 14b**

Non-standard Residential Placements 31<sup>st</sup> March

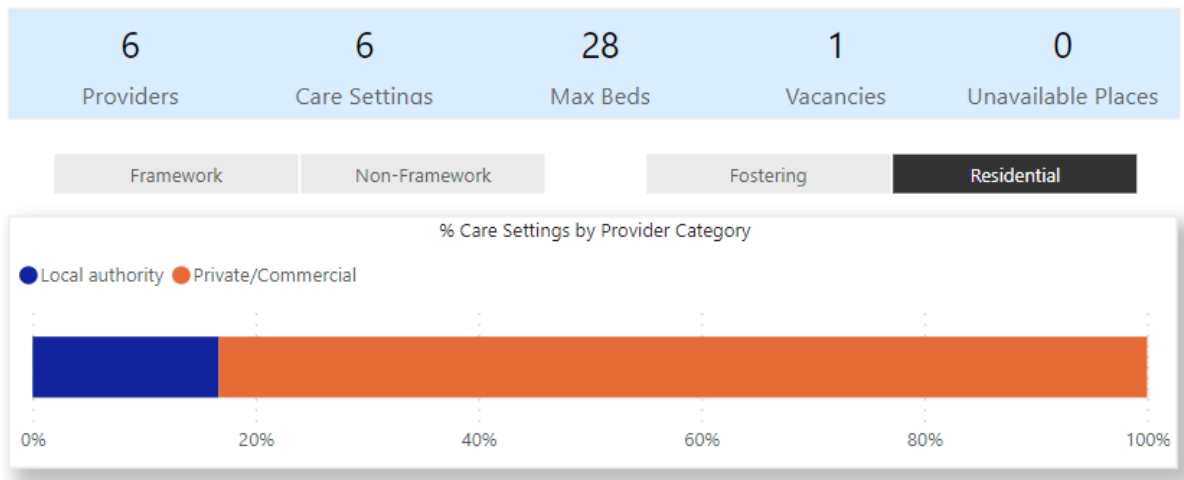


Source: Quarterly Baseline Data Returns

From the information, we can see that the number of young people placed in standard residential provision has decreased considerably since 2017, with no children placed in standard residential as at end of March 2021 or 2022. However, the number in non-standard provision has increased significantly, especially those children who are age 12+. This reflects an increasing complexity of need and an associated scarcity of resource.

## 5.5 Residential homes in the Vale of Glamorgan

### Number of residential care settings within Vale of Glamorgan by providers category



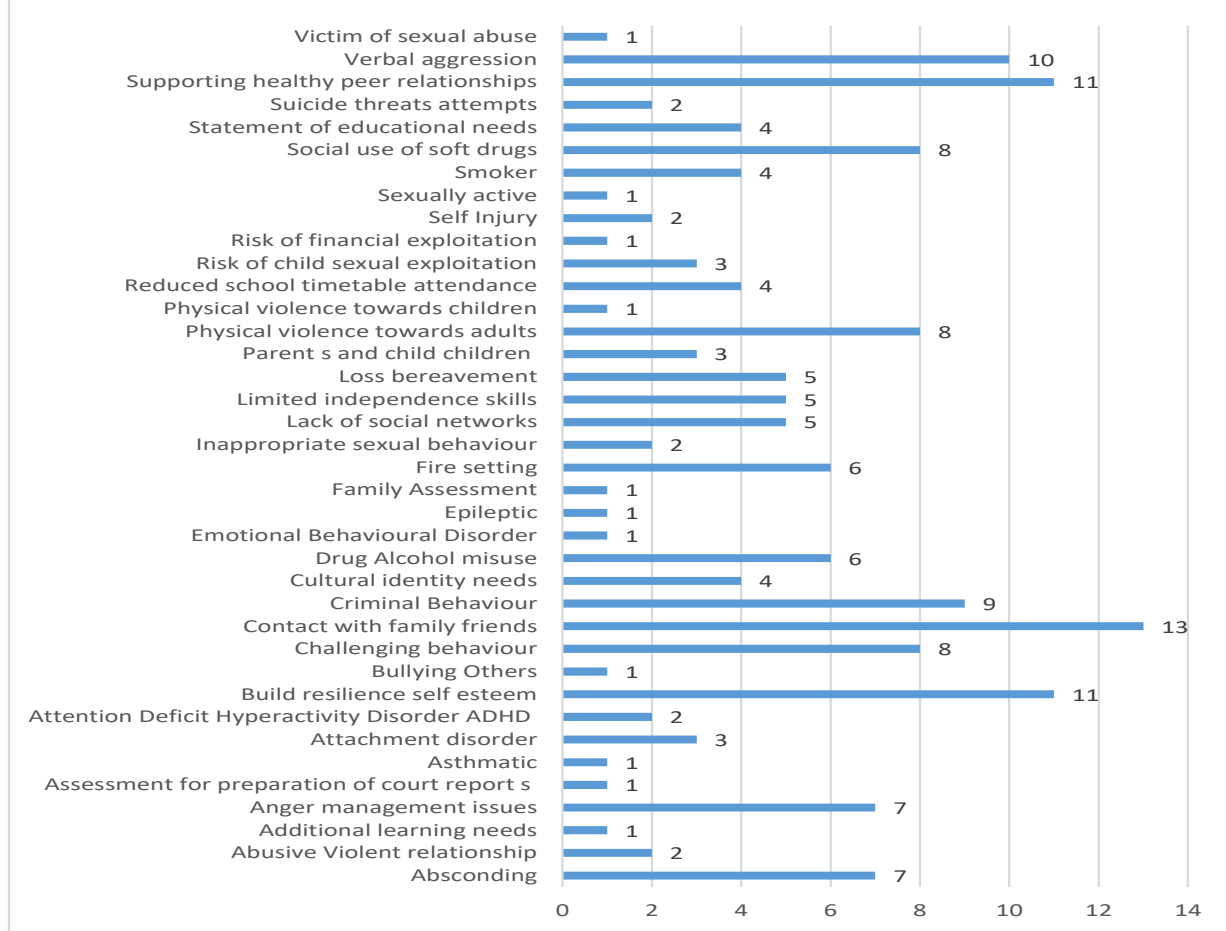
CCSR Reports

There are 6 Residential Care Providers within the Vale of Glamorgan with a total of 28 beds. None of these are Local Authority homes. Within the Cardiff and Vale region there are a total of 14 providers with a total of 152 beds. This includes Framework and Non-Framework provision.

## 5.6 Residential placements – Breakdown of categories

### Graph 15

**Childs need and outcomes identified through CCSR residential searches between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022**



**CCSR Data report – Note multiple searches could be made for 1 child and more than one need identified.**

Graph 15 indicates the children and young people’s needs where a search was made through CCSR for a residential placement. These were both Framework and Non-Framework searches.

There were 207 searches for placements made between this period however the needs were not identified for 126 of these searches so the graph depicts the needs for 17 searches for residential placements. Please note that there may have been 1 or more searches made for the same young person within this period so 207 searches do not equal 207 young people.

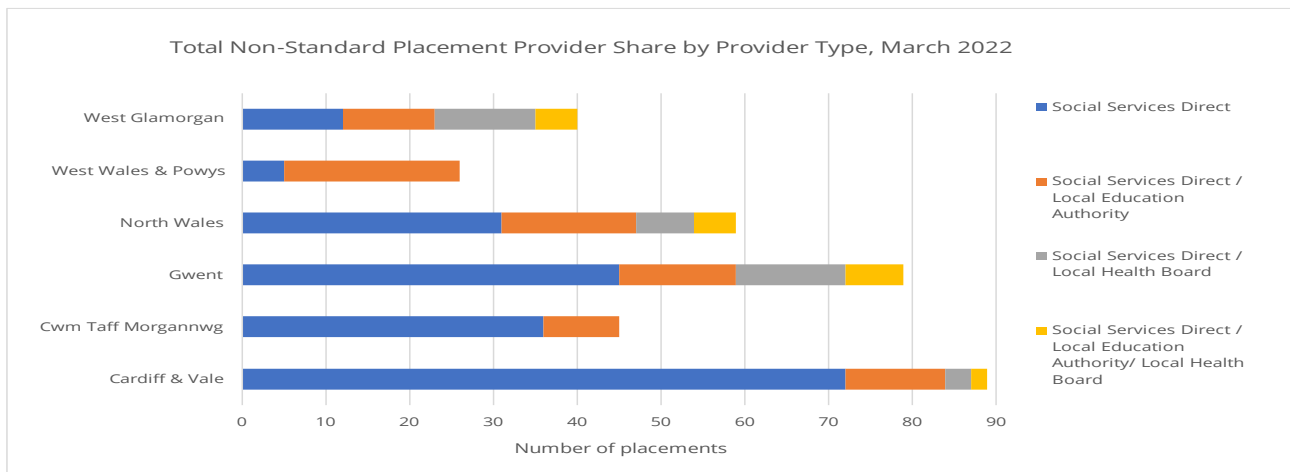
The reason children are looked after is not the same as their need. When searching for placements, the most commonly identified need and/or outcome for a child was:

- maintaining contact with family and friends
- supporting healthy peer relationships
- building resilience and self esteem

**5.7 Placements with complex care and support packages**

Children looked after with the most complex needs tend to experience multiple foster care placement breakdowns. Their risk-taking behaviours and significant emotional needs often exceed the resources of foster carers and as a consequence many of these children with complex needs are placed in residential care out of area, sometimes with poor outcomes and at a high cost.

**Graph 16**



Source: Quarterly baseline Data Returns

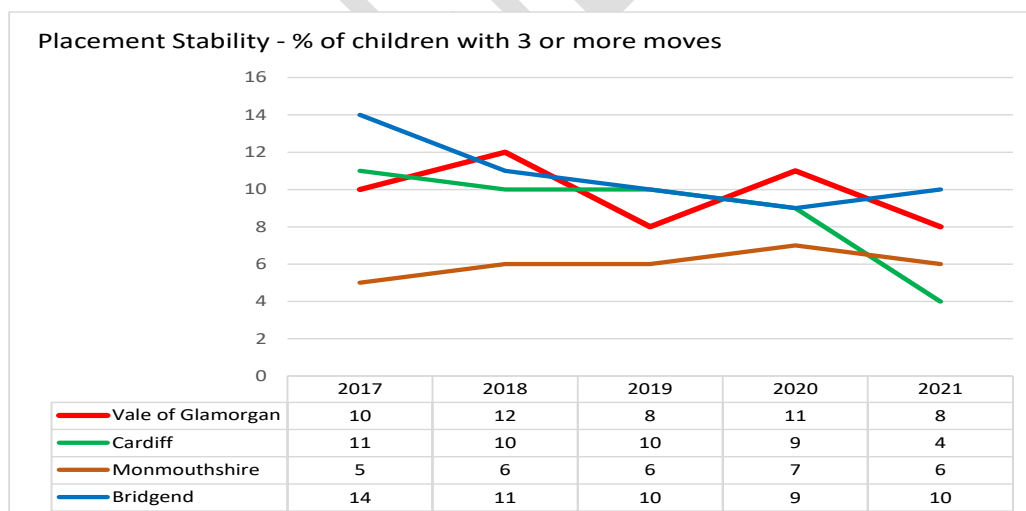
## 5.8 Supported Housing

The Vale of Glamorgan has a 'one stop shops' for young people who are at risk of homelessness. The 'one stop shop' is run by third sector organisations, Housing and Children and Young People Services to consider the housing and support needs of young people up to the age of 21.

The Vale of Glamorgan also has mediation services for young people over the age of 15; Supported Housing; and specialist Floating Support Services; funded by Supporting People for young people aged over 16 years. A Supported Lodgings scheme for young people who are homeless or leaving care is also commissioned.

## 5.9 Placement stability

Graph 17 Percentage of children experiencing 3 or more placements per year



Stats Wales: Data rounded up or down to the nearest 5

The above graph represents the percentage of children who had 3 or more placement moves from 2017 to 2021. Recent figures for end of March 2021 indicate that the percentage has decreased considerably.

The 2021 figure is just above the Welsh average of 7%. Performance in this area reflects the Council's promotion of stability as a priority for its children looked after.

## 6. Fostering Services

The Vale of Glamorgan Fostering Service is managed through the Placements Team. The Team consists of a Team Manager, a Practitioner Manager, eight Social Workers, three Social Care Officers, a Marketing and Recruitment Officer and dedicated Business Support.

There are 52 in house foster carers registered to provide a maximum of 70 places. There are 64 kinship carers offering 73 places.

The Aims and Objectives of the Fostering Service are:

- To provide a stable home environment for children and young people who are placed with Vale carers to allow them the opportunity to reach their developmental potential
- To provide a service that is committed to keeping the needs of the Looked After Child/ Young Person as central to its purpose
- To work within a clear and accountable framework for matching children and young people's needs to the skills of foster carers which takes account of potential risks
- To promote the racial, cultural and religious identity of children and young people and give consideration to the gender, sexuality, disability of fostered children and young people when identifying a placement
- To improve placement choice by the recruitment of foster carers from diverse backgrounds that reflects the community of the Vale
- To operate a competency-based foster care system of assessing, reviewing and supervising carers
- To operate a payment for skills scheme that allows for career progression for carers who wish to become full time, fee paid foster carers
- To provide qualified social work staff to supervise foster carers
- To operate a referral process, working in partnership with childcare social work teams, which reflects the needs of children and young people as identified by the National Framework for the Assessment for Children in Need and their Families.
- To work in partnership with childcare teams and Independent Reviewing Officers to support the implementation of individual children and young people's care plan/pathway plan
- To provide and maintain a comprehensive package of support to foster carers to ensure that lines of communication remain transparent and to minimise the risk of placement disruption. This includes a Foster Carers Forum, monthly practice support groups and a summer support scheme for looked after children and the foster carer's children.
- To provide 24-hour support for carers, 7 days a week, 52 weeks of the year
- To provide a rolling programme of training for carers and staff, including QCF Level 3 Caring for Children and Young People
- To operate appropriate information systems that will provide the opportunity of collating and monitoring relevant data with which to measure outcomes for looked after children that will achieve or exceed the National Minimum Standards for Foster Care.
- To provide a professional service that helps to maximise positive outcomes for looked after children.

### Recruitment Priorities

There are 13 Foster Providers that operate within Vale of Glamorgan boundaries, including in-house provision. (See Section 5.2).

There are 12 Framework providers (13 providers in total) and a total of 146 beds. IFA placements are commissioned through CCSR on a best match basis if the Vale of Glamorgan has to externally commission a fostering placement due to an inability to match via its internal fostering services. The largest IFA operating in Vale of Glamorgan is Calon Cymru fostering, see Section 3 for more information on the IFAs operating within Vale of Glamorgan.

All fostering agencies irrelevant of status currently face a recruitment shortfall. This is a national challenge.

## 6.1 Residential Care Homes

The Vale of Glamorgan's need for residential accommodation is not met within the Authority's boundary.

Section 5.5 sets out the number of providers within the Vale of Glamorgan. There are 3 Framework providers out of the total of 6 providers and a total of 11 beds. The largest residential provider within Vale of Glamorgan is Landsker Child Care Ltd.

## 6.2 Children with Disabilities

The Vale of Glamorgan has a contract with Action for Children to provide a respite and support service to children, young people and their families assessed as requiring services from our Child Health and Disability Team. The service operates from Ty Robin in Barry. The offer consists of two elements:

- Respite – working towards the inclusion of disabled children and young people as full and valued members of their families and communities. The continuum of respite ranges from support and activity-based provision through to overnight residential provision (short breaks).
- Domiciliary Service – operates 52 weeks of the year to meet needs as they arise. The service is provided both in the child / young person's home and in the community.

Both elements should respond to the particular needs of child or young person as defined by an assessment and subsequent care plan, should improve the quality of life of the child or young person, aim to integrate them with others whenever possible, encourage their personal development, and provide support to families in their caring role.

The above contract now in its fourth year. It has transformed the service user experience to provide consistency of staffing, together with flexibility of service provision from domiciliary care through community activities to short breaks, increasing when required and stepping back when situations settle / improve.

The overnight provision is contracted for a minimum of 1024 beds per annum.

Sessional and domiciliary care are contracted for a minimum of 3100 hours per annum.

As an example of the service provided, in Quarter 4 of 2021/22, the reported level of service provision was:

- 24 young people accessed Ty Robin for overnight stays
- 16 families were being supported via community sessions
- There was no waiting list for sessional support
- 2 families were receiving support via domiciliary care

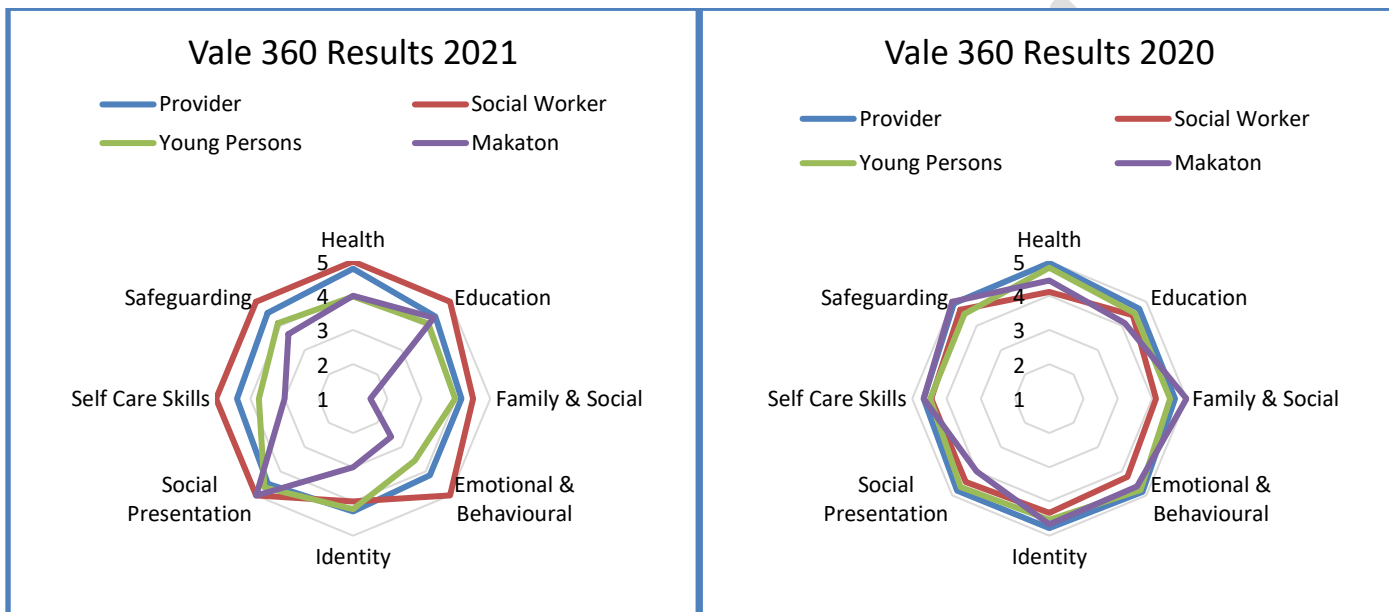
In addition to the contract (value added), Action for Children also provide a Youth Group and Independent Living Skills.

## 7. Stakeholder Consultation

On an annual basis we consult with key stakeholders including our children and young people, their families, our foster carers, our staff, and our external providers.

The 4C's 360 Degree Survey collates feedback from children and young people, carers (providers) and children's social workers regarding the outcomes achieved in individually commissioned external placements, both foster and residential placements. In 2021, 24 young people submitted surveys for Vale of Glamorgan. This the same number as 2020 but a higher percentage at 41% compared to 28% in 2020. A summary of the results categorised by Wellbeing Outcome is illustrated below:

**Graph 18**



## Section 3

Section 3 takes what we have learnt from the current data, identifies oversupply or gaps and when projecting future demand considers options for future provision to meet need most effectively.

## 8. Financial Analysis

The Vale of Glamorgan is operating within a challenging budgetary context, as are many local authorities. The cost of meeting the needs of the rising number of children looked after creates financial pressure for local authorities. Spend for the Vale of Glamorgan is illustrated below:

Placement Type	2021/2022 Actual	2022/2023 Budget
Internal Placements		
In house mainstream and kinship fostering	2,145,126	2,460,639
SGO support	794,124	728,549



External placements		
Residential	3,895,249	3,255,278
Independent fostering agencies	2,869,536	2,084,747
Secure	0	74,149

## 9. Recent Commissioning Activity

The table below sets out the number of searches for placements on CCSR between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

1st April 2021 - 31st March 2022	Awarded	No Decision Made	No Suitable Responses	Withdrawn	Grand Total
<b>Framework</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>138</b>
Foster	37	39	3	21	100
Residential	10	18		10	38
<b>Non-Framework</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>42</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>69</b>
Foster	1	28		18	47
Residential	3	14		5	22
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>207</b>

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### 9.1 Independent Standard Foster Placements 2019-2022 as at end of March each year

The tables below detail the costs related to foster placements for both Standard and Non-Standard placements (See Section 5.1 for more details).

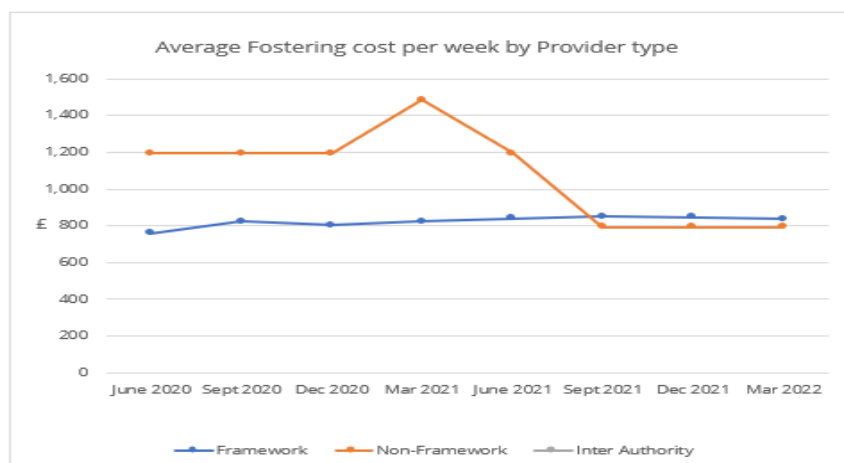
#### Independent Standard Fostering Placements and costs as of 31<sup>st</sup> March each year

	Cost				Age Range			Total Placements	Number of providers
	Total Weekly costs	Average Weekly cost	Max Weekly cost	Min Weekly cost	0-4	5-11	12+		
2019	£30,731	£768	£1,890	£616	4	22	14	40	11
2020	£35,258	£839	£1,895	£616	12	16	14	42	7
2021	£49,044	£846	£1,850	£616	13	24	21	58	13
2022	£51,054	£851	£1,461	£438	10	30	21	60	11

QBDR

The average placement fee has increased from £268 in 2019 to £851 in 2022, however the maximum weekly cost has decreased.

**Graph 19**



QBDR

### Non-Standard Foster placements

The QBDR data indicates that there was only one non-standard foster placement commissioned at end of March 2020 this was at a weekly cost of £89.04.

### Independent standard foster costs by provider as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

Provider	Total Weekly cost	Avg weekly cost	Number of placements
Calon Cymru Fostering	£15,515.00	£861.94	18
The National Fostering Agency - Cymru	£13,436.01	£839.75	16
Compass Fostering Cymru Ltd	£4,684.66	£936.93	5
Barnardo's Cymru Adoption and Fostering Service	£3,980.85	£796.17	5
Foster Care Group Wales	£3,626.00	£725.20	4
The Adolescent and Children's Trust (TACT Cymru)	£3,461.00	£865.25	4
Foster Care Associates Ltd (Cymru South)	£3,026.66	£756.67	5
The Foster Care Co-operative	£870.16	£870.16	1
TLC (Wales) Independent Fostering Limited	£839.77	£839.77	1
Supported Fostering Services	£819.98	£819.98	1
Safer Fostering CIC	£794.01	£794.01	1

QBDR

### Independent non-standard foster costs by provider as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

As stated earlier there were no non-standard foster placements commissioned as of 31st March 2022.

## 9.2 Independent Standard Residential placements and costs 2019-2022 as at end of March each year.

The tables below detail the costs related to residential placements for both Standard and Non-Standard placements. (See Section 5.4 for more details).

## Independent Standard Residential Placements as of 31<sup>st</sup> March each year

	Cost				Age Range			Total Placements	Number of providers
	Total Weekly costs	Average Weekly cost	Max Weekly cost	Min Weekly cost	0-4	5-11	12+		
2019	£19,214	£3,843	£4,500	£2,957	0	0	5	5	4
2020	£15,697	£3,924	£4,500	£3,177	1	0	3	4	4

QBDR

The QBDR data indicates that there have not been any standard residential placements commissioned since June 2020.

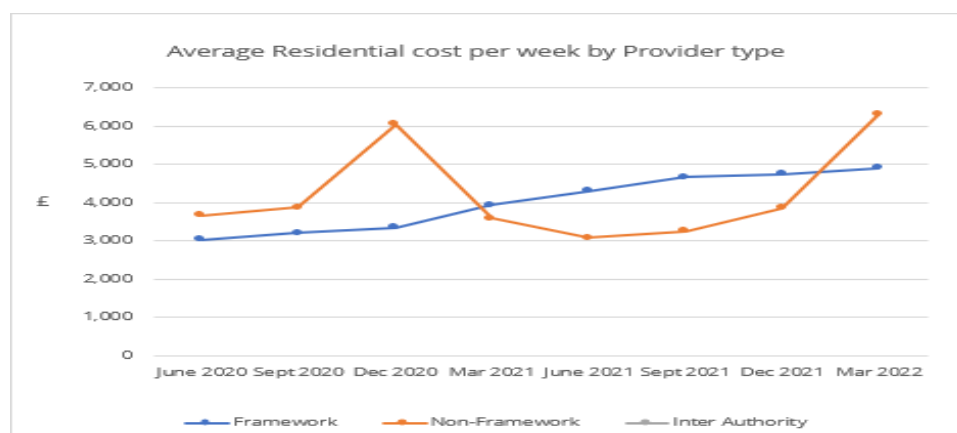
## Independent Non-Standard Residential Placements – as of 31st March each year

	Cost				Age Range			Total Placements	Number of providers
	Total Weekly costs	Average Weekly cost	Max Weekly cost	Min Weekly cost	0-4	5-11	12+		
2019	£57,459	£3,831	£5,903	£147	0	1	14	15	8
2020	£36,345	£3,029	£4,354	£139	0	0	12	12	7
2021	£60,714	£3,795	£7,194	£139	0	2	14	16	10
2022	£79,003	£5,267	£9,000	£2,850	0	2	13	15	11

QBDR

The average placement fee has increased from £3831 in 2019 to £5267 in 2022, however the number of children in placements has stayed consistent (15 children and young people).

### Graph 20



QBDR

## Independent standard residential costs by provider as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

As stated earlier there were no placements commissioned as of 31st March 2022.

## Independent non- standard residential costs by provider as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

Provider	Total Weekly cost	Avg weekly cost	Number of placements
Birribi Ltd	£16,361	£5,453.66	3
Landsker Child Care Ltd	£13,655	£4,551.79	2
Other (Not listed on CCSR)	£9,000	£9,000	1
Fairways Care (UK) Limited	£7,489	£7,489	1
Bryn Melyn Care Ltd	£7,194	£7,194	1
Bespoke Care Group Ltd	£5,300	£5,300	1
Keys Group Limited	£4,540	£4,540	2
Aropa Care Group Ltd	£4,500	£4,500	1
Hafan Saff Cyf	£4,124	£4,124	1
Action for Children	£3,990	£3,990	1
Stepping Stones Care (South Wales) Ltd	£2,850	£2,850	1

## 10. Projection of our Future Needs

The data above illustrates that our use of externally purchased care has increased, alongside significant increases in costs. Our ability to place children and young people is compromised in the context of increased demand and complexity and scarce placement resources locally and nationally.

We project the following:

- That the number of children looked after will increase in the medium term before stabilising, impacted by factors including the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of living and resettlement of asylum seekers.
- The number and range of foster placements will need to increase.
- The need to develop respite services at the edge of care.
- The need to increase the number of local residential placements in response to increasing demand and complexity, and to enable local placement and support return of children and young placed further afield.
- The need to develop smaller residential homes for a maximum of two children and young people given levels of complexity and challenges with matching.
- The need to increase the number and range of supported accommodation options.
- The need to develop an emergency arm to our Fostering Service, increasing levels of responsiveness and preventing the use of unregulated placements.
- The need to enhance our ability to meet the placement needs of children with additional learning needs.
- The need to increase support resources at the edge of care and to support placement stability.

## Section 4

**Section 4 sets out the key priorities for our internal placement service, our intended strategic commissioning intentions and our priorities for the service as a whole in response to the analysis in section 2 and 3.**

### **11. Key Priorities for our Internal Placement Service**

- To increase the number and range of foster placements.
- To develop respite services at the edge of care.
- To develop an emergency arm to our Fostering Service, increasing levels of responsiveness and preventing the use of unregulated placements.
- To enhance our ability to meet the placement needs of children with additional learning needs.

### **12. Strategic Commissioning Intentions**

- To develop a local residential home for children aged 9-14 in partnership with Action for Children, to support the therapeutic needs of younger children.
- To develop a local residential home for young people aged 15-18 in partnership with Llamau, supporting effective transition to independence.
- To develop a regional emotional wellbeing support service for young people stepping down from hospital admission, which includes an accommodation resource and community outreach.
- To work with Council and third sector partners to increase the number and range of supported accommodation options.

### **13. Priorities for the Service as a whole**

- To remain focussed on working effectively in a strength-based way, with a commitment to supporting families to remain together wherever possible.
- Where children are looked after, to take steps to support their return to their birth or wider families wherever possible.
- To ensure effective oversight and support of children placed with parents and with kin, with a view to achieving the discharge of Care Orders wherever possible.