

Meeting date: 27 March 2019
Report to: Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Housing
Subject/report title: Youth Homelessness and Support Services
Report from: Assistant Director Stronger Communities
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Wards affected:

- All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: Select an Exemption paragraph from the Quick Parts drop-down list

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the cabinet member of the outcome of the evaluation of the Solihull Youth Hub pilot, recommend plans for continued delivery and seek approval for the use of Flexible Homelessness Support Grant (FHSG) to finance provision during 2019/20.

2. Decision(s) recommended

- 2.1 To note the results of the evaluation of the 2 year youth hub pilot and the recommendations for on-going delivery.
- 2.2 To note the plans for the future commissioning of the accommodation and support services that make up the youth pathway.
- 2.3 To approve the use of FHSG to contribute to the funding required to extend the youth hub pilot for a further 12 months up to 31st March 2020.

3. What is the issue?

- 3.1 Solihull Youth Hub (SYH) was set up in April 2017 and provides advice, assistance and homelessness prevention and relief services to young singles aged 16-24.
- 3.2 The aims of the youth hub pilot were:

- to work with a wider cohort of young people, not just those owed statutory duties
- to minimise the numbers of young people requiring rehousing and reduce incidences of young people presenting in crisis,
- to provide support to keep young people in their family homes
- for those that do need to move to arrange planned moves into suitably supported accommodation
- to improve the co-ordination of support for young singles across the Council and its partner organisations,
- to deliver improved life chances and more sustainable outcomes for young people, across all areas of their life,
- to increase value for money and reduce costs for statutory services through joined up planning, resource alignment and commissioning of services
- to provide a comprehensive body of data relating to the housing and wider support needs of the young people being supported through the hub

3.3 The Council was also successful in a bid to the government Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer programme and has received funding of £305,204 over the 2 year pilot to provide a number of service enhancements. This included employing an Early Intervention Co-ordinator and Data Officer to support partnerships and performance reporting and delivery of a number of 'psychologically informed programmes' (PIE) providing training and support to young people and their parents, carers and staff who work with them to improve their skills and build confidence and resilience.

3.4 SYH was launched on a pilot basis so that the learning and evidence gathered from the first year of delivery (2017/18) could be used to evaluate effectiveness of the model, assess progress against the targets set and make recommendations for continued operational arrangements in this area during the second year of delivery (2018/19).

3.5 Through the SYH St. Basil's deliver the following services to single young people on behalf of the Council:

- (a) the single point of access for all young singles who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Solihull,
- (b) co-ordination of a holistic needs and risk assessment process,
- (c) the offer of homeless prevention support (including mediation and home visits) to all cases where it is appropriate,
- (d) management of a programme of psychologically informed training to support young people, parents, carers and those working with young people,
- (e) management of the youth pathway, a referral process into existing commissioned accommodation and support services,
- (f) provision of home options support to enable planned moves and work with providers to facilitate access to suitable accommodation
- (g) co-ordination of support for difficult / complex cases

3.6 St. Basil's have improved the delivery of services to young people threatened with homelessness, leading on early intervention to avoid / deal with crisis situations and prevent homelessness and for those young people that need more intensive support working closely with Solihull Community Housing (SCH) and Children's Services & Skills (CSS) to ensure the most appropriate response.

- 3.7 CSS have continued to deliver the Council's statutory duty to homeless 16-17 year olds and care leavers but St. Basil's have taken the lead on the joint assessment process for 16/17 year olds and put in place joint working arrangements with the Child Asylum and 16+ team to identify options and support for care leavers.
- 3.8 During 2017/18 SCH continued to deliver the Council's statutory duty to those who were homeless and in priority need. However from 1st April 2018 the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) placed new duties on Council's to:
- I. Assess all applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, agreeing, actioning and regularly reviewing Personalised Housing Plans with applicants.
 - II. Satisfy the prevention duty by taking reasonable steps to help applicants who are threatened with homelessness to remain in their homes or to move.
 - III. Satisfy the relief duty by taking reasonable steps to help homeless applicants secure accommodation.
- 3.9 These changes prompted a review of the contract and delivery processes for SYH and from April 2018 St. Basil's began carrying out and discharging the HRA assessment, prevention and relief duties on behalf of the Council. Where homelessness has not been prevented or relieved cases are then referred to SCH to investigate the main duty and ensure that the relevant statutory process is followed.
- 3.10 In order to manage the new duties and processes required St. Basil's implemented salary increases and revised job descriptions across a number of roles, which lead to delivery costs for year 2 being above original projections.
- 3.11 It is important to note these significant changes which will have implications for on-going delivery and the resources required to continue to commission the SYH. However the primary focus of the evaluation has been on the outcomes and findings from year one because full data for year 2 is not yet available and the first 6 months of year 2 has been a process of bedding in the new service delivery model, dealing with operational issues and implementing a new IT system in partnership with SCH.
- 3.12 A summary of the evaluation is included at **Appendix A**.
- 3.13 Overall the evaluation has demonstrated that SYH is achieving positive outcomes for increased numbers of young people in the Borough compared to the previous baseline. SYH has met the original aim of reaching a larger cohort of vulnerable young people, with a 63% increase in the number of young people being assessed during year 1 of the pilot compared to the previous service under SCH.
- 3.14 For 75% of young people who attended full needs assessment interviews, homelessness was prevented or relieved; this has benefited individual young people by supporting them to maintain or access suitable accommodation and working with them to meet their support and development needs but has also had positive outcomes for housing and partner services by reducing expensive crisis presentations and the wider community through improved tenancy and family sustainment.
- 3.15 A total of 167 young people were supported into suitable accommodation during 2017/18, 46% of these placements were in Solihull through the young person's

accommodation pathway that St. Basil's manage through the youth hub. 44% were found suitable accommodation out of the Borough (primarily with private registered providers offering supported accommodation options) and 10% moved into social or private rented accommodation in Solihull.

- 3.16 During 2017/18 51 young people were referred to SCH to make a homeless application. This was a 59% reduction in homelessness applications from this age group compared to 2016/17. 15 young people were accepted as homeless, a 32% reduction in homelessness acceptances for this client group compared to the previous year.
- 3.17 10% of all initial assessments resulted in a homelessness application and just 3% in a homeless acceptance. This has clearly resulted in reduced demand and workload for SCH in terms of case work and support for this client group.
- 3.18 Positive outcomes have also been achieved for a significant proportion of the 16/17 year olds who approached SYH. Of 59 16/17 year olds who were verified as homeless at presentation (26) or threatened with homelessness within 28 days (33) only 15 were referred to Children's Services through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for assessment under the joint protocol and 0 of these cases required accommodation under Section 20 of the Children's Act.
- 3.19 A further 34 16/17 year olds who had a future risk of homelessness were also supported. A proportion of these young people would have required higher levels of intervention from CSS under the previous model of provision, where CSS were the lead agency for the assessment of homeless 16/17 year olds.
- 3.20 Care leavers made up 7% of all referrals to SYH (42) and 38 (7%) went on to complete initial assessments. In the majority of cases care leavers were supported to find suitable accommodation through SYH (61%) with the others supported to remain at or return home (8%) or referred for further support to SCH (19%) or CSS (3%).
- 3.21 SYH has provided a holistic approach to assessing and supporting the needs of young people, addressing more than just housing need e.g. access to employment, education and training, support to address physical and mental health issues and to improve emotional resilience.
- 3.22 During 2017/18 of the 526 young people who completed initial assessments 48% disclosed mental health problems, 33% learning difficulties / disabilities, 27% substance abuse issues and 18% reported an offending history. Where it is recognised that additional support is required and the young person is not engaging with any other agency, referrals are made with the young person's consent. St. Basil's have developed robust joint working arrangements with partners to support this process and during 2017/18 a total of 72 referrals were made to partner agencies.
- 3.23 The evaluation has therefore shown that the launch of SYH increased positive outcomes for young people and has improved the service delivery model across Council and partner services.
- 3.24 In terms of the trailblazer enhancements, the additional funding supported a range of services and activities which helped to improve the overall value and outcomes

achieved through the SYH pilot.

- 3.25 St. Basil's staff have worked well with partner agencies to successfully prevent and relieve homelessness in a large majority of cases and as well as leading to better outcomes for young people this has had the effect of reducing the time and resource needing to be spent by housing and children's services to provide a statutory response to this client group.
- 3.26 PIE for staff is now embedded with an established process for regular reflection and staff support. Following regular attendance at the reflective practice groups 96% of attendees provided positive feedback, with 94% stating that attending the monthly groups has helped them to regularly use PIE tools & materials in their role and 100% feel that the group has supported them to reflect on their work from different perspectives. However there are issues to resolve in relation to attendance at the monthly reflective practice sessions, with an overall attendance rate of 59%, and making sure all staff are experiencing positive sessions with clear results.
- 3.27 Original performance targets were not achieved in relation to the numbers expected to attend the MST4Life training or the PYP programmes. Whilst the courses were still delivered as planned, with revisions to meet local circumstances, referrals and uptake were big issues in piloting these programmes in Solihull.
- 3.28 Overall there was valuable learning from the pilot work, and the trailblazer funding provided an opportunity to test and learn from emerging good practice relating to PIE and trauma informed approaches to supporting young people and their families. Whilst referrals were lower than forecast for the young peoples (MST4Life) and parenting (PYP) courses the individuals who did take part all reported positive outcomes. New ways of working have been implemented reflecting the learning from the PIE framework and clear exit strategies are in place for MST4Life and PYP.
- 3.29 **Appendix B** provides a full breakdown of 2017/18 performance against the KPI's. Of the 31 KPI's in place to monitor service delivery St. Basil's have fully met the targets for 25 and the remaining 6 have been assessed as amber, meaning progress has been made but performance has been below target. 4 of the 6 amber KPI's have related to core service delivery and the remaining 2 to the trailblazer enhancements.
- 3.30 As part of the evaluation the KPI's have been reviewed to take into account HRA implementation, a change in government requirements for the trailblazer projects which end on 31st March 2019 and learning from year 1 performance. This has resulted in the agreement of a revised set of KPIs to be included in the updated contract for 2019/20 delivery.
- 3.31 All of the amber areas noted above have been reviewed as part of this process; where applicable mitigating actions were put into place to improve performance or change delivery plans. Full explanation for the amber ratings is given in the reported outcomes column in the KPI table at **Appendix B**.
- 3.32 In addition to the Youth Hub there are a number of accommodation and support services in Solihull that make up the youth pathway (see **Appendix C**). From 2018/19 Managed Growth & Communities Directorate received a proportion of funding for a number of these services from Adult Care & Support that had previously been

delivered as part of the Supporting People programme. All current arrangements for provision of these services, including extension arrangements, are due to end on 31st March 2019.

- 3.33 SYH operate a single point of access for these services managing a central referral process and waiting list and providers meet on a monthly basis to review cases and agree on priority for upcoming places. During 2017/18 77 young people were accommodated through this pathway.
- 3.34 From end of June 2018 Home Group gave notice on all their young peoples services in Solihull. This was a total of 25 units across 3 schemes. 1 scheme, Venture House, is owned by the Council and has been retained, with St. Basil's providing the support and Home Group holding the lease. The Council are working with Home Group to end the lease and with stakeholders to develop future commissioning plans for Venture House. The other 2 buildings were owned by Home Group and are no longer available. An arrangement with St. Basil's and Birmingham CC has been agreed for the use of 5 units at Yardley House, a supported housing scheme in Birmingham, on the borders of Solihull. This has been operational since November 2018 but still leaves an 11 unit deficit compared to the resource that was available before Home Group gave notice.
- 3.35 The most significant knock-on impact of this loss of provision has been the need for St. Basil's to place young people out of Borough whilst they wait for a bed space to become available in Solihull. In 2017/18 of 167 young people who were accommodated through SYH 74 (44%) had to be accommodated outside of the Solihull Borough, the majority of whom were found places with private registered providers in Birmingham.
- 3.36 To address this a FHSG application from St. Basil's has been approved to expand the Turnaround floating support service so that there is capacity to support this group of young people whilst they are living outside of the borough, maintaining regular contact with them and enabling them to take up appropriate accommodation in Solihull as soon as possible.
- 3.37 There are also plans in place to re-develop an existing Council owned building, Lakeside in Kingshurst, to provide additional accommodation for young people. This would address the local deficit in accommodation units as well as delivering a clearer 'accommodation pathway'. The intention is for Lakeside to be 'step down' accommodation for young people with lower level support needs.
- 3.38 Beyond this there is a need to agree a longer-term commissioning strategy that will clearly set out the number and type of accommodation units that will be required to meet the needs of homeless young people in Solihull. This will be required to support the continued delivery of the positive pathway model, enabling SYH to prevent and relieve homelessness by supporting planned moves and helping young people to access suitable accommodation to meet their presenting needs.
- 3.39 Reflecting the need to develop the above plans, resolve the leasing arrangements for Venture House and to agree detailed specifications and performance monitoring processes for the youth pathway services, plus taking into account the contractual and delivery changes that have been made to SYH in 2018/19 to account for the

implementation of the HRA and the uncertainty of funding available for the delivery of homelessness services beyond 2019/20 (as set out in Section 6.4 on the financial implications) the Council's Procurement Board agreed on 5th February 2019 the following recommendations:

- The set-up of interim contracts for SYH and pathway services to 31.03.20 through a negotiated procedure without prior publication for Solihull Youth Hub and Exceptions to Rules for Contracts for St Basil's Accommodation and Support and Bromford Accommodation and Support
- The development over this period of a single commissioning and procurement strategy for youth homelessness and support services

3.40 The single commissioning strategy will inform a formal procurement exercise which will be carried out during 2019/20 to improve the efficiency of current arrangements and provide longer-term certainty for service providers. Providing on-going funding options are identified the target is for new contracts to be in place for SYH and pathway services from 1st April 2020.

3.41 During the 12-month contract extensions and through the development of a single commissioning strategy for the longer term there are a number of recommendations and areas of development that have been highlighted through the year 1 evaluation that will need to be taken forward by St. Basil's, SMBC, SCH and other partners involved in supporting young people. These are:

- 1) Monitoring performance of the SYH contract against a revised set of KPI's and embedding new reporting arrangements to accompany HRA delivery
- 2) Review working practice and processes of SYH including interface with SCH, joint protocol for the assessment of homeless 16/17 year olds, support for care leavers and other formal referral processes and customer pathways
- 3) Review and further development of partnerships, including exploring options for more formal co-location arrangements
- 4) Addressing the lack of appropriate accommodation options for young people in Solihull
- 5) Addressing the lack of accommodation services and support for young people presenting with complex needs and / or high levels of risk
- 6) In order to deliver on 4 and 5, the need to procure good quality, affordable accommodation and support within a Supported Pathway Model, backed up by a robust evidence based needs assessment to set out current and likely future need in this area
- 7) To review processes in place for monitoring longer-term outcomes for the YP supported – this will help to evidence how SYH is achieving improved life chances and more sustainable outcomes for young singles
- 8) To build on the cost-modelling developed as part of the evaluation process and review methods for capturing reduced costs, VFM and added value provided by the commissioning of the youth hub and youth pathway services

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

4.1 **Option A - Interim contract to extend SYH pilot over 2019/20 agreed through a negotiated procedure without prior publication:** Evidence from the evaluation set

out in section 3 has shown the positive outcomes that have been achieved through the launch and implementation of SYH and all consulted are supportive of the model continuing. However the impact of the introduction of a new legislative framework for homelessness, the HRA, from April 2018, the lack of certainty regarding the future receipt of government grant funding and the need to resolve a number of issues relating to the youth pathway accommodation and support services meant that it would not be prudent to agree commissioning plans for future provision beyond a 12-month contract.

- 4.2 **Option B - De-commission the SYH service:** This is not an option because the Council is under a statutory duty to provide homelessness assessment and prevention and relief services to anyone threatened with homelessness within 56 days. This includes sourcing suitable accommodation and support options to prevent homelessness and working with Children's Services to ensure appropriate assessment and accommodation options are in place for homeless 16/17 year olds.
- 4.3 **Option C - Re-commission longer service contracts commencing in April 2019:** This was not an option because it would not have been possible to meet the procurement timescales. It would also have prevented the Council from developing a robust commissioning strategy for youth homelessness services, including the accommodation and support contracts as well as the contract for SYH. The evidence has shown that there is a need to improve efficiency and value for money across these services by procuring 1 or 2 larger contracts rather than the current piecemeal arrangements. This will require time to address current contractual issues and develop a single commissioning strategy which would not have been possible if services were re-commissioned to be in place from April 2019.
- 4.4 **Option D - Return SYH services to SCH:** This has been considered as part of the evaluation and options appraisal but all partners consulted, including SCH, were supportive of the youth hub model continuing due to the positive outcomes achieved for young people and the specialism that St. Basil's have been able to bring to Solihull in terms of working with and advocating for young people, providing a holistic response to meet presenting needs and managing the youth pathway. In addition it is likely that initial operating costs would increase for SCH should SYH services return through the TUPE process (see point 6.4.5 in financial implications) and because many of the specialist functions would need to be reviewed there would be a likely reduction in the overall value of the model.

5. **Reasons for recommending preferred option**

- 5.1 **Option A** is the recommended option because it will allow for the necessary time and developments required to agree a single commissioning strategy supported by a comprehensive funding package for youth homelessness services. A contribution from the FHSG funding is required to fund SYH during 2019/20 and the reasons for this are set out in section 6.4 under Financial Implications.
- 5.2 The 12-month extension will be an extension of the pilot and reflects the fact that the implementation of the HRA halfway through the 2-year contract changed much of the original focus of the pilot and impacted upon the contractual relationship between St. Basil's, SCH and the Council. An additional year for the pilot will give time to address the outstanding issues, monitor performance against a revised set of KPI's and

establish on-going funding options for the model. The latter will include a dialogue with CSS about any future funding commitments to support delivery of the SYH service.

- 5.3 At the same time 12-month interim contracts will be put in place for the youth pathway accommodation and support services whilst detailed service specifications and monitoring schedules are agreed and whilst the lease issues for Venture House are resolved and commissioning plans for Lakeside agreed. Following this work the aim is for all services to be part of a comprehensive procurement exercise during 2019/20, with new contracts to be in place from April 2020.

6. Implications and Considerations

6.1 Delivery of key themes in the Council Plan:

How will the options/proposals in this report contribute to the delivery of the key themes in the Council Plan? *(select which themes apply and briefly state how the options / proposals in this report contribute to their delivery):*

- Improve Health and Wellbeing - delivery of SYH and pathway services supports young people to develop the skills and resilience to live independently, connecting them to appropriate health, mental health and lifestyle services to address the wider support needs that are identified as part of the assessment process.
- Managed Growth - implementation of the pathway has improved access to supported and move-on accommodation for young people and has provided a comprehensive evidence base to support future commissioning activities and facilitation of housing options in this area
- Build Stronger Communities - an increase in planned moves and tenancy sustainment supported by the SYH model leads to a less transient population, reduced anti-social behaviour and more inclusive communities that young people are willing and supported to contribute to
- Deliver Value - Value for money has been demonstrated through ensuring existing resources are targeted on those who need them most, providing housing options support to increased numbers of young people and generating more sustainable outcomes for those young people supported. The evaluation has been able to show the financial value of the SYH model through the reduced demand and statutory responsibilities for SCH and CSS, plus demonstrating added value across the public sector – see section 6.4 on financial implications for further details.

6.2 Implications for children and young people, vulnerable groups and particular communities:

- 6.2.1 St. Basil's have taken the lead on supporting young singles and co-ordinating the services working with them to address housing and wider support needs and this has led to improved outcomes for this group of young people. Prior to launch of SYH a number of young people aged 18+ fell through local gaps in provision or only

presented at a later date when a crisis had developed and when interventions were likely to be at a higher cost.

- 6.2.2 St Basil's manage a Single Point of Access, co-ordinating the allocation of all places of supported accommodation and floating support for young singles in the Borough. This has meant that available places go to those in most need and that data is available on all referrals made and accepted.
- 6.2.3 Feedback from CSS confirms that the pathway for managing access to accommodation and floating support has been key to improving outcomes for 16/17 year olds and care leavers and SCH have also reported the benefits of working with St. Basil's to ensure specialist support is available to meet the range of needs young people present with.
- 6.2.4 The risk assessment process supported by wider partnership work has resulted in much richer information and more robust support for young homeless people and this has meant that any risks or concerns are highlighted at an early stage with agencies able to discuss cases and put in place appropriate plans to respond.
- 6.2.5 By ensuring that the best possible advice and support is given to vulnerable young people as they make the transition to adulthood and into independent living delivery of the pathway contributes positively to the Council's Corporate Parenting responsibilities and reduces the need for costly interventions into adulthood.

6.3 Consultation and Scrutiny:

- 6.3.1 The implementation, delivery and evaluation of the pilot has been overseen by an operational steering group that has reported to a senior level commissioning group with representation from services across the Council (Children's Services, Managed Growth & Communities, Finance) SCH, St. Basil's and wider partner organisations (Employment & Skills, DWP, Police, supported accommodation providers, drug and alcohol services, mental health services etc).
- 6.3.2 As part of the evaluation process consultation has been carried out with stakeholders, operational partners across the statutory and voluntary sector and with young people who have used SYH services since its launch in April 2017. Key points from the various consultation exercises were:
 - (a) SCH - support continued operation of SYH recognising that the pilot has met the intended outcomes, that the data generated has been comprehensive and that relationships established between St. Basil's and the Housing Options Team to support young people have been positive.
 - (b) St. Basil's - reported positive experiences of working to establish and embed the youth hub pilot in Solihull, with key successes relating to the development of effective working relationships with partners within a short space of time, creating a more streamlined approach to preventing homelessness for this client group and a better customer experience for the young person.
 - (c) CSS – provided feedback that the joint assessment process is working well in Solihull, that CSS benefit from the availability of additional prevention options

and that the pathway for managing access to accommodation and floating support has been key to improving outcomes for 16/17 year olds and care leavers.

- (d) Operational steering group - the group were supportive of the model continuing and reported an improvement in joint working and more positive outcomes for young people since the launch of SYH. The group also agreed that the monitoring and governance framework in place had offered a robust reporting and escalation process for gaps or development areas and had been effective in bringing relevant partners together to improve services and outcomes for this group of young people.
- (e) Young People - young people who attended a focus group session reported a positive experience of the SYH service, with feedback praising the support provided and the welcoming environment of the youth hub. Regular customer feedback from the young people using SYH also supports this with those who responded during 2017/18 (31) stating that they were very happy or happy with the process (96%) and 100% said they would recommend the service to others.

6.3.3 The SYH pilot has not been the subject of scrutiny.

6.4 Financial implications:

6.4.1 The proposed budget for St. Basil's continuing to deliver the SYH service during 2019/20 is £311,500 as set out below:

	£000
Staffing Costs (Pay)	214.7
Staffing Costs (Non Pay)	2.0
Premises (Kingshurst Area Office)	24.0
Service Costs	7.0
PIE Training	23.2
Running Costs & Overheads	40.6
	311.5

6.4.2 The implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act has resulted in new duties that the Council (or its partner agencies) must discharge. As a consequence, staff roles and responsibilities have increased which has led to an increase in the cost of delivering the Council's obligations under the new legislation.

6.4.3 At the commencement of the original pilot (before the HRA) it was originally forecast that the on-going annual costs of the Youth Hub would be £151,000 plus office costs and that this would be funded by a reduction in demand from 16 – 24 year olds which would deliver savings for SCH which could be reinvested in the SYH.

6.4.4 However the implementation of the HRA has resulted in increased pressure on the Home Options service in SCH and as a result it will not be possible for SCH to make the savings and reinvestment into the SYH as originally planned.

6.4.5 If the Council did not continue to commission St. Basil's to deliver the SYH and the service was to return to SCH additional costs may be incurred. The transfer of these services is covered by TUPE regulations, under which existing contractual terms and conditions of employment of the staff transfer automatically. Due diligence would be undertaken as part of the TUPE process, but there is the potential for increased costs in relation to superannuation arrangements and any severance costs that might result from any organisational review of the service post transfer. Wider added value would also be lost through the specialist role and additional functions that St. Basil's have developed and now deliver as part of the current process which SCH do not have the expertise or structures in place to deliver.

6.4.6 It is proposed to fund delivery of SYH during 2019/20 as shown below:

	£000
Housing Funding Identified by SCH at commencement of Pilot	38
New Burdens Funding	38
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant (FHSG)	235.5
	311.5

6.4.7 It should be noted that FHSG and New Burdens Funding are only confirmed until 2019/20. It is possible that an allocation could be made for 2020/21 but funding decisions beyond this will be part of the next Comprehensive Spending Review.

6.4.8 Given the risk to these funding streams the development of a single commissioning strategy to identify longer term funding options for the youth hub and the youth pathway services will be a priority. This will include dialogue with CSS about future funding commitments to support delivery of the SYH service given the contribution made to the prevention and relief of homelessness for 16/17 year olds and the likely increased costs they would incur without the youth hub services.

6.4.9 Without a comprehensive funding package for these services it will not be possible to commission longer contracts or to improve the efficiency and VFM of youth homelessness and support services.

6.4.10 In addition to the direct cost and savings demonstrated through the evaluation process it has also been shown that SYH has provided added value across the public sector. Whilst it has not been possible to attribute a direct local cost to this contribution it is clear that through the SYH model the risk areas and support issues that young people present with are being assessed, monitored and addressed in a comprehensive way. High positive prevention and relief outcomes are being achieved for this cohort of young people.

6.4.11 Joint working with partner organisations offering further support is well established and as a result young people are much more likely to sustain their tenancies or move-in in a planned way, with improved life chances and achieving positive outcomes across employment, education and training, health and well-being and emotional resilience. This has the potential to save other public service costs that would have resulted if homelessness and support issues had escalated e.g. housing management, health and wellbeing services, DWP, prisons and probation etc.

6.5 Legal implications:

- 6.5.1 CSS have continued to deliver the Council's statutory duty to homeless 16-17 year olds and care leavers but St. Basil's have played a key role in leading the joint assessment process for 16/17 year olds.
- 6.5.2 During 2017/18 SCH continued to deliver the Council's statutory duty to those who were homeless and in priority need. However from 1st April 2018 to support the introduction of the HRA the contract for SYH was changed to authorise them to discharge the assessment, prevention and relief duties on behalf of the Council. Under these revised arrangements SCH retain responsibility for investigating the main duty where homelessness has not been prevented or relieved.
- 6.5.3 There was a project Group set up across SCH and the Council to oversee the HRA implementation plan and a representative from Legal Services was on this group. They ensured that all process and procedural changes were compliant with the legislation and advised on operational issues that arose during early implementation.
- 6.5.4 St. Basil's works closely with CSS and SCH to make appropriate referrals and to work collaboratively in order to assist the statutory processes and to maintain the focus on prevention and relief even where referrals have been made.

6.6 Risk implications:

- 6.6.1 There are two main risks related to the youth homelessness and support services. The first is a failure to have adequate units of youth pathway accommodation to meet need. This risk was increased following the withdrawal of Home Group and loss of 25 units they provided. However the Council re-commissioned 9 units at Venture House from July 18, a further 5 at Yardley House following agreement with St. Basil's and Birmingham City Council from November 2018 & longer term plans are in place to develop a new facility (as set out at points 3.37). St. Basil's have also developed strong working relationships with registered providers who have helped to meet the accommodation needs of young people in Birmingham and more recently have purchased properties in Solihull to meet local need.
- 6.6.2 Future risk will be mitigated through the production of a longer-term commissioning strategy that will review evidence of need, gaps in provision and future projections and will set out the number and type of accommodation units required to meet the future needs of homeless young people in Solihull. This will inform an action plan for future commissioning activity and for the facilitation of the housing options required.
- 6.6.3 The second relates to the funding uncertainty and the risk that the Council will be unable to commission the on-going delivery of SYH and related services due to the loss of government grant funding. Mitigating actions for this risk are to ensure clear consultation with government, providing feedback on the positive outcomes achieved from the use of FHSG, work with the West Midlands Homelessness Taskforce to feed into the Comprehensive Spending Review consultation process re: homelessness and locally for the Council to develop a commissioning strategy accompanied by funding options that will allow for the procurement of longer contracts for the youth hub and youth pathway services.

6.7 Statutory Equality Duty:

- 6.7.1 A full FTA was carried out to assess the equality and diversity implications of implementing the pathway prior to the launch of the pilot. Given that the pilot has improved existing services to this client group, the FTA identified a number of positive impacts across the equality areas assessed.
- 6.7.2 There were also some actual or potential negative impacts identified for several of the equality strands. On balance the FTA identified more positive than negative impacts from the delivery of the SYH pilot and for each negative / potentially negative impact an improvement action was identified to either be built into the implementation plan or to be monitored and evaluated through the pilot.
- 6.7.3 Positive progress has been made on implementing the action plan from the FTA and there is a wealth of information on this age group to a level that was not collected under the previous delivery model. Progress has been made in all areas highlighted through the FTA with examples being:
- Support for young people with mental health needs through effective referral and joint working processes
 - SYH has been delivered flexibly to respond to need with no blanket exclusion
 - Improved monitoring information which has been presented and analysed through the quarterly performance reports
 - Protocols for the assessment of 16/17 year olds and care leavers integrated into the youth Hub Referral and assessment process
 - Effective communications strategy in place
 - Process for gathering feedback from young people in place
- 6.7.4 A full review of the FTA action plan will be carried out during 2019/20 to inform new commissioning strategy and identify any new areas for action or development.

7. List of appendices referred to

- 7.1 Appendix A – Summary of Solihull Youth Hub Evaluation
- 7.2 Appendix B – 2017/18 Performance against KPIs
- 7.3 Appendix C - Youth Accommodation & Support Services for Solihull Young People

8. Background papers used to compile this report

- 8.1 N/a

9. List of other relevant documents

- 9.1 Report to Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Housing, 19th September 2018: 'Homelessness Funding'
- 9.2 Report to Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Housing, 20th March 2018: 'Homelessness Service – Scope and Funding'.
- 9.3 Report to Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration, 21st November 2016: 'Positive Accommodation and Support Pathway for Young People aged 16+'