

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL INCLUSION SCRUTINY

DATE: 29TH APRIL 2008

**SUBJECT: YOUNG PEOPLE'S HOUSING STRATEGY
STATEMENT**

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND LEARNING

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IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES	ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL	CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING	OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

PURPOSE

1. To inform and consult Children's Scrutiny Committee on the Young People's Housing Strategy for Luton Luton Borough Council Children and Learning Department, and to report on the progress to date in achieving the aims of this strategy.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. **Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committee is recommended to Review and discuss the content of the Young People and Care Leaver's Housing Strategy and to raise any questions regarding the impact of this work and the effectiveness of the Strategy.**

BACKGROUND

3. The Annual Performance Assessment of the Council in 2007 identified the need to make improvements in the levels of support and “suitable” accommodation made available for Looked After Children and Care Leavers (5037SC – Percentage of care leavers at age 19 who are living in suitable accommodation).
4. This indicator measures the suitability of accommodation as a proxy for the effectiveness of care leaving services in the authority. It measures the outcomes for care leavers at a specific time of the year and is a snapshot measure of the authority's performance for young people who were looked after for particular periods of their lives.
5. There are no hard and fast rules on whether accommodation is deemed “suitable” as this is a judgement that is made by the local authority. However, it is expected that any such judgements will be based on the authority's decision making dependent on the circumstances of the individual case and an assessment of whether or not a provision is sufficient to meet the needs of that young person.
6. Accommodation is to be regarded as suitable if it provides safe, secure and affordable provision for young people. It would generally include short-term accommodation designed to move young people on to stable long-term accommodation, but would exclude emergency accommodation used in a crisis. Accommodation that clearly exposes the person to risk of harm or social exclusion by reason of its location or other factors are therefore coded as unsuitable. Similarly, “in-custody” is considered to be unsuitable as is the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation.
7. In 2006 – 2007 Luton was below the performance of its statistical neighbours (as set in 2005 – 2006) in this area, and also slightly below the performance of the national average.
8. The table below demonstrates Luton's performance in this indicator since 2001.

	2001 – 02	2002 – 03	2003 – 04	2004 – 05	2005 – 06	2006 - 07
Luton	81.3	81.8	90.6	87.5	85.3	82.9
SN	64.6	74.9	81.4	86.4	87.9	-
Eng	69.4	74.5	79.6	83.9	87.9	-

9. This information suggests a changing trend in Luton's performance in this area to the lowest point since 2003. The Action plan in response to this concern has been to formulate an authority wide strategic response to the housing needs of young people leaving care and other vulnerable groups.

REPORT

10. The attached Young People and Care Leaver's sets out the department's target areas for the this specific area of support to care leavers and other vulnerable young adults.
11. The attached document is in it's initial draft stages and outlines the framework under which the strategy is being written. The final document will be built upon a detailed understanding of the needs of young people within the Borough and will outline what response is needed to meet those needs.
12. The strategy will also be written as a complimentary document to the existing Luton Housing Strategy Statement 2007 – 2011 and underlying principles and contextual issues that have been identified in that document remain in place.
13. The document is currently being re-written to also compliment the following documents;
 - (i) 14 – 19 Strategy
 - (ii) Youth Inclusion Strategy
 - (iii) Sustainable People Strategy
 - (iv) NEET Strategy
14. This document is a “work in progress” with additional data being included weekly. The finished document will be available for review on 25th April 2008.

PROPOSAL/OPTION

15. The Children's Scrutiny Committee discusses the Strategy and provide comments and feedback and confirmation of the plans.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16. There are no legal implications to this report and this has been agreed with J. Newman in Legal Services on 28 March 2008.

APPENDIX

17. Appendix A: Young People's Draft Housing Strategy.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D**

18. Young People's Draft Housing Strategy.