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Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
Date	29 September 2020
Present	Councillor Cuthbertson

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### **23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Executive Member confirmed that he had no personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, nor any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, to declare in the business on the agenda.

### **24. MINUTES**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 11 February 2020 be approved, to be signed by the Executive Member at a later date.

### **25. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the session under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

### **26. SUFFICIENCY DUTY REPORT**

The Executive Member considered a report that set out the Sufficiency Duty. The City of York Sufficiency Strategy sets out how the Local Authority and its partners will work together to provide the best environments for children in care and care leavers over the next three years.

The Interim Group Manager Achieved Permanence gave an overview of the report and explained the council Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2023, which was set out at Annex 1 of the report. The Interim Group Manager explained the background, principles and context of the Strategy. He explained the six key

objectives of the strategy and how they would be achieved. The six objectives were:

1. Children and young people will be supported to stay with their families where it is safe to do so
2. We will focus on achieving permanency in a timely manner through adoption and special guardianship
3. More children will live in a local placement
4. All children will be matched with good quality placements which meet their needs
5. All children in care will be prepared for independence and a healthy adulthood
6. We will review all commissioned placements

The Executive Member acknowledged the impact of COVID-19 on the strategy, in particular in relation to the availability of foster carers and placements. He noted the reasons for the rise in the number of children in care.

In response to questions raised by the Executive Member, the Interim group Manager confirmed that:

- The length of the strategy (three years) was down to individual local authorities to decide
- Listening to and acting on the strong voice of children was important in the strategy and Corporate Parenting and Children in Care Strategy 2020-2023
- Internet based foster recruitment campaign had been recommenced in June and much interest had been shown in this and four people had been taken through to the recruitment process and there was a focus on making sure children were safely discharged from care
- High proportion of children being placed out of York was linked to children living with a connected carer (which could be a family member), and children being placed out of the York area for different reasons.
- There were strong links with the health services, the Virtual Headteacher and other services. The Executive Member noted that the Virtual Headteacher had reported that children and young people had been engaged with virtual learning.
- The profile of children in care had been fed into the projected requirements
- With regard to the work needed to prepare a child and family for the discharge care orders, the authority would consult with the child and carers and undertake a special guardianship assessment. This would identify whether it was

the appropriate plan and whether any support would be needed, there would also be an annual support plan developed by the local authority as well as a financial offer to support the special guardians.

- There were six semi-independent living placements and plan is to develop those locally along with Wenlock Terrace for those young people outgrown residential placement or ready to move on from a foster placement into supported living.
- An outline of the process for matching placements was given.

The Executive Member welcomed the work undertaken to achieve the six key objectives of the strategy. He acknowledged the improved success of the regional adoption agency. He then:

Resolved: That the Sufficiency Strategy as set out in Annex 1 to the report be agreed.

Reason: In order to meet the requirement for the delivery of the Sufficiency Duty Strategy.

Cllr Cuthbertson, Executive Member  
[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.47 am].