

## Officer Non Key Executive Decision

<b>Relevant Chief Officer (Decision Maker):</b>	Director of Children Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member (for consultation purposes):</b>	Councillor Graham Cain, Deputy Leader - Children
<b>Report Author (Officer name and title):</b>	Diane Booth, Director of Children Services
<b>Implementation Date of Decision:</b>	31 October 2019

### EXTENDED TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF 331 BISPHAM ROAD

#### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To extend the temporary closure of 331 Bispham Road, pending the Council's review of residential service provision.

#### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To agree the continued temporary closure off 331 Bispham Road with effect from 31 October 2019 to 30 January 2020 or until the outcome of the review whichever is the soonest and continue with the redeployment of the existing staff group.

#### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 A residential review is taking place to inform the Council of the future need and shape of provision in Blackpool. There has been unavoidable delay in the review process.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

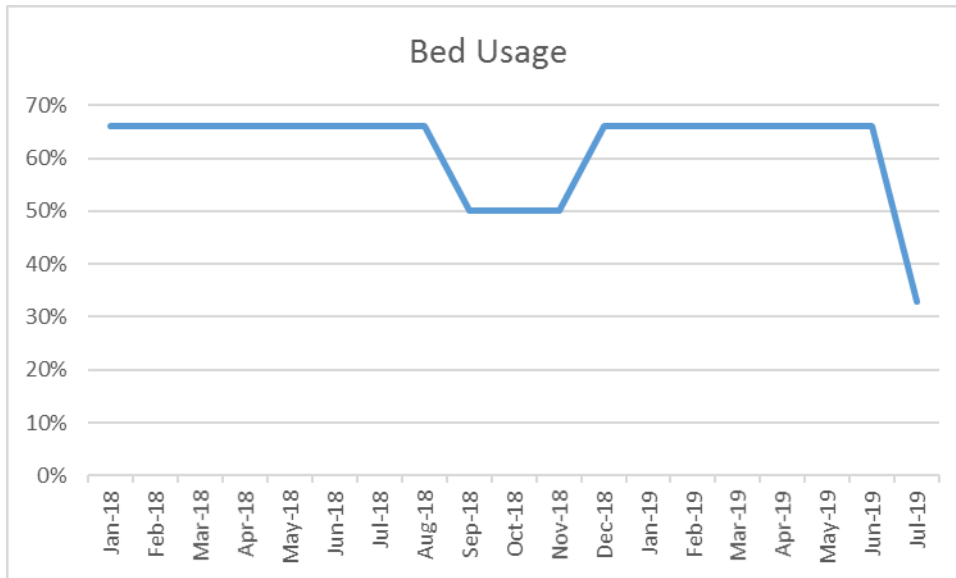
There are no current viable options.

#### **4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”.

#### **5.0 Background Information**

- 5.1 Blackpool Council has three residential homes for children registered with Ofsted. Hornby Road is a provision that supports families with children with disabilities with respite. The Link is a provision designed to support families where there are children and young people on the edge of care to develop strategies that help them to stay together. 331 Bispham Road is the only long-term residential home that is designed to provide residential accommodation for six young people that is stable, secure and long lasting.
- 5.2 As a local authority, the Council is increasingly seeking to ensure that it supports children and young people in a home that helps them achieve as close to normal family life as possible.
- 5.3 Locally, there are a number of residential homes in Blackpool and across the Fylde Coast. While the beds in these homes are not fully in use by Blackpool, they are actively marketed to other local authorities. When a residential placement is sought that could be met at 331 Bispham Road, it is usually the case that one can be found in the area and within agreed framework costs. As a result, over the past 18 months and longer, the home has not been operating at full capacity. For 78% of the time, the home has been operating at 66% capacity, for 15% of the time at 50% capacity and for 5% of the time, a 33% capacity.
- 5.4 Cabinet Member Decision PH41/2019 on the 31 July 2019 approved the temporary closure of 331 Bispham Road while a review would be undertaken into children’s home provision. The decision also required significant consultation to be undertaken with staff, Trade Unions and service users. The review has been delayed and rather than rush any decision it is considered best to extend the temporary closure until that review can be completed.



The market has developed significantly in recent years, and the provision of support within a family setting with enhanced interventions mean that children who would traditionally have struggled to settle in a foster placement can often be supported in specialist placements. These placements are provided at a cost of between £1,000 and £1,200 per week, and, when they work well, offer stable family homes for children who have experienced and continue to experience the effects of neglect and trauma.

There is a need to make a decision about the future of our residential provision and the commissioned review will inform this. An Ofsted inspection found 331 Bispham Road to be inadequate in June 2019 following an unannounced visit that found a number of key concerns. These concerns have in the main been addressed, but one that has not been is the appointment of a new registered manager for the service, a requirement that if not addressed would see the home remain inadequate irrespective of any other improvements.

No

**List of Appendices:**

None.

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 None.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 There are currently 13 members of staff from Bispham Road deployed into areas of their choice in Children's Services against current vacancies. They are regularly updated in respect of the progress of the review.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 Officers have reflected on the Equality impacts of this temporary closure in terms of service user and staffing matters. The wider policy review will explore the detailed potential impacts across these services on protected characteristics. At this stage, officers are confident there will be no detrimental impacts on service users - and they will explore the equality impacts on staff, as part of the formal consultations with them.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 Any financial long-term implications will be considered in the service review and developing alternative delivery model. Cost will be minimised and kept within current allocated budget, unless specifically approved. Best value and quality will drive decision-making. There is an initial potential cost implication of between £14,000 and £107,000, which the Council anticipates which has been partially offset by temporary deployment of the Bispham Road staff to current vacancies and discharge / step down of other placements.

The Council will continue to incur premises costs for the building whilst empty and the review takes place.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 331 Bispham Road has recently received an inadequate judgement following an Ofsted inspection in June 2019.

331 Bispham Road had been managed via an interim manager for the 4 months prior to temporary closure, due to not being able to secure a suitable appointment to this post. Ofsted have been clear that if there is not a permanent manager in post then this would result in Ofsted giving a further inadequate judgement and likely notice that the home should close.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal / External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 As outlined above a commissioned review of residential service/provision is taking place and will inform the Council of future need and options on how best to meet this need, which will inform the commissioning of future placements.

**13.0 Decision of Chief Officer**

13.1 To agree the continued temporary closure off 331 Bispham Road with effect from 31 October 2019 to 30 January 2020 or until the outcome of the review whichever is the soonest and continue with the redeployment of the existing staff group.

**14.0 Reasons for the Decision of the Chief Officer**

14.1 A residential review is taking place to inform the Council of the future need and shape of provision in Blackpool. There has been unavoidable delay in the review process.