

## **£600,000 support package to help young care leavers build a better future**

Finance Minister, Rebecca Evans and Housing and Local Government Minister, Julie James announced 2 streams of funding – £243,000 from the Welsh Government's Invest to Save fund and £400,000 of Innovate to Save funding – during a visit to the accommodation for young people.

The 2 projects will be delivered by Swansea-based organisation, FABRIC, who already provide accommodation for young people aged 16-17 in the area. The £243,000 support package will help FABRIC to expand its services to the Neath Port Talbot area, providing a home for a further 6 people in the care system.

The second package, worth £400,000, will provide semi-supported accommodation for young adults over the age of 18 leaving the care system and taking their first steps into adulthood – giving them the space to develop their independence whilst offering a support network to fall back on.

Both projects aim to generate cost savings to local authorities by providing a housing solution for young people in care, avoiding the local authority having to use expensive emergency accommodation.

Minister for Finance and Trefnydd said:

“I am pleased that the Welsh Government's Invest to Save fund, along with Innovate to Save funding, is helping support care leavers as they make their transition into adulthood and independent living.

“The evidence tells us that young people leaving the care system are more likely to abuse drugs or alcohol, or to end up in the criminal justice system. As well as being terrible for the young people involved, it inevitably leads to costly interventions for the government. This innovative idea seeks to go some way to breaking this cycle by providing young people with help and support when they need it most.”

Minister for Housing and Local Government added:

“This is a great example of how Innovate to Save funding can support some of Wales' most vulnerable young people at a crucial time in their lives. I look forward to seeing more young people fulfilling their potential thanks to help from these projects.”

Together these 2 projects will provide a consistent pathway from care to independent living for some of Wales' most vulnerable young people,

supporting them to develop the required living skills, engage in education and training, employment and address personal development.

Director of FABRIC, Harri Coleman said:

“Combining the goals of achieving equal opportunities and improving outcomes for young people alongside the financial savings which our approach delivers, was the basis of our involvement in Innovate to Save. It is FABRIC’s aim to be a part of eliciting positive change in the FABRIC kids and creating alternative positive outcomes in adulthood. Whilst it may not be possible to achieve equal outcomes for all, FABRIC aspires to see “Equal Opportunities for Care Leavers” in Wales and across the UK.”