

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – JULY 2017

Title of paper:	Pathway Planning	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Helen Blackman - Director, Children's Integrated Services	Wards affected: All
Report author(s) and contact details:	Sharon Clarke - Service Manager, Children in Care and Leaving Care Service Sharon.clarke@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Other colleagues who have provided input:		
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)		
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:		
Strategic Regeneration and Development		<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools		<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services		<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer		<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector		<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture		<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration		<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
<p>This report includes the current issues in relation to the legislative duties required by Nottingham City Council, in respect of those children eligible for a Pathway Plan. It focuses on the work required by Social Workers and Personal Advisors in relation to the assessment, planning, implementation and reviews of Pathway Planning in order to ensure young people have a robust plan to aid transition into adulthood.</p>		
Recommendation(s):		
1	To continue to support and understand the required duties of Corporate Parents, in relation to Pathway Planning for children in care and care leavers.	

1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Nottingham City has a legislative duty to ensure all young people have a robust plan that is recorded and reviewed on their file.
- 1.2 Nottingham City has an E-Pathway Plan to ensure plans are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. The new plans better measure outcomes, and provide clear evidence of young people's wishes and feelings. Recent audits have

indicated that, generally, plans are of a good standard. Following the implementation of our new IT System, E-Pathway Plans will be reviewed.

2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 In April 2011, guidance was issued by the Government to Local Authorities / Agencies who provide services to care leavers. This was updated in May 2014, to include further duties in respect of Staying Put arrangements. The updated guidance also included direction on providing young people access to their records, and further guidance in respect of Personal Advisors assisting and supporting young people with access to training: “Young people do not need to have decided what education or training they would like to pursue. They can get in touch if they are wanting to pursue education or training and in such cases, the Personal Advisor should help the young person identify the best options suited to them” (3.56). The main aim of this guidance is to ensure care leavers are provided with support, so they can achieve in any aspiration they may have difficulty or face challenges with.

Further to this the Children and Social Work Act, 2017, received Royal Assent on 27th April. We are awaiting government guidance on this. This policy document stipulates that all Local Authorities in England must formally produce a local offer for care leavers, with Local Authorities required to support care leavers until age 25. It is also a requirement as per this policy that the Local Authority must provide a designated member of staff, who will be responsible for nurturing and assisting with the educational attainment of care leavers.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 made a number of changes to Children’s Services more generally. Including that Local Authorities in England and Wales can now place looked after children in secure accommodation in Scotland, Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards are to be replaced with new local arrangements for safeguarding and promoting looked after children’s wellbeing, and Health and Care Profession’s Council (HCPC) is to be succeeded by Social Work England as the profession’s regulatory organisation.

- 2.2 For all young people, the transition into adulthood can be a turbulent time. However, the transition time can be eased by living with Carers / Parents until ready emotionally and / or financially for independence. However, for young people leaving care, this may not always be offered by carers on an on-going basis. Therefore, as Corporate Parents, we need to provide support for our care leavers in the same way that reasonable Parents provide support for their own children.
- 2.3 It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to assess, plan, implement and review Pathway Plans, and support young people as they transition into adulthood. This applies irrespective of other services provided e.g. if they are disabled, in custody or if they are unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC).
- 2.4 The Children Act, 1989, requires that a Pathway Plan must be prepared for all eligible children and continued for all Relevant and Former Relevant Children. The Pathway Plan is derived from their Care Plan and sets out the necessary actions to be taken by the Local Authority, the young person, their Carers and Agencies so that each young person has an individual plan that provides them with the services required in supporting a successful transition into adulthood.

- 2.5 The E-Pathway Plan addresses the requirements of the Act. It includes:
- Young person's health and development.
 - Education, training and employment.
 - Contact, supports and networks.
 - Young person's financial capabilities and money-management capacity.
 - Young person's views.
 - Input from Parent / Carer, providers of housing, Personal Advisor, health, education and Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).
- 2.6 Young people leaving care should have a Health Passport (referred to as Important Health Information) which gives their full medical history in consultation with a Looked After Nurse, if the young person wishes to co-operate. The Local Authority continues to collaborate with the Health Team, which is responsible for the production of Health documentation. A number of young people also refuse medical appointments, and creative methods are utilised to help these young people to engage.
- 2.7 The care leavers' team employ a qualified Social Worker who acts as a dedicated Transitions Worker to work with young people, Adult Services, Carers, Social Workers and Personal Advisors to input into Pathway Planning for young people who require Adult Services or further support in their transition. The Disabled Children's Team retain responsibility for formulating Pathway Planning, for children in care who have a permanent and substantial disability. All care leavers who are eligible for Adult Services also receive services relevant to their status as a care leaver.
- 2.8 Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) have both a leaving care and immigration status which means Pathway Planning can be complex. This requires a multi-faceted planning model; addressing planning for young people with permission to remain in the UK, for those who have been refused permission to remain, those who may want to return to their country of origin and those who have been granted time-limited discretion to remain in the UK. Nottingham City Council has a legal duty to support UASC who are post-18 and in an appeal regarding their immigration status. These duties include the allocation of a Personal Advisor, providing accommodation and financial support.
- 2.9 The LASPO Act 2012 (Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders) means Nottingham City Council has a legal duty to extend Looked After status to all young people remanded into custody. Therefore, once eligible, there is an expectation that these young people have a Pathway Plan.
- 2.10 All young people, from 15 years and 9 months of age, are required to have a Pathway Plan up until they are 18 years of age. These are formulated, implemented and reviewed by their allocated Social Workers. Post-18 care leavers are allocated a Personal Advisor who is then the key professional responsible for the continuation and review of the young person's Pathway Plan up until they are 21, or 24 if in fulltime education.
- 2.11 Performance in respect of Pathway Plans has remained a challenge in ensuring all young people have a compliant and authorised Pathway Plan, complete with an independent Personal Advisor viewpoint. Performance has continued to improve and Audits are being undertaken to test quality.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 None.

4 FINANCE COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

4.1 None.

5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)

5.1 None.

6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)

6.1 None.

7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No



An EIA is not required because:

(Please explain why an EIA is not necessary)

Not needed as the report does not contain proposals or financial decisions.

8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

8.1 None.

9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

9.1 Leaving Care Act (2000)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/35/contents>

9.2 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations – Volume 3: Planning Transitions to Adulthood for Care Leavers (2010)

https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/pdf/PS_The%20Children%20Act_Nov2012a.pdf

9.3 The Children and Social Work Act (2017)

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/pdfs/ukpga_20170016_en.pdf