

**Aftercare Service**  
**Background paper.**  
**9<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**History of the service.**

**Aftercare post**

The original contract prior to 2013, was set up when Nottingham City were working alongside Nottinghamshire County Council to deliver an after care service to a mixture of City and County Young People. This was originally set up to deal with Care Leavers that were at risk of being homeless. However due to improved links and a working protocol between the Leaving Care Service and Nottingham City Homes and our Placements Team, the need for this service was reduced. In 2013 this contract was updated to reflect the change in need and that the Leaving Care Service focuses on Nottingham City Care Leavers only. The Aftercare Service was retendered in 2013 to improve engagement with hard to engage Care Leavers and provide higher case holding capacity. Since 2013 the Leaving Care Service has worked to significantly improve engagement with hard to reach Care Leavers and provide more opportunities to participate which have reduced the numbers of non-engaged care leavers. The anticipated case holding figures have not been realised and the post holds 20-25 cases in line with a leaving care Personal Advisor.

**Managers post**

The Leaving Care Service is currently functioning without a Manager in Post. The Manager of the service was the Manager of the 15 Plus Team which was disbanded when the service reconfigured into Children In Care Teams. In order to align the service appropriately with clear management direction, it is proposed to replace one of the current senior Personal Advisor posts, into a Team Manager post Grade I and retain one Senior Personal Advisor Post.



## **Current Service Barriers.**

### **Aftercare post**

The Aftercare Service has no direct access to our IT systems. We have had to invest in a laptop to ensure statutory reporting, logging and data is inputted to ensure our performance targets are met. However due to alternative line management of the Aftercare worker and the supervisors lack of understanding of our statutory paperwork and timescales, this can be hard to manage. Nottingham City Council have mandatory training linked to processes and statutory requirements with regards to looked after children and care leavers. Due to this post being external, it has proved hard to get the post holder on all of the training required. This training is linked to safeguarding and ensuring the young person is supported appropriately.

### **Managers post**

The Leaving Care Service is now inspected and graded by Ofsted within their full inspections of City Councils. In order to have clear accountability it is critical to have a Team Manager Post.

## **Financial Implications.**

### **Aftercare post**

The current contract with NCHA costs £38,655 per annum. The current pay scale of a Personal Advisor, including on costs, is £28,254 - £31,445 per annum, depending where they start on scale F. The current post holder is paid less than the Nottingham City Council Personal Advisor post, therefore it is anticipated that the Aftercare Post holder will transfer on their existing terms and conditions providing a saving to the Authority.

### **Managers post**

To fund the Leaving Care Service Managers post, there is a shortfall of £10,000, which can be utilised via the £10,000 saving from bringing the Aftercare Service post in house. To move one of the current Senior Personal Advisor posts to a Managers post level (I) top end, including on costs this will be £47,337.

The senior PA's are currently both currently paid £37,150, this is the bottom end of (H) with on costs. The top end of (H) with on cost is £41,781. To create the managers post, and take it to the top end to allow increments, this will be £47,337. That is a difference of £10,187.

## Consultation.

### **Aftercare post**

The 2014 Children in Care and Care leavers Have your Say Survey has identified that CIC and Care leavers are happier with our in house service.

15 year old plus, 52 young people responded to the survey. (This cohort is aged 15-21 that answered this question) 18.6% stated that they talk to their personal advisor; this has increased from 12.8% the previous year.

We have previously disengaged young people coming back requesting support. This request does not include having someone separate to the local authority and have been allocated to in house PA's.

The Aftercare post still reflects cases that become disengaged. Being separate to NCC does not prevent disengagement with the After Care worker via NCHA.

The Leaving Care Service is implementing new opportunities for Care Leavers on an ongoing basis, which broadens their horizons and encourages participation.

The leaving care service is working hard to improve outcomes for care leavers. It takes into account the issues that face care leavers locally and nationally and are part of the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum (NLCBF). The Team are striving to ensure that Care Leavers want to engage with the service, and that we create opportunity for them to engage and influence the way the service is delivered.

Our pathway plan has been revised and is now SMART, care leavers have commented on how this new version is more engaging and clearer, and are more willing to engage with the pathway planning process.

We have improved links and a working protocol between the Leaving Care Service and Nottingham City Homes and our Placements teams so Care Leavers will have suitable accommodation to move to or remain in, if agreed, to prevent homelessness.

We have a Transitions Social Worker attached to the team to ensure young people who do not qualify for Adult Social Care, are assessed appropriately and supported in identifying appropriate supported housing with Adult support services attached to the package.

The Leaving Care Service is encouraging participation of Care Leavers. The team have worked on a Care Leavers questionnaire to be utilised throughout the year, so care Leavers can raise any issues or concerns. The aim is this information will be collated and shared with Service Managers, Heads of Service, Corporate Parenting Board and Directors. A meeting group has also been set up, called 'Your Voice', so that Care Leavers can meet up to six times a year to raise issues and look at national issues for Care Leavers. This information then is shared at the Children in Care Council (CICC) and the Corporate CICC group, to ensure CIC and Care Leavers voices are heard and are helping shape the way our services are run. The Leaving Care Service aim to identify a Care Leaver to attend the Young



Peoples Benchmarking Forum (YPBMF), from the 'Your Voice' meeting group. So that Nottingham City has representative by a young person in that forum.

We are strengthening our EET opportunity by trialling an Employability PA to work with our most vulnerable or disengaged clients. This will enable us to put together bespoke packages to support our young people back into EET, linking achievable qualifications to the packages so they can improve their CV's and experience building up to full time work or further education opportunities.

The Leaving Care Service are also working alongside Fostering and Adoption, to provide training for foster carers around the transitioning of CIC to Care Leaver, so carers and young people are clear about what transition looks like and what processes need to be followed prior and post 18 with regards to housing, employability, benefits and support networks.

The Senior PA's are attending LAC reviews at 17, so to build earlier links with the young people before they become Care Leavers to strengthen the link between Social Care and Leaving Care, so the young person will be able to build relationships and have a better understanding about what the Leaving Care Service provides and what support will be offered. This should also help prevent disengagement post 18.

Having all Personal Advisors based internally ensures Care Leavers have a consistent service and that the PA is aware of the opportunities available and that Managers are managing the workers consistently. It is easier for Managers to oversee cases and the Managers at the Leaving Care Service are clear on the legislation and internal policies and procedures, which ensure Care Leaver's receive a consistent service. When out sourced to other providers, their knowledge and understanding can impact on decisions they make or conflict with the service we provide internally. Also being based internally means we have control and oversight of case and personal supervision, to ensure work is kept on track and completed within statutory time requirements. The Aftercare Worker post delivers the identical service to our Care Leavers as an internal PA post would, due to statutory requirements and internal processes. If bought back in internally, we can manage the case load in case of sickness or annual leave, whereas currently there is no cover if the Aftercare worker is off for any reason.

### **Managers post**

The Leaving Care Service is now inspected by Ofsted. It has been agreed by senior management that the Leaving Care Service need to have a manager in place to ensure clear management oversight and accountability for the team/service.

## **Proposed future for the service.**

### **Aftercare post**

The Aftercare worker being based internally also ensures we get the best value for money for that post, utilising on Duty rota, clear direct line management and oversight and direct access to support e.g. CIC police officer, EET PA, Transitions Social Worker and being part of the team dynamics instead of feeling isolated. Bringing this post internally will also save £10,000 per annum for Nottingham City Council.

### **Managers post**

With a Manager in post the Leaving Care Service will have clear management oversight and accountability.