

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – August 2018

Title of paper:	Care Leavers Annual Report	
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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 outlines the work undertaken and progress made by the Leaving Care Service since the Pilot Ofsted Inspection in January 2017. It is the Annual Report on the Service, to update the Board on services provided to young people transitioning from care into adulthood.</p>		
Recommendation(s):		
1	The Board continues to support and understand the duties required of the Leaving Care Service.	
2	To make the Board aware of the proposals for service redesign of the Leaving Care Service	

1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Nottingham City Council has a duty to provide services to those young people defined as Care Leavers under the Statutory Guidance; The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations; Volume 3, Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers, The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

1.2 Research and practice shows that young people who have been in care will have the best chance to succeed as adults if those providing transitional care and support take the following principles into account

- Is this good enough for my child?
- Provide a second chance if things do not go as expected.
- Is the support package tailored to a young person's individual needs?

These are the principles which Nottingham City Council's Leaving Care Service uses to underpin the service they deliver to our Care Leavers. The service ensures that each young person has a Pathway Plan which outlines the support to be provided which is tailored to meet their individual needs and is reviewed regularly to ensure their transition into adulthood is successful.

1.3 The Leaving Care Service provides a range of services to young people defined under the Leaving Care Act as 'Qualifying', 'Eligible', 'Relevant' or 'Former Relevant', the definitions for which are set out within statute.

1.4 Nottingham City Council has a duty to provide and sustain young people defined as Care Leavers with suitable accommodation. The Act defines suitable accommodation as the following:

- That which is reasonably practical and suitable for the young person with regards to their needs.
- That which the responsible Authority finds satisfactory with regards to the character and suitability of the landlord/provider.
- Accommodation that complies with Health and Safety legislation.
- That which takes into account young people's views, training, education and employment needs.

1.5 As the majority of young people approach their 18th birthday, they will be working towards gaining their own tenancy. The Leaving Care Service works closely with Nottingham City Homes (NCH) who are extremely supportive of Care Leavers. There is a robust housing protocol in place which enables Care Leavers to be a priority for housing, with the aim being to ensure our young people are provided with good, safe, quality accommodation. In addition, in specific cases, a direct offer of accommodation is made by NCH to a Care Leaver, rather than the typical bidding process for accommodation.

1.6 Personal Advisors work closely with NCH Housing Patch managers to ensure young people are provided with the necessary support to sustain their own tenancies. NCH will share information if young people are struggling and there may be a risk to their tenancies. NCH provides support to young people regarding finances and is well accessed by young people.

- 1.7 There are a number of young people 'Staying Put' post 18 years of age in their former foster placements, residential homes (if appropriately registered) and within semi-independent residential placements who are not ready to manage and maintain their own tenancies.
- 1.8 Current performance with regards to Care Leavers and suitable accommodation stands at 95.7% (Q1 for 2018/2019). One of the issues affecting this performance is that young people in custody are not counted as being in suitable accommodation. For 2017/2018 our figures were 87%.
- 1.9 The Leaving Care Service employs a qualified Social Worker, whose role it is to identify those young people who would qualify for Adult Social Care Services. The post title is that of a Transitions Worker and the post has proved beneficial in ensuring that our most vulnerable Care Leavers access the appropriate Adult Social Care Service in a timely manner, and if they are not eligible, identifying other support services.
- 1.14 All young people eligible for a Pathway Plan must be allocated a Personal Advisor (PA). These are not necessarily qualified workers but have the necessary skills and expertise to work with Care Leavers. This includes providing information and support in relation to finances, housing, health, education, training and employment. They are the key professionals for co-ordinating Care Leaver support. New statutory guidance determines that local authorities now retain a role as corporate parent to care leavers up to the age of 25 years (previously Care Leavers would have a PA up until 21 years of age unless in Higher Education). Young people will be able to continue to receive support when they reach age 21, or to request PA support at any point after age 21 up to age 25, even if they had previously indicated that they did not want support.
- 1.15 In addition, new statutory guidance requires local authorities to consult on and publish a Local Offer for its care leavers. The Local Offer should provide information about all the services and support that is available to care leavers from the local authority, including information about both their statutory entitlements as well as any discretionary support. The Local Offer should set out what support all local authority departments will provide (not just Children's Services). Work is underway to develop our Local Offer, which will be published in October 2018.
- 1.16 The number of young people engaged in training, education, employment and training (EET) is crucial in ensuring young people succeed in transitioning successfully into adulthood. The Leaving Care Service employs an Employability and Training Support Coordinator who works alongside other Personal Advisors, EET Providers, voluntary organisations, Futures and internal Departments to ensure young people are engaging with education, training or employment. For 2017/2018 our figures for those engaged in EET was 57.3%.
- 1.17 The Leaving Care Service have launched an in-house employability programme that supports Nottingham's most disengaged and vulnerable care leavers to make positive steps towards training and employment. The programme is recognised by the DWP as a genuine, progressive job seeking provision for care leavers. The programme provides bespoke opportunities that aim to build a young person's confidence and give them the support that they need to develop the good habits and skills that are essential to sustaining mainstream training or employment. Each bespoke programme gives young people the opportunity to gain meaningful work

experience under the guidance of a mentor, provided by an ever increasing network of community partners and internal Nottingham City Council services.

- 1.18 In addition, the Leaving Care Service has become a registered centre for the delivery of ASDAN courses and all young people have the opportunity to achieve employability qualifications (from entry level to level 2).
- 1.19 The Leaving Care Service is working hard to ensure the participation of Care Leavers in delivering appropriate services. A Care Leavers group known as 'Your Voice' continues to meet quarterly, bringing a wide range of young people together to discuss experiences and issues that care leavers face during the transition to living independently. The group is closely linked to the Children in Care Council, with care leavers regularly feeding back on the work undertaken by the group, to other young people who are approaching leaving care. The Your Voice group has previously participated in meetings with Councillors regarding access to housing and supported accommodation; education, employment and training and the 'Have Your Say' survey findings. Representatives from the Your Voice group regularly participate in recruitment, advisory and assessment panels across Children and Families (key examples include the recruitment for Head of Service and Personal Advisor roles, and helping to assess presentations by student social workers on the Grow Our Own programme.)
- 1.20 Our 2nd annual Achievement Awards took place on the evening of Thursday 19th July 2018 at the Council House, celebrating the successes of our care leavers. 77 young people received recognition for their achievements across 6 categories; Education, Employment, Apprenticeships, Employability, Contribution to Service Improvement and Outstanding Achievement. In addition to receiving awards for their hard work, young people and their guests enjoyed celebrating their success with a 3 course meal and live entertainment by local artists who gave up their time to perform for free. The event was sponsored by a number of our key partners who provide support and opportunities for our care leavers to enter and progress in EET, including Lasting Differences, Switch Up, Nottingham City Homes and Radiant Cleaners.
- 1.21 The Pilot Ofsted Inspection in January 2017 identified that the Leaving Care Service needed to be more tenacious in ensuring the service maintains contact and support with older Care Leavers. Our response to the inspection findings included the review and updating of the Keeping in touch Protocol and the commissioning of an independent review of service delivery and structure which identified the need for additional management capacity. As a result of this, additional specialist resources were identified to support Management capacity. Currently a Youth Justice Specialist has been seconded to the Service on a part time basis and provides additional management oversight. The Leaving Care Service has also taken opportunity to learn from other Local Authorities (East Riding and Hull) and from the National Implementation Advisor for Care Leavers. In addition, the Leaving Care Service has been relocated to sit alongside the Children in Care Teams.
- 1.22 A Structure Review is currently being undertaken to address capacity and improve transitions planning. We are currently considering a new model for a 16+ team, which will be responsible for Children in Care aged 16 up to care leavers aged 25 years. This will be a team comprised of 2 Team Managers, Social Workers as well as Personal Advisors and it is anticipated that this structure will improve transition

planning and lead to better outcomes for our care leavers as they move into independence.

2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 The Board have a corporate duty to understand and promote the services that Nottingham City Council has to undertake legally, to promote the outcomes and opportunities of its Care Leavers.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 None.

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

- 4.1 None.

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

- 5.1 None.

6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY 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.

Yes



Attached as Appendix x, and due regard will be given to any implications identified in it.

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 The Children Act, 1989; Guidance and Regulations, Volume 3, Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers.
- 9.2 The Children (Leaving Care) Act, 2000.
- 9.3 Children and Young Persons Act, 2008. The Children and Social Work Act 2017