

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has been included in the relevant Forward Plan

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PEOPLE) TO CABINET

(18th April 2018)

CHILDREN AND SOCIAL WORK ACT (2017): BARNSELY'S LOCAL OFFER FOR CARE LEAVERS

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present, for Cabinet's consideration and approval, the Borough's proposed Local Offer to young people leaving the care of the Authority.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Cabinet approves for publication, the draft Local Offer for Care Leavers as shown in the Appendix to the report.**

3.0 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Both the Children Act (1989) and the Children (Leaving Care) Act (2000) place a statutory duty upon the Council as the 'Corporate Parent' to provide continued financial and transitional support to young people aged up to 25 and leaving care.
- 3.2 This forms a key part of the Council's 'Pledge' to improve the range of outcomes for children in care and care leavers (notably, their educational achievement, health and wellbeing, including safeguarding from harm) which was reviewed, revised and then adopted for approval by Full Council, alongside the Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel during 2016.

4.0 PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION

- 4.1 Children And Social Work Act (2017)
- 4.2 Part 1, Chapter 1 of the Children and Social Work Act (2017) augments a statutory duty upon local authorities, in England, to publish in accordance with recent statutory guidance, information about the services which the local authority directly offers to care leavers, together with other services which could assist care leavers in preparing for adulthood and independence.
- 4.3 These services include the following:
- Health and wellbeing.
 - Relationships.
 - Education and training.
 - Employment.

- Accommodation.
- Participation And Inclusion.

4.4 Barnsley's Local Offer To Care Leavers

4.5 As part of complying with this provision, the Appendix, to this report, sets out Barnsley's draft Local Offer, for Cabinet's consideration. This document builds upon our continuing 'Pledge' to children in care and care leavers and reinforces the commitment of the Council and its partners to achieving seven corporate parenting principles, summarised below:

1. To act in the best interests and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children in care and care experienced young people (*or care leavers*)
2. To encourage children in care and care experienced young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of children in care and care experienced young people in planning and commissioning relevant services.
4. To help children in care and care experienced young people to gain access to and make the best use of services provided by the Council and its partners.
5. To promote high aspirations and secure the best outcomes for children in care and care experienced young people.
6. For children in care and care experienced young people to be safe and to foster stability in their home lives, relationships and education, training or work.
7. To prepare children in care and care experienced young people for adulthood and independent living.

4.6 Right To Support From A Personal Advisor

4.7 In further compliance with the above named Act and recently produced statutory guidance, the Local Offer also includes reference to the right of a care experienced young person up to the age of 25 to have a personal advisor who will assess and develop a pathway with a view to identifying:

- Any services offered by the Local Authority which could assist in meeting the young person's needs and,
- If so, what advice and support the Local Authority could, appropriately, provide in helping the care experienced young person to obtain these services.

5.0 **CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES**

5.1 The Borough's Local Offer to Care Leavers has been developed in response to the new statutory duty indicated in Paragraph 4.2, together with subsequent, statutory guidance, with which the Authority must comply and where there is no alternative.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS

- 6.1 The Local Offer, combined with our continuing 'Pledge' will ensure all care experienced young people, wherever they live, are aware of their rights and are supported in making a successful transition to adulthood and independence

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 It is envisaged that the support provided by the Council as outlined in the Local Offer can be funded from existing resources of the Children Social Care and Safeguarding Business Unit.
- 7.2 Additional Government grant funding (£8,638) has been provided in 2018/19 to help the Council to meet the requirements of the new duty (which comes into effect on 1 April 2018) to offer Personal Adviser support to all care leavers up to age 25.

8.0 EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no workforce implications for the Council, directly arising through consideration of this report.

9.0 COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Subject to the Council's approval and at the appropriate time, steps will be taken to publish and promote the Local Offer, including via the Council's own and the Barnsley '*I Know I Can*' Web Sites.

10.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The Local Offer has been formulated with the benefit of direct insight from care experienced young people and will be reviewed and refined annually to ensure it remains fit for the purpose of informing them of their rights and on how they can access services which will enable them to achieve their aspirations and make a safe and successful transition to adulthood and independence.

11.0 THE CORPORATE PLAN AND THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

- 11.1 The Local Offer will support the Council's Corporate Plan Priority of enabling all young people to achieve their potential. It will also support the achievement of five of the six Strategic Objectives of the Barnsley Children and Young People's Plan (2016-19) indicated below:
- Keeping children and young people safe.
 - Improving education, achievement and employability.
 - Tackling child and family poverty and improving family life.
 - Supporting all children, young people and families to make healthy lifestyle choices.

- Encouraging positive relationships, strengthening emotional health and maintaining inclusion.

12.0 PROMOTING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

- 12.1 As part of the first annual review of the Local Offer, an equality impact assessment will be compiled next year in order to help ensure the specific needs of care leavers with protected characteristics continue to be met, including through help in challenging any perceived discrimination on the grounds of being a care leaver and this will be regularly monitored by the Service and reported to the Corporate Parenting Panel.

13.0 TACKLING THE IMPACT OF POVERTY

- 13.1 The Local Offer demonstrates the Council's prevailing commitment towards supporting (*including financial support*) care leavers in making a successful transition into adulthood and independence. It builds upon the recent proposal, included within the Council's Service and Financial Plans for 2018/19, to exempt care leavers who enter independent accommodation, from the payment of Council Tax until the age of 25 in order to prevent the multiple effects of deprivation and to provide stability of accommodation from which their aspirations and potential can be better fulfilled.

14.0 TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

- 14.1 The Local Offer expressly includes reference on which services and how care leavers will be supported to maintain their health and wellbeing, as part of closing the gap with peers and helping achieve their potential.

15.0 REDUCTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER

- 15.1 There are no implications within the Local Offer for tackling crime and disorder. Our ongoing 'Pledge' to both children in care and care leavers will ensure care leavers are supported to remain safe from harm and are prevented from adopting risky behavior which can impact on themselves and their communities.

16.0 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 16.1 Any emerging risks in fulfilling the statutory duty of publishing and adhering to the Local Offer will be monitored through the Children's Services Continuous Improvement Plan.

17.0 HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESILIENCE ISSUES

- 17.1 There are no implications for the health and safety of the public or employees and the Borough's resilience arising through this report.

18.0 COMPATIBILITY WITH THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

- 18.1 The Local Offer would accord with the Articles and Protocols of the Convention, particularly in promoting the rights of young people.

19.0 CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY

19.1 There are no implications for the local environment or the conservation of biodiversity emerging through publication of the Local Offer.

20.0 GLOSSARY

20.1 None, applicable.

21.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

21.1. Appendix : Barnsley's Local Offer For Care Leavers (2018).

22.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

22.1 If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

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Financial Implications / Consultation



...22 March 2018.....

(To be signed by senior Financial Services officer where there are no direct financial implications)