

11 February 2019**Agenda Item: 14****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL
WORK****APPROVAL OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE'S LOCAL OFFER FOR CARE LEAVERS****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report seeks Member approval of the proposed Nottinghamshire Local Offer for Care Leavers, attached as **Appendix 1**.

Information

2. Section 2 of the Children and Social Care Act 2017 requires each local authority (including seven districts/boroughs) to publish a Local Offer for its care leavers (18 – 25 years). It should provide information about all the services and support, statutory and discretionary, that is available to them from each local authority. It should be noted that this Act describes district councils as 'local authorities'. The Local Offer should include details of local authority services and support that could help care leavers' transition to adulthood and independent living in relation to health and well-being, positive relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation and participation in society.
3. Through Nottinghamshire Local Authorities Chief Executives' Group, the eight authorities agreed to create one joint single Care Leaver Offer for Nottinghamshire. They also agreed that Nottinghamshire County Council would co-ordinate the development, writing and publication of the Offer.
4. Partners in Nottinghamshire with responsibility for developing the Local Offer for Care Leavers have benefitted from the tireless work of Terry Galloway. Terry is a care leaver himself and a champion of care leaver rights. Terry is campaigning both locally and nationally to improve services for care leavers and Nottinghamshire's Local Offer has been enhanced significantly as a consequence of his support and commitment.
5. The Act does not specify when the Local Offer should be published. However the Government's expectation is that it should be available within six to nine months of commencement of the duty (April 2018), to allow for the consultation with stakeholders, including care leavers, in the development and publication process.
6. Representatives from the County Council, district/borough councils, other public sector services, voluntary organisations and key stakeholders including ex and current care

leavers, have all been involved in developing the Local Offer. These have included relevant representatives from: housing, leisure, safeguarding, health improvement, community engagement, economic development and regeneration, transport and planning operations, partnerships, foster care services, leaving care services, care leaver apprentices, Children in Care Council, youth services, looked after children services, Mansfield Community & Voluntary Services, Prince's Trust, Children's Society, SOVA (providers of the Independent Visitor Service for Nottinghamshire's Looked After Children), Probation Service, We R Here, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service, health care providers, health care commissioners, Achieve and Inspire Foundation, Futures, FE colleges, Nottingham Trent University, University of Nottingham, Youth Offending Team, D2N2, Chamber of Commerce, Department of Work and Pensions and Groundwork.

7. It is proposed that Nottinghamshire's Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers (CL) Strategic Partnership Board be the body accountable for the performance management and continuous improvement of the Offer. This Board is currently attended by the Vice Chairman of the Children and Young People's Committee and is chaired by the Service Director for Education, Learning and Skills.
8. The Offer will be a dynamic one that will be presented and published in different formats, including on IT platforms, to make it accessible to a wide range of care leavers.

How the Local Offer has been created

9. Since April 2018, representatives from departments across the local authorities have worked alongside NCC officers, partners including health, as well as current and ex care leavers to ensure the offer has the potential to make a real difference for individual care leavers. Work streams were agreed and have been led by appropriate senior officers from across the collaborative partnership as follows:
 - employment, skills and apprenticeships – led by the Chief Executive of Newark & Sherwood District Council
 - education and work experience – led by the Service Director, Education, Learning and Skills, Nottinghamshire County Council
 - housing – district council-led working group led by the Gedling Borough Council and a Care Leaver Ambassador
 - physical and mental health – led by the Consultant in Public Health, Nottinghamshire County Council
 - wellbeing, relationships and community engagement – led by the Service Director, Youth, Families and Social Work, Nottinghamshire County Council.

The content of Nottinghamshire's Local Offer for Care Leavers

10. The resulting Local Offer document contains the current services and support available for care leavers in Nottinghamshire (**Appendix 1**). This offer builds on support and advice already available to Nottinghamshire's care leavers. However, by working collaboratively with the other local authorities and partners, this offer has been significantly strengthened. Specifically the proposed Offer builds on existing relevant NCC Social Care Policies and Procedures as detailed in Nottinghamshire Children's Social Care Service Procedures Manual (updated January 2019). These are:

- a. 11.8.1 Leaving Care and Transition
 - b. 11.8.2 Financial Arrangements for Care Leavers
 - c. 12.4 Staying Put Policy.
11. The Council has, however, committed to providing real opportunities that go beyond any statutory minimum requirements of the 2017 Act. Over the last six months, the Council has developed new offers for care leavers as follows:
 - a. dedicated care leaver apprenticeships: five are currently employed within the Youth Service, one of whom is working on the Local Offer project
 - b. a coaching programme for all care leaver apprentices to enable them to successfully complete their training and assessment
 - c. a top-up of care leaver apprentices' salaries to the age-related National Living Wage
 - d. a free annual residential or day trip to one of NCC's outdoor and environmental centres for care leavers who would like to go.
 12. The top up of care leaver apprentice salaries to the age related National Living Wage reflects the high level of commitment of the Council to improving the life chances of our care leavers.
 13. By working in partnership with district/borough councils, a significant housing offer has been secured. Care leavers will be exempted from council tax up to their 25th birthday, will have immediate prioritisation to band 2 for housing and will have access to self-contained accommodation where required. This has been possible through discussion, alignment and adaptation of policies between the district/borough councils and the County Council and other organisations.
 14. In response to identified need from care leavers, district/borough councils' chief executives have also agreed to support, in principle, a new single offer of free access to council-owned leisure facilities for all care leavers across Nottinghamshire, subject to the details being considered and ratified by their appropriate decision-making bodies.
 15. District/borough councils' chief executives have also agreed to join NCC in providing a single offer of care leaver apprenticeships with coaching support within their organisations. This will be further developed over the coming months before it is formally added to the published Offer.
 16. The Local Offer will be outcomes-focused, monitored and evaluated by the LAC and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership Board.

Other partnership activities

17. A Business Breakfast will take place on Thursday 7th March 2019, hosted by the Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire. He will outline the Local Offer to business leaders from across Nottinghamshire and invite them to pledge their support to increase employment opportunities for care leavers.
18. The service directors of children's social care from across D2N2 are discussing the development of a joint offer across the regions. This has been driven by the Care Leaver

Ambassador who is also advocating for a stronger national offer for care leavers to be developed centrally by government.

Communicating the Local Offer

19. Subject to approval, the Local Offer (**Appendix 1**) will be available in printed form to all care leavers through their social worker or personal adviser, in a format that is appealing and accessible to young people. It will also be available on a dedicated area of 'Notts Help Yourself' (www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk) and on a mobile App. The use of IT platforms means that the current Offer will be updated as soon as new services and support become available from partners (for example, the districts' leisure offer). The design of all media (printed and online) will be informed by the feedback gained from consultation with care leavers on the Local Offer that was undertaken between 10th and 21st December 2018.
20. Members have already approved a detailed communications plan for the dissemination of the Offer at the meeting of Children and Young People's Committee on 19th November 2018. The communications plan advised Members that a conference would be delivered in February 2019 but this been postponed to the summer term 2019.

Other Options Considered

21. That each local authority in Nottinghamshire develop and produce its own Local Offer for Care Leavers.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

22. To fulfil Nottinghamshire County Council's statutory duty as Corporate Parent.
23. To improve lifetime outcomes for Nottinghamshire's care leavers.
24. To reduce lifetime local and national spend on care leavers.

Statutory and Policy Implications

25. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

26. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Implications for Service Users

27. The proposed Local Offer for Care Leavers has significant and positive benefits for services users, namely the County's care leavers, who are some of the most vulnerable residents in

the County. This new Offer provides a comprehensive guide to all the services and support care leavers are already entitled to, as well as new entitlements that, together, will have a substantial impact on their lives.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) To approve the proposed Nottinghamshire Local Offer for Care Leavers, attached as **Appendix 1**.

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Constitutional Comments (KK 18/01/19)

28. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee.

Financial Comments (SAS 29/01/19)

29. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Children and Social Care Act 2017 -
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted>

Local offer guidance: Guidance for local authorities (February 2018) –
www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-offer-guidance

Communications strategy for Nottinghamshire's Local Offer for Care Leavers – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 19 November 2018.

Leaving Care Policy
http://nottinghamshirechildcare.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_leaving_care.html

Financial arrangements for Care Leavers
http://nottinghamshirechildcare.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_fin_arrang_leavers.html

Staying Put Policy

http://nottinghamshirechildcare.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_staying_put.html

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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