

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEES**WORK EXPERIENCE AND APPRENTICESHIPS FOR LOOKED AFTER YOUNG PEOPLE AND CARE LEAVERS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Personnel Committee on the work of the Human Resources, Workforce & Organisational Development team (HR, W&OD) in the development and delivery of a programme of work experience and Apprenticeship opportunities for NCC Looked After Children and Care Leavers and seek approval for continued work in this area.

Background

2. As corporate parent, the Council has a responsibility to ensure that not only do Looked after Children have a safe and stable home life but that they also have the necessary support needed to make the move from school into further education, training or work.
3. For Looked After Young People, the transition from school to further education, training or work can be especially difficult. In addition to the support from Children's Social Care teams, a number of initiatives are being put in place to support this transition, including a new work experience programme designed to get Looked After Children from year 8 upwards ready for work. This work also includes increased opportunities for apprenticeships with the Council for these young people.
4. The Councils Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2018-21, which was approved by the Children and Young People's Committee in January 2018 outlines the commitment to:
 - *Offer work experience and work placements, within an appropriate bespoke curriculum pathway plan, that supports children and young people, as far as they are able, to aspire to access the most appropriate route into future education, employment or training from Year 9 onwards;*
 - *Provide initial work experience from Year 9, leading into work placements and employment from 16 years. This is to ensure that all Looked After Children and care leavers have opportunities for learning and developing the appropriate skills that will support them in their future careers.*
5. Whilst this strategy originates from the Children and Families Department of the Council, there is a clear role for the HR, Workforce and Organisational Development team (HRW&OD) to play in ensuring that relevant and appropriate opportunities are provided across the Council in line with other work experience opportunities provided more

universally.

Progress to Date

6. Under current arrangements any Care Leaver or Looked After Child is guaranteed to be shortlisted for supernumerary entry level apprenticeships across the Council.
7. Closer joint working between HRWOD team members and the Leaving Care Team including attendance at team meetings with Personal Advisors and Achievement Advisors in the Children and Families Service will improve our ability to identify possible opportunities for this group of young people.
8. Work has also been undertaken with the co-ordinator of Virtual School to develop a programme of work experience and careers support for our Looked after Children. This work experience programme for the first Year 8 cohort took place in July 2018. This initial day involved young people meeting with senior officers and Elected Members, observing a full Council meeting and provided an initial introduction to the work of the Council.
9. Where possible, the Council will offer all Looked After Children and Care Leavers either an apprenticeship or alternatively support in an apprenticeship if the chosen career is not one present in the Local Authority.

Next Steps

10. An Action Plan has been developed to focus on the implementation of the programme of work over the next six months (**Appendix 1**).
11. The group of Year 8 students who attended in July 2018 will be invited back to undertake a further programme of work experience in the summer term 2019 as Year 9 students. A further group of Year 8 pupils will be invited to attend the Induction to the programme. These young people will continue to be supported with work experience opportunities and careers advice until they leave school.
12. Promotional materials will be produced to promote Apprenticeships as a positive career choice and to promote the offer of work experience opportunities for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. This information will be circulated to schools and support will be offered to ensure children are encouraged to take up of these opportunities.
13. Work continues with colleagues in the Virtual School, the Leaving Care and Looked After Children teams to secure the engagement of young people in the programme and to offer opportunities to individuals that meet their personal career aspirations.

Other Options Considered

14. A range of options have been considered to support the Council in fulfilling its corporate parenting role and improve outcomes for care leavers. The programme developed is felt to best meet this objective but must be kept under review and developed in light of feedback and experience.

Reason for Recommendations

15. The support to encourage young people within the care of the Council to engage with work experience opportunities and having left care, supported into employment in an apprenticeship enables the Council to deliver its statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of Looked After Children and to act as a good corporate parent.

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. 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

17. There are no additional financial implications for this committee to consider other than the allocation of officer time to maintain engagement with the programme.

Human Resource Implications

18. As a key part of its overall approach to workforce planning and underpinning its commitment to being an Employer of Choice, the County Council supports the use of Apprenticeships as a means of offering jobs, work based learning and career opportunities to the most diverse range of potential new recruits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Approve the continuing work around the engagement and support of care leavers into employment using apprenticeships as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2) Approve the continuing delivery and expansion of a work experience programme for Looked After Children.

Marjorie Toward

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Constitutional Comments (KK 05/11/18)

19. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

Financial Comments (SS 06/11/18)

20. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

Human Resources Comments (SJ 20/11/18)

21. There are no specific HR implications for the current workforce but attendance at the events will support the Council as described in paragraph 18.

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.

- Nottinghamshire County Council *A Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers in Nottinghamshire*. 2018-2021
<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/130637/lookedafterchildrencareleaversstrategy.pdf>

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All