

**2 July 2024****Agenda Item: 8****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, HELP, PROTECTION AND CARE****PROGRESS OF THE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS (2022 – 2025)****Purpose of the Report**

1. The report provides an update on the Partnership Strategy for Looked after Children and Care Leavers 2022 - 2025, including the progress and some of the key achievements by the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Partnership to date since January 2024.

**Information**

2. The Council remains committed to delivering a genuine, multi-agency, child-centred strategy to achieve its shared ambition and delivery of commitments. As a Partnership, the collective commitment is to give every one of our children and young people the foundations and support to thrive in adulthood.
3. Over the next few years, there is a requirement for partners to work together in the wider community to create systemic change: a better, more cohesive way of thinking and with agencies and organisations working towards a common goal. This must include the early dignified help and support that families need and trust, to enable better relationships.

**Nottinghamshire's Delivery Plan for Looked After Children and Care Leavers (2022-2025)**

4. The Looked After Children and Leaving Care Partnership Delivery Plan 2022-2025 was approved at the Partnership Board meeting in May 2024. It is owned by all partners as part of their existing service and/or multi-agency plans and seeks to capture wider achievements of Looked after Children and Care Leavers in relation to their social and emotional wellbeing.
5. There is a strong focus on preparation for independence and a fulfilling adulthood, ensuring explicit commitment to the Looked after Children and Leaving Care Partnership Strategy 2022-2025.
6. Evaluation and analysis of key performance indicators against strategic aims is to take place in summer 2025 and will form the basis of The Looked after and Leaving Care Partnership Strategy 2026-2029. The intention is to include the voice of a young person on the Partnership in this next partnership strategy.

## **The Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership Board**

7. The Partnership Board continues to be chaired by Amanda Collinson, Service Director for Help, Protection and Care and vice-chaired by Peter McConnochie, Service Director for Education, Learning and Skills and is attended by Councillors Sinead Anderson and Tracey Taylor. The Board meets bi-monthly and is well attended by both internal services and external partners with the aim of working effectively together to ensure improved outcomes for looked after children and care leavers in Nottinghamshire and that these are prioritised within their respective organisations.
8. The Corporate Parenting principles continue to underpin the work of the Board and set an expectation of Board members to use their voice to influence and advocate on behalf of looked after children and care leavers in partner's wider organisations, taking all opportunities to amplify the understanding of the experiences and needs of looked after children and care leavers at a local, regional, and national level.

## **Progress and Partnership Updates Provided to the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership Board from Internal and External Partners**

### **Partnership Pledge**

9. The Partnership Pledge has been developed by local care-experienced young people, approved by Partnership Board Partners earlier this year and referred to in the update to the Corporate Parenting Panel in January 2024. The pledge includes the support available to young people in care and outlines the Council's commitments to them. The voiceover for the animated video version of the Pledge took place on 20 May at the Inspire Youth Arts.

### **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment**

10. Key priorities and recommendations have been identified on the development of the joint strategic needs assessment for children in care and care leavers, with input from the Partnership Board.
11. Nottinghamshire's key data performance on demographics of children (including unaccompanied), ethnicity, education and employment, youth and criminal justice has been analysed and compared against local and national data, considering health inequalities, local need, local provision, gaps, views and guidance, best practice, and legislation. A report is to be presented and approved at Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2024.

### **Statutory Health Assessments**

12. Initial health assessments (IHAs) for looked after children remain on the NHS risk register, but it is an improving picture, with a focus on standardising the measurement of IHAs across all three health care providers and on improving outcomes for unaccompanied children. New key performance indicator metrics provide robust data and clearly identify blocks and challenges. There is a reduction in health assessment waiting times, the referral process is more robust, and is now 3-4 weeks as opposed to 10 weeks previously. Health

is working closely with the Council's looked after and leaving care team to triangulate the data and provide quarterly reports to NHS Senior Leadership.

### **The Integrated Care System Service Improvement Forum (SIF)**

13. There is a focus on transition into the adulthood service for children in care and care leavers. There is a larger capacity of NHS nurses, enabling them to be more child focussed and understand the needs of older children, particularly on safeguarding issues. Out of area children and young people are considered carefully, with a particular focus on older children, ensuring working together effectively with other authorities. Safeguarding concerns are escalated to the Looked After Assurance group ensuring intelligence is captured and to understand challenges/issues with involvement from the Council's children's social care on the workstreams.

### **Nottinghamshire's Updated Local Offer for Care Leavers**

14. The Local Offer informs young people about the 'offer' of services and support available as a care leaver in Nottinghamshire. An updated offer was launched in April 2024, including amendments, making it more inclusive and easier to understand.

### **Working Well (Individual Placement Support Project for People with Health Conditions)**

15. Primary care provision is in place to support a sustained relationship between health and employment within Nottinghamshire, Nottingham City and Derby City. The key aim of the programme is to support local growth, the economy and employment, and facilitate sustained employment for care leavers who move into adulthood, who may have health conditions or disabilities impacting their ability to work. The programme supports individuals to secure work and maintain a job role.

### **Good News Stories**

16. The Looked after and Leaving Care Team and the Virtual school provides updates on achievements and progress of children and young people and examples include:
  - Young people singing, dancing and reading at the recent Fostering's Got Talent event.
  - A Special Guardianship Order gained for a young person by his foster carer who he had lived with many years.
  - A young person out of education secured a college place in September 2024.
  - A young person has been elected to the school council.
  - Two young people spoke to the education conference (from West Notts College) about their experience at college, their aspirations and the support they receive.
  - A young person had positive contact with their dad for the first time in six years.

### **Other Options Considered**

17. To not bring this report to the Panel: this option is discounted because this report provides information which forms an important part of the Panel's remit in assisting the Council in fulfilling its legal corporate parenting duties and acting as an effective corporate parent.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

18. The report provides an opportunity for the Panel to consider any further actions arising from the information contained within the report.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

19. 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**

20. There are no financial implications arising from the report.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the Corporate Parenting Panel:

- 1) considers whether there are any actions it requires to further strengthen the Leaving Care service.
- 2) considers how it wishes to further monitor the implementation of the Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers in Nottinghamshire (2022-2025).

**Amanda Collinson**  
**Service Director, Help, Protection and Care**

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## **Constitutional Comments (CD 19/06/24)**

21. The recommendations proposed falls within the remit of the Corporate Parenting Panel by virtue of its terms of reference.

## **Financial Comments (VC 19/06/24)**

22. There are no additional financial implications arising 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.

DfE statutory guidance for local authorities Local Offer for care leavers:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-offer-guidance>

DfE statutory guidance for local authorities, Applying parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-corporate-parenting-principles-to-looked-after-children-and-care-leavers>

[A Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers \(2022-2025\)](#)

The Terms of Reference and Membership of the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership Board.

The Partnership Pledge – A Guide for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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