

Leaving Care Consultation Report for the Local Offer July 2018

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To date there are 215 Care Leavers open to Derby City Council. Over a period of 3 months PA's were encouraged to go through these consultation exercises as part of their visiting routines. 31 forms were returned in total with 5 not completed or part completed. 1 person did not understand the questions.

The consultation document was split into the Pathway Plan domains to coordinate the responses and will be used as part of the development of Derby City Council's Local Offer.

The key themes are as follows.

Health and Well Being

- Support for mental health is a reoccurring need with requests for accessing therapy, having a mental health nurse employed by Leaving Care team and counselling service.
- Health passport with summary of health needs
- How to access a GP and dentist
- Sexual health advice
- Information and support with DV issues
- Free gym passes and free access to DCC leisure facilities. (some young people have this whilst others do not)
- Free bus pass especially when attending education and for those that live in rural communities
- Organised activities
- Information on what financial support is available and how to access it
- Regular updates on leaving care website of all local events and resources that include free access to care leavers

Relationships

- Opportunity to help other young people leaving care – become mentors
- Want to know about independent visitors
- Mentors
- Forum dates/topics

- Clubs where care leavers can get together
- Information on healthy relationships
- DV support
- Free legal advice and support

Education

- More careers guidance and future planning with education and employment
- More career opportunities for care leavers
- Preparation for employment including applying for jobs and interview techniques
- Information from Connexions for 18-19 year olds. They provide a service for 16-17 year olds and for 19+.
- 1-1 opportunities to visit Universities
- Open days at Universities
- Separate jobs for young people
- Incentives to attend education
- Continue with Derby City Council apprenticeships and support to apply for this
- More support to access apprenticeships
- Offers specific to care leavers
- Regular emails about opportunities from Connexions and employers

Accommodation

- Extra funding to set up a home
- More houses to be available and made easy through other housing services rather than housing options
- Support with decorating and repairs
- Tenancy support
- Different supported living options
- Support with getting accommodation in a different area to Derby City Council Keep staying put
- More to time to set up before moving into accommodation
- More information about options for housing and the support post 18
- Some options for care leavers who have made mistakes and lost accommodation
- Do not use Milestone House
- Know where the stop cock is

Getting your voice heard

- Have a face book page or forum where care leavers can talk when not living locally
- Blog for anonymous comments
- Care leaver forum to be made more inviting with a nice venue and maybe with some food and drink
- Leaving Care website to have activities and events added so that care leavers can consider any of interest
- 1-1 sessions on personal issues/needs
- Outings to seaside and leisure parks
- Celebration events
- Christmas money to be paid in cash
- Peer support – match to somebody with same personality so can meet up
- Use media apps
- Receive information in the post

Priorities for the next 2 years

- Get a job, have a career, have a profession
- Have a house
- Have a family
- Settle in UK permanently
- Keep accommodation
- Continue with education
- Have a house (mortgage)
- Be a good parent, provide for my family and keep them safe
- Continue working so that I can get a house with my partner
- Be stable
- Get support for mental health
- Build positive relationships.

Derby City Council Rights and Entitlements

- 1 person has used the service
- 5 people know about the service but have not used it
- 8 do not know about it
- 2 are unsure

What we get right

- PA support is good
- No council tax
- Get support when I cannot cope emotionally. My PA and leaving care team guide me through
- I have accommodation, finances, education and support with solicitor and Home Office
- Financial support to get to college was good
- The care leavers rights and entitlements booklet is useful

What we do better

- Need information in different languages
- More financial support
- Allow me to make my own decisions
- Would like more careers/education advice
- Consultations with mental health
- More information on bursary and free travel to college
- Give more chances when we make mistakes
- There are not enough workers so time they have is limited
- Send letters about opportunities for young people
- Would like to know ahead if worker is not going to be available
- Young people have to wait too long at reception for vouchers or tickets
- Prefer brief information as it can be confusing.

Analysis

General consensus is care leavers are happy with the service they receive, they have good relationships with their leaving care workers and have good access to support from them.

Mental health and support for mental health/emotional has been identified by a number of young people. They have come up with suggestions to have a mental health nurse employed by leaving care and easier access to therapy and counselling. DV is another issue that has been identified and as one young person said “when you are lonely you make friends with anybody and they then use you”. This is a good example of the isolation young people feel when leaving care and how their vulnerability increases.

There appears to be a disparity in the services young people get with some getting free gym passes and others not getting this. The same would apply to free bus passes for attending college.

Most young people are ambitious and want to further their education or have a career or a job however they struggle to achieve this for a number of reasons, finance is one as they have limited funds to live on and getting to work or college is an extra expense and motivation is another as one young person said “there is nobody telling you to go so it is easy to just not go”.

Young people are identifying that there is no careers advice for 18-19 year olds and would like this to be available. They would like support with making job applications and interview skills. The apprenticeships available through Derby City Council have been a success and young people would like this to continue. Some have secured permanent jobs from their apprenticeships.

Young people would like to be supported to attend open days at universities or have the opportunity to look around different places before making a decision.

Some of the care leavers are now becoming parents and have identified that they would like some support for their children i.e. during legal disputes. Others would like to know more about healthy relationships to tackle DV.

A reoccurring theme is loneliness and isolation. Young people would like opportunities to socialise with each other; this could be through social events and trips to seaside or Theme Parks. Young people have talked about the care leavers’ forum and would like this to be more inviting with better venues and perhaps some food and drinks available.

Young people are appreciative of having accommodation but would like extra funding to set up home, more time before they move in to set up and would like some support with decorating and repairs. They would also like to know where important things like the stopcock or electrics box are.

A few recognised they lost their accommodation due to mistakes they made and would like to be given another chance and never be put in Milestone House. Some would like better opportunities for housing away from Derby.

Young people want a Facebook page for care leavers so that they can get information about activities and events and to talk to each other. This again highlights the isolation young people feel as care leavers.

Things that need improving in the service young people receive from their workers is for young people to be told in advance if their worker is not going to be available, them not having to wait so long to receive vouchers or tickets, opportunity to make their own decisions and second chances when they make mistakes