



Derby City Council

**Corporate Parenting Sub Board  
4 December 2012**

**ITEM 06**

Report of the Strategic Director of Children and Young People

**Charter for Care Leavers**

**SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Department for Education (DfE) in association with care leavers, charities and local authorities launched a Council charter for care leavers. The charter is based on six principles of support: identity and aspiration, listening to care leavers views, support when needed, information, finding care leavers a home and working together. The Charter was created by care leavers over a two-year period and was officially launched by Children's Minister Edward Timpson to mark National cares week (24<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2012).
- 1.2 The Children's Minister has written to Councils urging them to sign up to the Charter and to discuss with Children in Care Councils what needs to be done to help embed its principles in day to day practice.
- 1.3 It is perhaps important to note that what is pledged is already covered in legislation and should therefore be standard practice. Case law has further clarified the extent and nature of these duties including a general duty to provide all care leavers with accommodation where their welfare requires it.
- 1.4 In relation to find a home the Council have clear duties to provide care leavers with suitable accommodation when they leave care and to step in as a safety net should they become homeless or find themselves in unsuitable accommodation.

**RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To sign up to the Charter and to discuss with Children in Care Councils what needs to be done to help embed its principles in day to day practice.
- 2.2 To ensure the continued provision of supported accommodation to enable a phased approach to moving on and allow young people who have already left care the option of moving back to supported accommodation should they be unable to manage a tenancy.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The Charter is about the hearts and minds of care themselves and thinking about

them as individuals and should therefore be the essence of good corporate parenting.

- 3.2 The Council already has these duties detailed in the pledge under the provisions of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations. Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Nationally 19% of young people left care at the age of 16 and 18% at 17. In 2011, 36% of care leavers were not in training, education or employment (NCAS 2012). Evidence from research, practice and young people identify the following messages:

- myths, stereotypes and stigma
- diversity of needs and experiences, not a homogenous group
- many are vulnerable to not achieving potential
- collectively over-represented in disadvantaged groups.
- transitions are accelerated, compressed and not sequential
- stability, consistency and quality relationships promote resilience
- good quality support does improve life chances and outcomes
- young people need to be at the centre of decision making

- 4.2 What concerns young people about leaving care?

- Being on own
- Not being able to cope
- Not being to get help when you need it
- Not having enough money to live on
- Cleaning up after yourself
- Leaving care before you're ready
- Having nowhere to go/come back to
- Being put in a dodgy place
- Having nowhere to live
- Not being settled anywhere and having to keep moving around

Children's Right Director 2010 [www.rights4me.org](http://www.rights4me.org)

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None as we would like to adopt the charter for care leavers for Derby.

**This report has been approved by the following officers:**

<b>Legal officer</b>	N/A
<b>Financial officer</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resources officer</b>	N/A
<b>Service Director(s)</b>	Jane Parfremment
<b>Other(s)</b>	Steve Baguley, Head of Service

**For more information contact:**  
**Background papers:**  
**List of appendices:**

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Appendix 1 - Care leavers Charter  
Appendix 2 – Care Leavers Chart report, pathway assessment and plan  
Appendix 3 – Presentation

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial and Value for Money**

- 1.1 The proposed cuts to supporting people will mean that there will be very limited supported accommodation available to care leavers unless CYP commissions the support directly to enable young people to move on in a phased and gradual way. This however would be a pressure on the existing leaving care budget which next year will be cut by £50.000.

**Legal**

- 2.1 The pledge should be covered by the local authorities statutory duties to care leavers as detailed above including the provision of suitable accommodation to meet diverse accommodation need.

**Personnel**

- 3.1 N/A

**Equalities Impact**

- 4.1 The pledge when embed fully in practice should improve services to care leavers as a diverse and heterogeneous group with focus on them as individuals with diverse needs.

Many care leavers are vulnerable and at risk of not achieving there potential. The pledge seeks to improve outcomes by promoting high aspirations.

**Health and Safety**

- 5.1 N/A

**Environmental Sustainability**

- 6.1 N/A

**Asset Management**

- 7.1 N/A

**Risk Management**

8.1 N/A

### **Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

9.1 Narrowing the gap for vulnerable groups and ensuring a clear corporate parenting strategy for looked after children and care leavers.

To improve performance in relation to outcomes for care leavers as measured by the numbers in employment, education and training (148) and in suitable accommodation (147).