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Care Leavers Report - Education, Employment and Training

Purpose

- 1.1 To provide the Corporate Parenting Committee with an overview of the Derby City Leaving Care Service with a particular focus on Education/Employment and Training.
- 1.2 **Children and Young Person Summary.**

When young people go into care, they have help from their carers (and Social Worker) until they move out of where they are living. This might happen when a young person is 18 or it might happen a bit later than that. When young people reach age 18, their worker changes from a Social Worker to a Leaving Care Personal Advisor. The Personal Advisor supports, advises and guides the young person with all the things other young people need help with when they are becoming an adult, such as education and work, budgets and finances, social groups and having somewhere safe and stable to live. This report tells you about how the Leaving Care Service is working, looking at education and employment particularly.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the content of the report and the progress made in respect to how the Leaving Care Service meets its statutory functions.
- 2.2 To note and respond to our actions and plans made for Derby City Care Leavers as their Corporate Parents.

Reason

- 3.1 Care leavers must be provided with access to high quality information, advice and guidance to inform their plans in order to progress into continuing education, training or employment. How this will be met should be included in the Pathway Plan. They should be offered work experience and other opportunities to allow them to test their career aspirations and needs.

Supporting information

4.1 Overview of Leaving Care Service

The Leaving Care Service has statutory responsibility for 231 Care Leavers aged 16-24. In addition, the Leaving Care Service also supports a number of 16/17 year olds who are in care as part of the transitioning process as they prepare to leave care. The following demographics table relates to the 231 young people solely open to the Leaving Care Service.

Age	Number	%
17	7	3
18	35	15
19	67	29
20	53	23
21+	69	30
	231	

Sex	Number	%
Male	129	56
Female	102	44

Ethnicity	Number	%
White	166	72
Black	16	7
Dual Heritage	33	14
Asian	11	5
Other	5	2

Eligibility	Number	%
Relevant	4	2
Qualifying	20	8
Former Relevant	207	90

Eligible young people are aged 16/17 are in care and have been a Looked After Child for 13 weeks or more after their 14th birthday, these young people will still have their Social Worker in place until they reach 18 and are transferred over to the Leaving Care Team.

Relevant young people are aged 16/17 and are no longer in care but were an eligible young person when they were in care, this could include young people who have moved into semi-independent accommodation.

Former Relevant young people are aged 18-25 and have left care and were either Relevant or Eligible or both.

Qualifying young people are aged 18-25 and were a Looked After Child but not Eligible or Relevant. The Leaving Care Team will assess support via assessment of needs.

Accommodation	Number	%
Considered Suitable	200	87
Considered Unsuitable	31	13

4.1 Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (EET)

Where young people are continuing with an education or training course beyond their 21st birthday, the practical and financial support being provided must continue to be set out in their Pathway Plan.

Education employment and training levels of Care Leavers in Derby City continues to remain consistently between 60% and 65%. Although this does compare well both regionally and nationally, it does mean that at least a third of this cohort remain in the NEET (not in education training or employment) category.

As of the 21 January 2019, Derby City Council Leaving Care Service is supporting 231 Care Leavers aged 17-24.

- 62% of Care Leavers aged 16-20 are currently EET (101/162 YP)
- 48% of Care Leavers aged 21-25 are currently EET (33/69 YP)

To enable more care leavers to enter the workplace or to secure educational or training placements the local authority are currently undertaking the following;

- The Local Offer for Care Leavers promotes opportunities for education, employment and training
- The Local Authority currently runs an apprenticeship programme aimed at securing apprenticeships for Care Leavers with the council who are currently NEET. A report due to be provided by the Space@Connexions team at today's Committee meeting will provide an outline of the numbers of care leavers who are currently part of this programme and who have been through the programme.
- The Leaving Care Service is co-located with the Space@Connexions team, who have a Personal Advisor dedicated to children in care and care leavers, which ensures accessible support for care leavers in the city.
- Care leavers are actively supported and encouraged to access EET opportunities as part of their Pathway Planning process by way of emotional,

practical and financial support and encouragement that is provided by their Personal Advisor and the team around the young person. The Pathway Plan is reviewed every 6 months to ensure that work remains on course.

- The Virtual School will provide an offer to support pathway planning for all children in care transitioning to adulthood aged 16- 18 years from 2019.
- The Leaving Care Service also engages with a number of other schemes to support care leavers into work for example 'Towards Work', 'Building Better Opportunities' and a cross authority D2N2 programme.
- For Care Leavers who live outside of our region, Personal Advisors offer support in accessing more locally based EET support and provision.

4.2 The Challenges for Care Leavers. What more can we do?

Those care leavers who remain NEET continue to have significant barriers to their progression. Many have had poor experiences of the Education system and have not acquired the necessary skills and knowledge, they have experienced significant life events which have had a negative impact upon their lives, they are often living in independent, semi-independent, supported or shared accommodation; whereas most of their peers remain at home and do not face the same challenges.

Care Leavers are clearly disadvantaged in this regard and it is imperative that support of this group of young people is available with a consistent and understanding approach, especially when they enter the work force, education or training placements for the first time.

The Local Authority as Corporate Parents has a key role to play to provide a wide range of opportunities for care leavers. Ongoing work is being explored of how the collective Corporate Parent partnership can provide a wider range of opportunities for Derby care leavers from: apprenticeships, to work placements and taster days across all departments and stakeholders.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 This report comments on current progress and performance in relation to consultation with care leavers and EET. Ongoing work is required to develop participation work in the service and continue to drive performance in regards to EET. We would also like to ensure future reports more fully incorporate feedback from care leavers to the Committee to enable this report to become part of a more consultative process.
- 5.2 The Leaving Care Service Improvement Board continues to meet to oversee performance and development of the service in key areas and consists of a number of key stakeholders. The Board is chaired by the Deputy Head of Service for Children in Care and Care Leavers.

- 5.3 A presentation was provided to the Councils Corporate Managers Conference on 24 January 2019 in relation to the Local Offer for care leavers. This outlined the statutory requirements on both the service and LA of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, including the broadening out of Corporate Parenting principals across the whole of the LA.
- Services and departments were asked to consider what more they could do to offer the best possible care and support to care leavers.

Other options

- 6.1 None arising from this report

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 Resourcing of the Leaving Care Service presents a significant risk to service development and improvement in relation to participation and EET.

Legal implications

- 8.1 The Leaving Care Service has a number of statutory obligations set out in a range of primary legislation

Other significant implications

- 9.1 None arising from this report.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal Finance Service Director(s) Report sponsor Other(s)	Suanne Lim	29 January 2019