



Report to Cabinet

Subject: Nottinghamshire's Local Offer for Care Leavers

Date: 19 March 2019

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Wards Affected

All

Purpose

To seek Cabinet approval for the Gedling specific aspects of the Nottinghamshire Local Offer for Care Leavers.

Key Decision

This is a key decision because its impact is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living in an area comprising two or more wards

Recommendation(s)

To:

- 1) Endorse the "Nottinghamshire Local Offer for Care Leavers" policy,
- 2) Give approval to provide care leavers aged 18-25 with free access to full peak membership to leisure centre facilities in the borough,
- 3) Note that when Gedling Housing Allocation Scheme is reviewed in 2019/20 priority is given to care leavers.

1 Background

- 1.1 Care leavers are young people aged 18 to 25 years of age who have been in local authority care (foster care or residential home or semi-independent flat). Care Leavers are defined in law by the amount of time spent in care and their age. The anticipated numbers of care leavers as at 9th January 2019 is shown in the table below:

Care leavers in Nottinghamshire		
Local Authority Area	Age 18-20 years	Age 21-25 years
Ashfield	38	55
Bassetlaw	30	41
Broxtowe	22	9
Gedling	13	20
Mansfield	41	57
Newark & Sherwood	30	24
Rushcliffe	14	24
Total	188	230

- 1.2 The Children and Social Care Act 2017 requires each local authority to publish a Local Offer for its care leavers. Through the Nottinghamshire Local Authorities Chief Executives' Group, the eight authorities agreed to create one joint single Care Leaver Offer for Nottinghamshire, with an overall offer for the Nottinghamshire and specific actions for each district/borough council to deliver.
- 1.3 The Local Offer should include details of local authority services and support that could help care leavers' transition to adulthood and independent living in relation to health and well-being, positive relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation and participation in society.

2 Proposal

Nottinghamshire Offer

- 2.1 Representatives from the County Council, district/borough councils, other public sector services, voluntary organisations and key stakeholders including ex and current care leavers, have all been involved in developing a dynamic Local Offer. Work streams were agreed and have been led by appropriate senior officers from across the collaborative partnership, including:
- employment, skills and apprenticeships – led by the Chief Executive of Newark & Sherwood District Council
 - education and work experience – led by the Service Director, Education, Learning and Skills, Nottinghamshire County Council
 - housing – district council-led working group led by the Gedling Borough Council and a Care Leaver Ambassador
 - physical and mental health – led by the Consultant in Public

Health, Nottinghamshire County Council

- wellbeing, relationships and community engagement – led by the Service Director, Youth, Families and Social Work, Nottinghamshire County Council
- 2.2 Nottinghamshire County Council approved the Local Offer policy on 11th February 2019 at the Children and Young People's Committee. The next stage is for all the eight Nottinghamshire Local Authorities to formally approve their aspects of the offer. After this time, there will be a need to publicise it through a variety of communication channels, media, publicity and events.

Gedling offer

- 2.3 There are elements that are contained within the Local Offer that are to be delivered by/in partnership with Gedling Borough. These are detailed below.
- 2.4 **Employment, skills and apprenticeships** – to create a single offer of care leaver apprenticeships with coaching support within organisations. Officers are proposing to ensure that care leavers are targeted for relevant apprenticeships or work experience placements in the Council wherever possible.
- 2.5 **Housing** – to offer a consistent approach across the County that gives priority to care leavers within Housing Allocation Schemes and waiting lists, together with a commitment to help care leavers secure accommodation as quickly as possible (ideally within 8 weeks). However, if emergency accommodation is required, it is proposed that the statutory homelessness process would be triggered and homeless accommodation utilised, as a last resort. This will be in accordance with the Council's statutory duty as detailed in the Children's and Social Work Act 2017.
- 2.6 **Physical and mental health** – to recognise the health benefits of physical activity, Officers are seeking approval to provide care leavers aged 18 to 25 with free access to full peak membership to leisure centres/facilities in the borough.
- 2.7 **Council tax** – to exempt care leavers from paying council tax up to their 25th birthday. This has already received Cabinet approval in March 2018.

Governance

- 2.8 It is proposed that Nottinghamshire's Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership Board be the body accountable for the performance management and continuous improvement of the Offer,

which will be outcomes-focused.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative options have been considered throughout the work done to establish the County wide scheme. By working together, this ensures that all Care Leavers have a single offer throughout the County and is a very clear message to be presented to these potentially vulnerable young adults.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are revenue implications linked to these proposals, but are considered to be limited (in relation to the amounts of care leavers within the Borough) but also difficult to quantify at this stage. For example, a leisure membership is £300 per person, which could be a loss of income, but only if they were already members. The extra resource required to accommodate a “free” member is negligible on an individual basis. However, the cumulative effect may have resource implications and Officers are proposing to monitor the financial implications and to review if required.

5 Appendices

- 5.1 A - Nottinghamshire’s Local Offer for Care leavers

6 Background Papers

- 6.1 Children and Social Care Act 2017 –
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted>

- 6.2 Local offer guidance: Guidance for local authorities (February 2018) –
www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-offer-guidance

7 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 To fulfil statutory Corporate Parenting duties, improve lifetime outcomes for Nottinghamshire’s care leavers and to reduce lifetime local and national spend on care leavers.
- 7.2 To approve the specific elements of the offer which relate to employability, housing and leisure services. The Council tax reduction scheme already has full approval.