

## CABINET

19 December 2017

### CARE LEAVERS LOCAL OFFER 2017-2020

#### Report of the Director for People

Strategic Aim:	Reaching our Full Potential	
Key Decision: No	Forward Plan Reference: FP/141117	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr R Foster, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People (Safeguarding)	
Contact Officer(s):	Tim O'Neill, Director for People and Deputy Chief Executive	01572 758402 toneill@rutland.gov.uk
	Rebecca Wilshire, Head of Children's Social Care	01572 758258 rwilshire@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	All	

#### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Cabinet approves the Care Leavers Local Offer 2017-2020 (Appendix A)

## 1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The term “Care Leavers” is used to describe those children and young people who fall within scope of local authority duties set out in sections 23A and 24D of the Children Act 1989.
- 1.2. The new **Children and Social Worker Act 2017** places a duty on the local authority to publish a **Local Offer for Care Leavers** providing information about services which the local authority offers that may assist Care Leavers in, or in preparing for, adulthood and independent living. This includes services relating to health and wellbeing; relationships; education and training; employment; accommodation and participation in society.
- 1.3. This policy is intended to give an overview of Rutland’s offer to Care Leavers.
- 1.4. The Children in Care Council will frequently review offer through the strategy, and ensure we as corporate parents are challenged when needed, our feedback survey will be developed to ensure we capture areas of the strategy in line with the local offer in measuring how well we are doing and what we need to do better.
- 1.5. We are confident outcomes for our children looked after and our care leavers will continue to improve.

## 2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1. The **Children and Social Work Bill** seeks to combine a commitment to protect the most vulnerable in society with the “ambition to ensure that disadvantaged children have the brightest possible future”. The Bill has been heard in the House of Lords and will be debated in the House of Commons in October 2017. A subsequent strategy entitled **Keep on Caring – Supporting Young People from Care to Independence** published in July 2016 sets out a plan for the delivery of a ‘step change’ in services for children in and leaving care.
- 2.2. At the same time the House of Commons’ Education Committee published its inquiry into the **Mental Health and well-being of looked-after children 2015/16**.
- 2.3. The **Children and Social Work Act 2017** received Royal Assent on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The Act aims to:
  - 2.3.1 Improve support for children looked after in England and Wales especially for those leaving care;
  - 2.3.2 Enable better learning about effective approaches to child protection and care in England;
  - 2.3.3 Establish a new regulatory body for the social work profession in England.

2.4. Our Pledges to Children Looked After and Care Leavers are:

**Children Looked After and Care Leavers are happy and have good Health and Well Being**

**Children Looked After and Care Leavers are safe and in safe and stable placements**

**Children Looked After and Care Leavers achieve their potential and have access to good education, training and/or employment**

**Children Looked After and Care Leavers are prepared for adulthood**

**Children Looked After and Care Leavers are listened to and supported to participate in society**

**Children Looked After and Care Leavers build positive relationships**

- 2.5. The overall aim of the Corporate Parenting Board is to ensure the corporate responsibility of the whole council and partner agencies to children looked after and care leavers, through the corporate parenting arrangements and governance. Rutland County Council has a strong track record as a corporate parent and this strategy builds on this so that the Council can become an outstanding corporate parent.
- 2.6. The Corporate Parenting Board holds others to account where the needs and wellbeing of children looked after and care leavers are not met.
- 2.7. The principle of '**would this be good enough for my child**' underpins our Corporate Parenting Board and therefore the objectives of the children looked after and care leaver strategy are to ensure that the whole Council and partner agencies work together towards ensuring better outcomes for children looked after and care leavers.
- 2.8. Care leavers in Rutland receive a Good service, as judged by Ofsted in their inspection in November 2016. Our local offer is based on those good services and good outcomes to ensure we sustain a good service and further build on this.
- 2.9. We have our Pledges which will further support and monitor this local offer and ensure it is effective and ensure all care leavers get the right support.
- 2.10. Relevant professionals from across different partner organisations form the multi-agency **Corporate Parenting Board**. This group, will monitor progress and support activity within the Next Steps Action Plan. Regular updates on progress will be delivered to the **People Directorate Management Team** and **Children in Care Council**.

### 3. KEY THEMES

- 3.1. The local offer aims to offer a detailed oversight of the different areas of support and guidance which is available for all our care leavers in Rutland
- 3.2. Rutland underwent their Single Inspection Framework in November 2016 which was published in February 2017. **The graded judgement about the experience and progress of Care Leavers was that it was good.**
- 3.3. The local offer will ensure we maintain a judgement of good, as well as enabling us to continue to improve the service and our offer.

### 4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1. Consultation has taken place with all our care leavers, they the offer has been shared and feedback received.
- 4.2. Our care leavers have confirmed this is the offer they have received and feel this is a good offer and a good offer for future care leavers.
- 4.3. Our care leavers report a good supported service.
- 4.4. The Local Offer has been considered by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel.
- 4.5. Whilst no formal consultation has taken place for the local offer to be finalised it has been committed with staff and partners through a variety of ways to gather thoughts and feedback, for example Scrutiny Panel, Corporate Parenting Board and The Children Trust Board.

### 5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 5.1. There is no planned alternative, the local offer is laying out the available support open to care leavers as required within the **Children and Social Worker 2017 Act.**

### 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no financial implications, the strategy is based on support and existing resources we have in place to ensure we offer the best service possible to Care Leavers.
- 6.2. However, the service we do outline such as our Mentoring and Advocacy Service will need to continue within our Early Help provision

### 7. LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1. Section 2 of the Children and Social Care Act 2017 requires local authorities to publish information about services offered to care leavers and other services that may assist care leavers to transition to adulthood and independent living.

### 8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

- 8.1. Equality Impact Screening has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found.

## **9. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. There are no Community Safety Implications.

## **10. HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. There are no health or wellbeing implications.

## **11. ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1. There are no organisational implications

## **12. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

**12.1.** Rutland has been judged by Ofsted as 'Good', with regards to our work and support to Care Leavers.

**12.2.** We are very proud of all our Care Leavers and their achievements and would like to thank them for their ongoing support and influence they offer us as a council. We know there are things we can still do better and intend to work on these areas further as part of our local offer.

**12.3.** With our local offer alongside our promise (Pledges) to Care Leavers we are confident that as a council, and in partnership with our partners and our Care Leavers and those young people looked after, we will enhance our service further and ensure all our Care Leavers have the best start possible into adulthood.

**12.4.** As a council we want to make sure also our Care Leavers can access a range of services to meet their needs including financial support, access to health, education training and employment, personal advisers, effective pathway planning, appropriate housing including supported accommodation if this is assessed as being a need and mental health and counselling services as required.

**12.5.** We ask Cabinet to approve the offer outlined in the policy.

## **13. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

13.1. There are no background information

## **14. APPENDICES**

14.1. Appendix A – Local Offer to Care Leaver Strategy 2017 – 2020

**A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.**