

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:**

Roger Gough,  
Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and  
Education

**DECISION NO:**

**18/00056**

**Subject: Proposal to publish Kent County Council's Local Offer for Care Leavers up to the age of 25 years**

**Decision:**

**As Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education, I agree to:**

- (i) Publish Kent County Council's Local Offer for Care Leavers up to the age of 25 years in accordance with the statutory requirements of The Children and Social Work Act (2017)**

**Reason(s) for decision:**

The Children and Social Work Act (2017) was implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and extends the Corporate Parenting responsibility for a Local Authority to provide support to Care Leavers up until the age of 25 years (formerly 21 years). Local Authorities are required to publish a Local Offer for Care Leavers by December 2018 which sets out the services and support available to them including their entitlements.

The Care Leavers Service has kept the impact of this change under review to ensure sufficient staff capacity to meet the demand. The offer will detail what this support will include, for example the allocation of a Personal Advisor, regular "drop in" events, signposting to partner agencies and community resources.

To help meet the requirements of the Local Offer, a grant from the Department of Education has been given towards the additional costs arising from supporting young people up to the age of 25. However, it is anticipated this will be insufficient to cover all the additional costs of providing the support and any further pressures will need to be identified within the 2019-22 Medium Term Financial Plan, a draft of which will be published in early January and is subject to agreement by the County Council in February 2019.

The Care Leavers Service completed a consultation with young people through the Young Adult Council (YAC) to seek their views and input into the offer. Care Leavers have been fundamental to the process, to co-produce the offer and ensure a service user voice in the design and commissioning of our 18plus Care Leavers service. A Care Leavers Survey has also been sent to all young people to establish their views on the service (November 2018).

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:** At its meeting on 29 November 2018, the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee debated the decision. The minute extract is as follows:

Caroline Smith (Interim Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting) and Paul Startup (Head of Care Leavers 18 plus Service) were in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Smith introduced the report which provided an overview as to why Kent County Council were required to produce a Local Offer for Care Leavers and detailed the proposed offer.

a) In response to a question, Ms Smith said that comprehensive training would be provided to foster carers in relation to the local offer for care leavers.

- b) In response to a question, Ms Smith said that the local care offer for care leavers would be shared with all of Kent's districts. She said that Kent County Council were working closely with housing boroughs to work towards being able to offer council tax exemption to Kent's care leavers.
- c) In response to a question, Ms Smith said that an interactive, easy-read local offer to care leavers document would be available on Kent County Council's website.
- d) In response to a question, Mr Startup referred to the entitlement rates within the document and said that they were being reviewed. He said the revised entitlement rates would be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.
- e) In response to a question, Mr Startup referred to the accredited course that was offered to Kent's care leavers and answered questions from Members of the Committee.
- f) In response to a question, Ms Smith referred to the food vouchers that were offered to Kent's care leavers and said that they were a safe way of ensuring that young people could buy their food in supermarkets. She added that Kent's care leavers were supported by Kent County Council to ensure that they were able to attend college and had an aspirational future.

2. Mr Dunkley referred to Kent's budget of 800 unaccompanied asylum-seeking care leavers and said that there was severe financial pressure on Kent County Council's budget to accommodate the additional care leavers.

3. RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education, to

- a) agree publication of KCC's Local Offer for Care Leavers up to the age of 25 years in accordance with the statutory requirements of The Children and Social Work Act (2017); and
- b) delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision,

be endorsed.

Any alternatives considered:

It is a statutory requirement for the Local Authority to publish its Local Offer for Care Leavers. There was extensive consultation with the Young Adult Council who provided their views and opinions on the content and design of the offer, which enabled different formats to be considered. Consultation was also undertaken with partner agencies including Young Lives Foundation, Catch 22, Health and Virtual School Kent. During the consultation, Local Offers from other Local Authorities were viewed, as a small number of authorities have already published their offer. This ensured that Kent County Council took into account learning and feedback from both young people, partner agencies and neighbouring authorities prior to the publication of the Kent Local Offer.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken, and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None

Signed



Date

6 / 12 / 2018