

**From:** Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

Matt Dunkley, CBE, Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education

**To:** Corporate Parenting Panel – 27 March 2019

**Subject:** **Care Leavers Survey**

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Summary:** This report provides members with an overview of the Care Leavers Survey, undertaken in October 2018.

**Recommendation:** The members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to **NOTE** the results of the Care Leavers Survey 2018 and Action Plan.

## 1. Introduction

**1.1** The 18+ Care Leavers Service is committed to ensuring young people have a voice and can contribute to the design and delivery of our future services. The Care Leavers Survey was identified as a piece of work within the Accelerating the Pace of Delivery Plan and in consultation with our VSK apprentices and young people's councils. During October 2018 an on-line survey was promoted and made available to all young adults receiving the 18+ Care Leavers Service. The survey was designed to understand satisfaction within the service and identify areas of development, alongside informing our practice to achieve our ambition to become an outstanding service.

## 2. Background

**2.1** The Care Leavers Service commissioned Strategic Commissioning Analytics to carry out a survey of young people supported by the service to determine their level of satisfaction with the service they receive and to highlight any issues which could inform service improvement in the future.

**2.2** The survey was co-designed by the Young Adult Council, following a consultation with them on which were the most important issues and concerns which the survey should focus,

**2.3** The survey was delivered on-line and the software used for the survey ensured this was suitable for, and easy to respond to on mobile phones. The survey was delivered as a multi-lingual survey available in the following languages: English, Arabic, Tigrayan, Kurdish, Vietnamese and Pashto.

**2.4** The survey was live for 3-weeks between the end of October 2018 and beginning of November 2018. The survey was also available on the Kent Cares Town website and was promoted by Personal Advisers.

**2.5** There were 139 respondents, 51.1% were male and 48.9% were female.

### **3. Summary of Results**

- 3.1** Care Leavers have good relationships with their Personal Advisors with 72.2% of respondents rating their relationship as either 4 or 5 stars. 5 stars was the highest scoring grade available.
- 3.2** Care Leavers receive help for a range of issues and are positive about the help they receive, with 68.6% of respondents rating the quality of help as either 4 or 5 stars.
- 3.3** 98.3% of respondents knew how to contact their Personal Advisor and 69.2% had seen their Personal Advisor in the last month.
- 3.4** Care Leavers were less positive about their Pathway Plan with 47.7% rating their plan as either 4 or 5 stars. Female Care Leavers are highlighted as wanting to be more involved in the development of their Pathway Plan.
- 3.5** Care Leavers' satisfaction with their current placement was mixed with 49.6% of respondents giving a 4 or 5-star rating. Issues raised included the standard of accommodation, being moved on frequently and wanting to live closer to work/college.
- 3.6** However, Care Leavers have positive relationships with the people they live with, with 68.6% of respondents giving a 4 or 5-star rating.
- 3.7** Levels of awareness of schemes and entitlements that are available to support Care Leavers was mixed. There were particularly low levels of awareness of the Rent Guarantor Scheme with 48% of respondents reporting that they 'don't know anything about it'. This is a new small pilot scheme, launched in June 2018 and was not part of the advertising for the publishing of the Kent Local Offer for Care Leavers in December 2018. Should the outcome for the Pilot Scheme lead to a key policy change of the Rent Guarantor Scheme being fully implemented into our Care Leaver Offer, this would be widely communicated to all Care Leavers. The Rent Guarantor Scheme is promoted on the Kent Cares Town website, as is the Entitlements document. However, we recognise within the Action Plan this will be an area for development to ensure all our young people are aware of their entitlements and our specific schemes.
- 3.8** Respondents who gave a positive rating of their overall experience of the Care Leaver service reported the following unprompted reasons for their high scores which have been themed:
  - The Personal Advisor is friendly/helpful/kind/caring
  - The Personal Advisor responds quickly
  - The Personal Advisor advice is beneficial and constructive
  - The Personal Advisor goes above and beyond

**3.9** Respondents who gave a negative rating of their overall experience of the Care Leaver service reported the following unprompted reasons for their low scores which have been themed:

- Don't hear from the Personal Advisor very often
- The Personal Advisor doesn't support my needs/do things they're supposed to do
- Don't see the Personal Advisor often/would like to see them more
- Bad communication

The visiting requirement for a Personal Advisor is to visit the young person as a minimum every 6 weeks, unless the young person has had a placement move, in which case their Personal Advisor would undertake a visit within 7 days of the move. The service acknowledges that there are some young people that would like more contact and who would benefit from additional visits. Personal Advisors always aim to provide extra visits at times of crisis and to our most vulnerable young people and there are additional duty workers who can assist in this, should it be required. The service is working on other ways to enhance our visits and support including regular "drop in" sessions at our youth hubs, developing the suggestion for a Care Leavers Community Café/hub, providing more regular local social activities and working with VSK and the Young Lives Foundation to develop peer mentors.

#### **4. Conclusions**

It is the intention of the Service to undertake this survey on an annual basis, in the designated Care Leavers week, which is usually in October. We plan to build upon this year's survey and would expect to receive a greater number of responses in future surveys. This survey did enable us to learn about how we can use technology to reach our Care Leavers, with the most effective means being by way of mobile phone technology.

The survey responses were generally positive in terms of feedback about the Personal Advisors, but we did identify areas of improvement, particularly around developing Pathway Plans and establishing effective communication between the Personal Advisor and the Care Leaver and work is underway to review how Pathway Plans are completed, in conjunction with the Young Adult Council.

Following the completion of the survey and considering the responses, the 18+ Care Leavers Service has put in place an action plan, Appendix 2, to address the issues and themes coming through in the survey. The plan includes ensuring that Personal Advisors set up clear contact arrangements for each Care Leaver, which is to be written into the Pathway Plan. The Service will be receiving Smart phones for the Personal Advisors to further aid remaining in contact with our Care Leavers. We have also developed template communication letters for our Care Leavers.

We are reviewing our Pathway Plan document, to include how it is completed and to ensure the Care Leaver is engaged in it.

We are continuing to develop the 'Moving on' section of the Kent Cares Town website to house important information, including the promotion of the Rent Guarantor scheme' promotion of the Care Leaver Local Offer and entitlements.

**Recommendation:** The members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to **NOTE** the results of the Care Leavers Survey 2018 and Action Plan.

## 5. Background documents

Appendix 1 – Care Leavers Survey Report

Appendix 2 - Care Leavers Service Action Plan

## 6. Contact details

### Lead Officer

Caroline Smith

Assistant Director of Corporate Parenting

03000 415 091

[Caroline.Smith@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Caroline.Smith@kent.gov.uk)

### Lead Director

Sarah Hammond

Director of Integrated Children's Services East

03000 411 488

[Sarah.Hammond@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.Hammond@kent.gov.uk)