

Report title	Local Offer for Care Leavers	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paul Sweet Children and Young People	
Corporate Plan priority	People - Stronger Communities	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	Emma Bennett, Director of Children's Services	
Originating service	Children and Young People	
Accountable employee	Alison Hinds Tel Email	Head of Looked after Children 01902 553035 Alison.hinds@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Strategic Executive Board	21 August 2018

Recommendation for decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Endorse the Local Offer for Care Leavers
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services to consider and agree any variation to the current Local Offer within the annual review period.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide details of the City of Wolverhampton's Local Offer for Care Leavers and for Cabinet to endorse the Local Offer.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Following the 'Children's Social Care Reform – A Vision for Change' document published in January 2016, the government produced the Children and Social Work Bill which subsequently received Royal Assent on 27 April 2017. Implicit in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 is the requirement to improve support for looked after children in England and Wales especially for those leaving care.
- 2.2 The Act introduces seven corporate parenting principles to which local authorities must have regard. These are:
- to act in the best interests and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of relevant children and young people
 - to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
 - to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
 - to help those children and young people gain access to and make best use of services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
 - to promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for those children and young people
 - to have regard to the need for those children and young people to be safe and have stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work
 - to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.
- 2.3 By September 2018 local authorities in England are required 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 well-being, relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation and participation in society.
- 2.4 In addition to the Local Offer, the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) is one of six champion local authorities across the country working with a Wolverhampton based company, Spectre. Spectre are the key delivery partner for the Department for Education on the development of a national Care Leaver Covenant. This is not only an opportunity for CWC to be part of the development of a national initiative for care leavers which will enhance opportunities for care leavers on a national scale, but it is also an opportunity for CWC to showcase the work that is currently being undertaken ensuring the social

value aspect of contracts awarded by the council address and benefit the needs of care leavers.

3.0 Progress

- 3.1 The City of Wolverhampton Children and Young People's Service has worked closely with internal and external partners, and with care leavers via the Care Leavers' Forum to co-produce the Local Offer for Care Leavers. The Local Offer not only details the statutory requirements of support to care leavers, but also includes details of additional support and services that are available within the City of Wolverhampton for care leavers who have been previously looked after by the City of Wolverhampton.
- 3.2 Once endorsement is received from Cabinet the Local Offer will be published and the content made available in different forms, utilising traditional written documentation and publication, but also utilising the council website and social media. It will be communicated to care leavers and professionals working with care leavers across the City. The Local Offer will be officially launched in national Care Leavers' week in October.
- 3.3 The City of Wolverhampton Council is continuing to work with care leavers and partner organisations on enhancements to the Local Offer. The Local Offer will be reviewed on an annual basis. Any additional service or support available will be added to the Local Offer when it is reviewed.
- 3.4 In order for the Local Offer to be varied to enhance the support to care leavers within the annual review period, it is proposed that the Director of Children's Services is delegated the necessary authority to agree any variation required .

4.0 Evaluation of alternative option

- 4.1 Production and publication of a Local Offer for care leavers is a statutory requirement. The City of Wolverhampton Council has worked closely with partner agencies within the City to maximise the support available to care leavers.

5.0 Reasons for decisions

- 5.1 Production and publication of a Local Offer is a statutory requirement. Publication of the offer will ensure that care leavers up to the age of 25 are made aware of the services available to them.

6.0 Financial implications

- 6.1 The statutory elements of the Local Offer for Care Leavers are contained within existing budgets in the Transitions Team under the Looked after Children's Service.
- 6.2 The other discretionary elements of the Local Offer for Care Leavers have been negotiated with other partners as in-kind contributions to the offer.

- 6.3 There are no other direct costs associated with the Local Offer for Care Leavers.

[NM/10072018/U]

7.0 Legal implications

- 7.1 Section 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires each local authority to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers.
- 7.2 It must also publish information on any other services the local authority offers that may assist care leavers in preparing for adulthood and independent living. This includes services relating to health and well-being, relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation and participation in society.

[TC/11072018/B]

8.0 Equalities implications

- 8.1 An equalities analysis has been completed. This has raised no concerns relating to equalities. The Local Offer supports the ambition to improve opportunities and reduce disadvantage that care leavers face within society.

9.0 Environmental implications

- 9.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

10.0 Human resources implications

- 10.1 There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

11.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 11.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

12.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 - The City of Wolverhampton Local Offer for Care Leavers