

Corporate Parenting Board

26 January 2016

Report title	Care Leaver Forum Annual Report 2016
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Val Gibson Children and Families
Wards affected	All
Accountable director	Linda Sanders, Children and Young People
Originating service	Looked after Children
Accountable employee(s)	Alice Vickers Corporate Parenting Officer 01902 553005 alice.vickers@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Care Leavers Forum

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to:

1. Consider the attached Care Leaver Forum Annual Report, attached as an Appendix.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To enable the Board to consider the work carried out by the Care Leavers Forum during 2016.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Care Leavers Forum was first started in September 2015 following the implementation of the New Belongings Project designed to improve and increase support for the City of Wolverhampton's Care Leavers. The Care Leavers Forum have written a report to highlight their achievements over the past 12 months which is attached.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.
- 3.2 Any costs associated with the Care Leavers Forum are funded from within existing budgets within the Children and Young Peoples Service area.
[NM/17012017/L]

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.
[RB/18012017/S]

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 An equalities analysis will be undertaken if required, in partnership with the Equalities and Diversities Team.

6.0 Environmental implications

- 6.1 There are no environmental implications.

7.0 Human resources implications

- 7.1 There are no human resources.

8.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 8.1 There are no corporate landlord implications.

9.0 Schedule of background papers

There are no background papers.



Care Leaver Forum Annual Report 2016

Care Leavers Forum Members

Gareth Rafferty – Co Chair

Alicia Blewitt – Co Chair

Shaideen Malcolm

Ricky Lowther

Pravjeet Atwal

Gabby Parker

Lucy Lowther

Imani Myers

Lauren Catlin

Supported by Celine Rafferty – Assistant Corporate Parenting Officer



Our mission

To inform and advise services that supports Care Leavers on our experiences and opinions of provision, policy and practice.

Our vision

To ensure that services understand the needs and experience of Care Leavers to inform their practice and raise the level of support to Care Leavers.

Our History

- The Care Leavers Forum was first started in September 2015
- We started with 3 people
- We currently have about 8 to 10 people who turn up at the average meeting

Our achievements in 2016

This report covers the period of January 2016 – December 2016. It is important to note that some of these achievements were initiated either by the CLF, the Care Leavers Survey, the New Belongings project or the Corporate Parenting Strategy. We are proud to be working so effectively in partnership with the City of Wolverhampton Council. Together, this year we have achieved a huge amount for care leavers in Wolverhampton, whether that be in direct support services, practical resources, opportunities and policies and procedures.

Direct Support Services

- Created and support the Buy, Sell and Swap site for Care Leavers
- Prepayment Cards for Care Leavers to receive financial support
- Offered care Leavers opportunities to engage in service development and gain skills throughout our programme of events for National Care Leavers Week
- Development of a Young Mothers' Support Group for Care Leavers
- Independents group hosted by the Way to support Care Leavers with practical skills when living independently
- An addition of another crash pad, expanding on the provision for emergency accommodation for Care Leavers
- The creation of weekly drop-in sessions with advice and guidance available from EET Coordinator, Housing Support and Health for all Care Leavers

Practical Resources

- Storage Unit for Care Leavers Belongings
- Design and Launch a Webpage full of resources and information for Care Leavers

- Negotiated free membership at the Way
- Increased the number of training flats.
- Exemption of Council Tax for all Care Leavers residing in Wolverhampton
- Gained Wolverhampton ICT support to provide second hand mobile phone handsets to Care Leavers in need.
- Christmas Party for all Care Leavers
- The recruitment of Assistant Corporate Parenting Officer to support our work, which is care experienced.
- The design and implementation of a Care Leavers pack filled with resource and information.
- The introduction of a Health Passport to accompany the Care Leavers Health Summary.

Opportunities

- Contributed to the National Benchmarking Forum in Oxford
- Supported the recent Referendum Vote and completed the count at Aldersley Stadium
- Day trip to Warwick Castle for 12 Care Leavers
- Participated in Wolverhampton's Take Over Day Challenge
- Received a nomination for the Express and Star 'Big Thank You' Awards for our Co Chair
- Support the I awards 2016
- Delivered Total Respect Training to the Designated Teachers of Wolverhampton to develop their practice and level of understanding for Looked after Children
- Gained 2 seats on the Wolverhampton Youth Council
- Gained 20 tickets for Wolves Match for Care Leavers and a guest to celebrate Care Leavers Week
- Prince's Trust Young Researchers Project aimed at care leavers and their experiences.
- Supported a week's programme of events to showcase the needs of Care Leaver in National Care Leavers Week



- Winning the Prince Albert 150 – Mayor Award 2016 for Youth Achievement for our Co Chair
- Badger Court Care Leavers Forum Road show in partnership with the YMCA
- Attendance and contribute to the National Children’s Bureau conference on Care Leavers hosted by Eventbrite.
- One-week residential workshop at Queen Mary University of London, specially targeted at 15 to 17 year old young people with experience of care.
- Bi-annual attendance at the Corporate Parenting Board to inform their knowledge and understanding of issues facing Care Leavers

Policies and Procedures

- Attended and consulted the New Belongings West Midlands Cluster Group.
- Consulted on the Fostering and Adoption Annual report resulting in policy changes and developments.
- Cabinet decision to exempt all Care Leavers residing in Wolverhampton from Council Tax.
- Design and creation of Mandatory E-Learning training on Care Leavers for all Council Staff
- Consulted on the implementation of MOMO app for all Care Leavers, LAC and all young people accessing social care service to share their views on the service there to support them.
- Set up Challenges for staff to live like at care leaver for a day to help inform their practice, this was showcased as part of Care Leavers Week Celebrations.
- Joint meeting with The Transitions Team to inform and design of the New Belongings Plan for 2017.

Our Aims For 2017

To increase membership by

- socialise outside of the meetings

- reimburse bus fare for Care Leavers wishing to attend
- YPA's to discuss the Forum when introducing the Care Leavers Pack
- Produce a video of our experiences of the forum to be shared on social media and at the I Awards 2017
- Assistant Corporate Parenting Officer to text members on Monday's before the meeting on Wednesday to remind members
- Add the Care Leavers forum as an event on Facebook so it will add as a calendar entry on Care Leavers phones
- Ensure new members are supported by a member of staff they know and trust at their first meeting

To raise awareness of newsletter and webpage

- Ensure details are shared about the Webpage when care leavers receive their care leavers pack
- Regular texts with details of the webpage and newsletter are sent using group text messaging

To set work plan for next 12 months.

To be involved in the recruitment of foster carers.

To raise awareness of Total Respect Training.



Acknowledgements

Care Leavers forum has been helped and supported by many over the past 12 months and we would like to say thank you to:

- Wolverhampton Children in Care Council
- The Way, Wolverhampton
- Wolverhampton's Youth Council
- The YMCA
- The City of Wolverhampton Council
- WV Active

