

Title of report: **Supporting our Care Leavers**

Meeting: Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Meeting date: Thursday 3 October 2024

Report by: Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

This report and its appendices provide information to support the Health Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's scrutiny of the council's services to support its looked after children who are leaving or have left care.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The committee read this report and its appendices and**
- b) **Prepare any questions it may have for the members of the executive and officers attending the meeting.**

Alternative options

1. As this report is for information only, it presents no alternative options.

Key considerations

2. The Health Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has a remit to scrutinise the supported housing provided by Herefordshire Council and its partners for people in Herefordshire. Committee members identified support offered to looked-after children and young people

leaving the council's care as a priority for its work programme, as part of a focus on supported housing for different vulnerable groups.

3. In preparing this work, the committee recognised that to look at the matter of supported accommodation for children and young people leaving care would not provide a full account of the work that takes place to support looked after children as they prepare to leave care. The committee therefore asked officers to provide an account of all services provided to care leavers, to include:
 - a. The personal advisor support offered
 - b. Pathway planning
 - c. Housing and accommodation
 - d. Financial assistance
 - e. Education, employment and training support
 - f. Health and wellbeing support
 - g. Social and emotional support
 - h. Advocacy and rights
 - i. Ongoing support up to 25 years old
 - j. The council's corporate parenting responsibilities to care leavers
4. The information requested in paragraph 3 above is attached to this report as Appendix 4. A selection of the slides in this appendix will be presented to the committee in the meeting.
5. At a further planning meeting, members of the committee asked for further information about the local authority's duties to its looked after children and young people, and how other local authorities support their care leavers. Appendix 1 of this report is an outline of these duties, prepared by the Local Government Association (LGA). Appendix 2 includes case studies from the LGA detailing how other local authorities have fulfilled these duties. Finally, appendix 3 to this report provides findings of research from Ofsted that asked children about their experience of services to support their transition to independent living.

Community impact

6. As this report is for information only, it contains no assessment of community impact. However any recommendation made by the committee, if agreed by Cabinet or a portfolio holder, may have an impact on the support offered to children and young people leaving the care of the council. In this case, Cabinet or a portfolio holder will have to consider these potential impacts when deciding whether to accept the recommendation.

Environmental Impact

7. Operating services to support children leaving care creates minimal environmental impacts. The service considers how to minimise waste and resource use in line with the Council's Environmental Policy.

Equality duty

8. In producing this report, officers have been mindful of their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The report and appendices are written in plain English and laid out clearly to maximise readability.
9. Although the reports themselves only provide information, they may result in recommendations to Cabinet or a portfolio holder for action. In agreeing those recommendations, Cabinet or the portfolio holder will need to consider the impact of those recommendations on the council's equalities' duties.

Resource implications

9. As this report provides information only, it has no resource implications. However any recommendation made by the committee, if agreed by Cabinet or a portfolio holder, may create a resource implication. In this case, Cabinet or a portfolio holder will have to consider that resource implication when deciding whether to accept the recommendation.

Risk management

10. As this report is for information only, it contains no risk assessment. However any recommendation made by the committee, if agreed by Cabinet or a portfolio holder, may create a resource implication. In this case, Cabinet or a portfolio holder will have to consider that resource implication when deciding whether to accept the recommendation.

Consultees

11. No consultations were carried out in the process of producing this report.

Appendices

1. Extract from Local Government Association Support for care leavers resource pack – an introduction
2. Extract from Local Government Association Support for care leavers resource pack – case studies
3. Extract from Ready or not': care leavers' views of preparing to leave care, Ofsted 2022
4. Supporting our care leavers in Herefordshire

Background papers

1. [Local Government Association Support for care leavers resource pack – an introduction](#)
2. [Ready or not': care leavers' views of preparing to leave care, Ofsted 2022](#)

Report reviewers used for appraising this report:

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