



## Corporate Parenting Panel

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday, 19 July 2023</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>4.00 p.m.</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Committee Room 1 - Birkenhead Town Hall</b>

**Contact Officer:** Joe D'Henin  
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Please note that public seating is limited, therefore members of the public are encouraged to arrive in good time.

Wirral Council is fully committed to equalities and our obligations under The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. If you have any adjustments that would help you attend or participate at this meeting, please let us know as soon as possible and we would be happy to facilitate where possible. Please contact [committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk)

This meeting will be webcast at  
<https://wirral.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

## AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**
- 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 3. MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Members are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

- 4. PUBLIC AND MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

#### **4.1 Public Questions**

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, 14 July 2023 to the Council's Monitoring Officer via this link: [Public Question Form](#) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10.

For more information on how your personal information will be used, please see this link: [Document Data Protection Protocol for Public Speakers at Committees | Wirral Council](#)

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your question by the deadline for submission.

#### **4.2 Statements and Petitions**

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, 14 July 2023 to the Council's Monitoring Officer ([committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk)) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 11.1

Petitions may be presented to the Committee. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding three minutes) to outline the aims of the petition. The Chair will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda. If a petition contains more than 5,000 signatures, it will be debated at a subsequent meeting of Council for up to 15 minutes, at the discretion of the Mayor.

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your statement/petition by the deadline for submission.

#### **4.3 Questions by Members**

Questions by Members to dealt with in accordance with Standing Orders 12.3 to 12.8.

- 5. CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23 (Pages 1 - 20)**
- 6. LOCAL OFFER FOR CARE LEAVERS (Pages 21 - 48)**
- 7. CORPORATE PARENTING WORK PROGRAMME 2023-2024 (Pages 49 - 54)**



## **CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

**Wednesday, 19 June 2023**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

The purpose of the report is to provide members of the Corporate Parenting Panel with the Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022-2023.

The Annual Report highlights the activity and achievements of the local authority and partners in fulfilling their corporate parenting responsibilities. This report is to provide an update on the delivery of the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022 to 2025, focusing upon the four key areas of the strategy outlining plans and progress:

- Emotional and Physical Health and Wellbeing
- Independence and Transition to adulthood
- Personal Lived Experiences
- Education and Employment

The work outlined in this report delivers against the following priorities of The Wirral Plan 2021 – 2026:

- Brighter Futures
- Safe and Pleasant Communities
- Active and Healthy Lives

This decision affects all wards. It is not a key decision.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to endorse the Annual Report and the work undertaken to date to ensure that the local authority and partners are effective corporate parents.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 To enable the Corporate Parenting Panel to consider the work undertaken by the Local Authority and partners to fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities and to enable Members to scrutinise arrangements.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 Do nothing: This has been discounted as it ensures transparency and legitimacy for the work of the local authority and partners in undertaking their roles as corporate parents.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Children and Families Act 2014 and supporting statutory guidance; “Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers” introduces the seven principles that local authorities and partners must have regard to when considering support for children looked after and care leavers. The principles are:
- To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of children and young people.
  - To encourage children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
  - To consider the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.
  - To help children and young people gain access to, and make the 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 children and young people.
  - For children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
  - To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.
- 3.2 The Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy was developed in 2021 to ensure that Children Looked After and Care Leavers had a voice in designing what they wanted corporate parenting and its approaches to focus upon. Four key work streams already outlined in this report were identified. These four work streams are underpinned by the work of the corporate parenting operational group which comprises of key members across the partnership.
- 3.3 Appendix 1 of the report provides an update of the delivery of the four key work streams which are aligned to the themes of the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy including work undertaken, future plans, and progress.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Financial implications relating to Foster Carers and the Cheshire Wirral Partnership, CWP, Integrated Home are addressed in page 15 in appendix 1 of the report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no legal implications arising out of the report.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

6.1 Staffing implications have been highlighted within the report.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 It is important that the local authority and partners can capture and share their work as corporate parents with stakeholders including elected members and children and young people. This needs to be undertaken regularly to ensure that statutory responsibilities are met.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 Young people have been consulted on the Children Looked After and Care Leaver Strategy prior to its finalisation and were involved from the outset in its design. Young people are regularly consulted with via the children in care Council and the Participation and Engagement Team to better understand feedback around each aspect of the strategy and its impact, as well as any other issues that are of renewed or new importance to young people.

8.2 Further to this a range of internal partners and external organisations are involved in the design and review of the strategy.

#### **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report.

#### **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no direct environment and climate implications arising from this report.

#### **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 Wirral are supporting care leavers to achieve apprenticeships and increase their skill set within the Wirral working economy. This report highlights the provision of internal council staff to support long term support strategies and change for Wirral children and families.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Progress Update 2023

Some information in the appendix may not be suitable to view for people with disabilities, users of assistive technology or mobile phone devices. Please contact eifionburke@wirral.gov.uk if you would like these documents in an accessible format.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-25](#)

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

This report is being considered by the Corporate Parenting Panel in accordance with the following extract of its Terms of Reference:

“A Sub-Committee... with delegated authority to exercise responsibility for the Council’s functions relating to the delivery by or on behalf of the Council, of Corporate Parenting functions”.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>	<b>12.10.2022</b>

# **Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy Progress Update 2023**

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## **1. Introduction**

This Appendix is to provide an update on the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-2025.

The report will focus on the four key areas of the strategy outlining plans and progress:

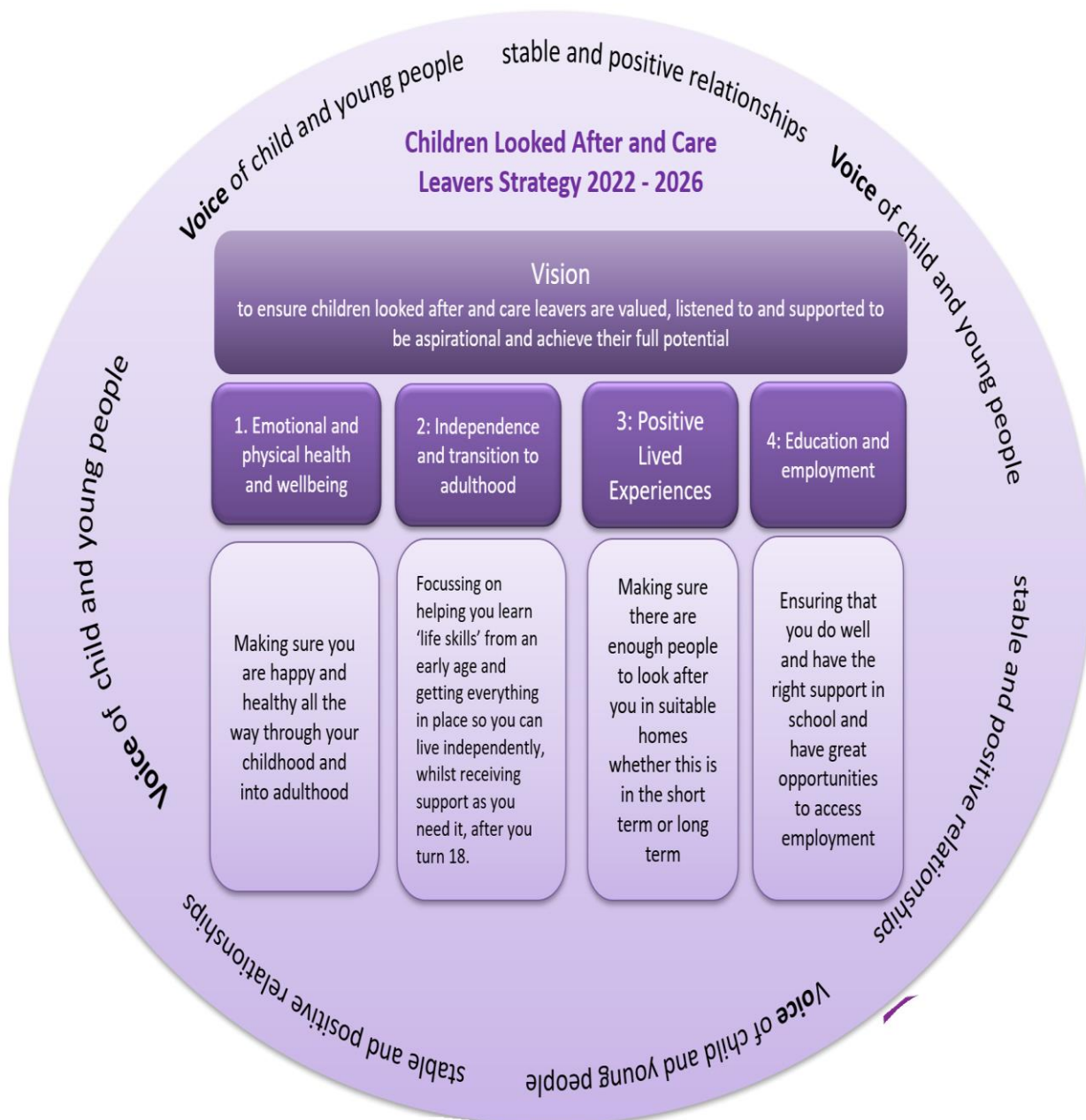
- Emotional and physical health and well-being
- Independence and transition to adult hood
- Personal lived experience
- Education and employment

## **2. Background**

The Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy was developed in 2021 to ensure that Children Looked After and Care Leavers had a voice in designing what they wanted the corporate parenting board and its approaches to focus upon. Four key work streams already outlined in this report were identified. These four work streams are underpinned by the work of the corporate parenting operational group which comprises of key members across the partnership.



# Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-2025



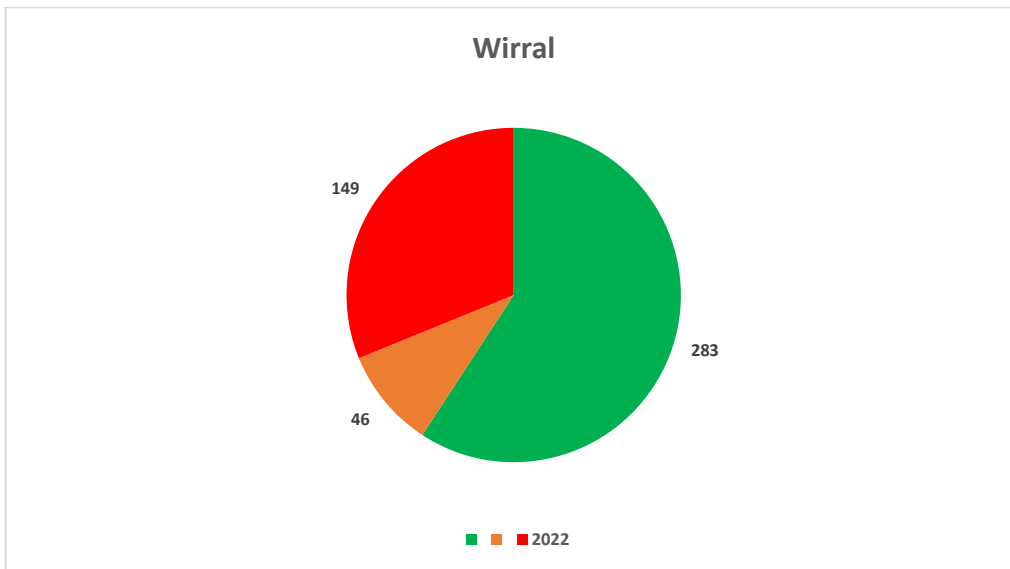
### 3. Emotional and physical health and well-being

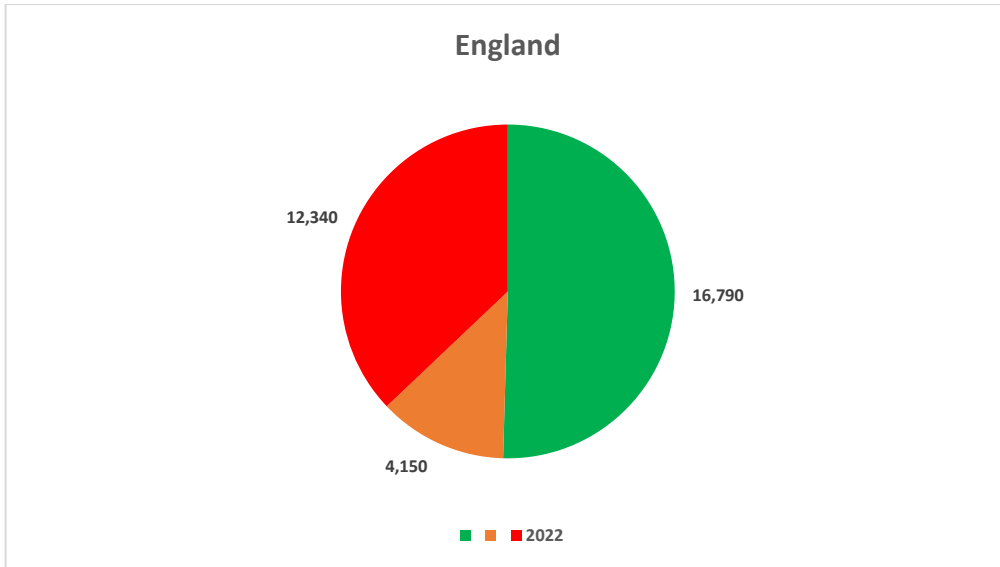
The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a brief emotional and behavioural screening questionnaire for children and young people. The tool can capture the perspective of children and young people, their parents and teachers and foster carers. The pie charts below shows the comparison between Wirral and the rest of England. As can be seen, Wirral has less children in the borderline and cause for concern areas than compared to the rest of England. This is based on approximately 95% compliance rates of SDQ being completed.

Green: Normal SDQ score

Orange: Borderline score

Red: Cause for concern score





A paper is being submitted to the Senior Leadership Team to consider an options appraisal for children looked after and care leavers around specific mental health support from December 2023 onwards when the current contract with Polaris and Open Door is due to expire.

There are three options to be considered:

- Retender for the original specification
- Retender with an amended specification
- Provide services via a permanent staffing group across services

The option to continue working with current providers is catered for within the first two options described above.

Support around children’s mental health and emotional well-being has been successful. Providing bespoke services to meet a range of needs across this cohort of children has been greatly beneficial. The support has been provided across children, foster carers and other professionals as well as social workers in order that children’s needs are more fully understood and met within the community. There have been some waiting lists across the work undertaken by Polaris. This reflects an increase in the amounts of one-to-one therapeutic work originally anticipated as being required, and additionally the service has been beset by staffing issues at different points throughout the contract. There have been difficulties in retaining and recruiting

some staff members, although the current manager has been working extremely hard in support the service and has been excellent in communication and engagement with the local authority.

Polaris provides therapeutic work 1-1 with children and supports carers and professionals working with children to think psychologically about their needs and their developmental history. Open Door provides a range of CBT interventions, peer mentoring and an activity based focus ranging from crafts, and Art, to Yoga, boxing and other group/individual wellbeing activities.

Both organisations have worked alongside CAMHS in ensuring that children receive support when needed and if there is a waiting list in either CAMHS/Polaris then often Open Door can provide some interim support, with the additional benefit of the Care Navigator Team that has been developed within CAMHS in the past 12 months and has been operational for approximately 7 months.

#### **4. Independence and transition to adult hood**

In order to prevent children and young people becoming homeless at 18 years of age a guarantor scheme is being implemented by the care leavers service. Specific legal advice has been sourced in order to ensure that young people can move into tenancies prior to 18 where appropriate with support from the Local Authority.

‘Staying Close’ funding has been approved following a successful bid earlier in the year. This provides for:

The Staying Close offer from Wirral Council will support residential care move on for young people 18+ into semi-independent living with onsite support, or independent living with outreach support. The focus will be to ensure that young people at the age of 17 have an identified person who supports them in a trusting relationship when they leave residential care. To facilitate this, the existing Leaving Care Panel will integrate a ‘Staying Close,’ element to identify young people within residential homes who are moving on to semi-independent/independent living provision.

In addition to the cohort of young people described above, those eligible for staying close will be young people leaving supported accommodation and moving into alternative accommodation at 18 and with supported living accommodation being their only option between age 16-18. These young people are likely to be just as vulnerable as many of the children leaving residential care at 18 years old. It is vital that trusting relationships they have developed during this period is continued.

Furthermore, the project will focus on Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) within Wirral to ensure continuity of relationship with a trusted person.

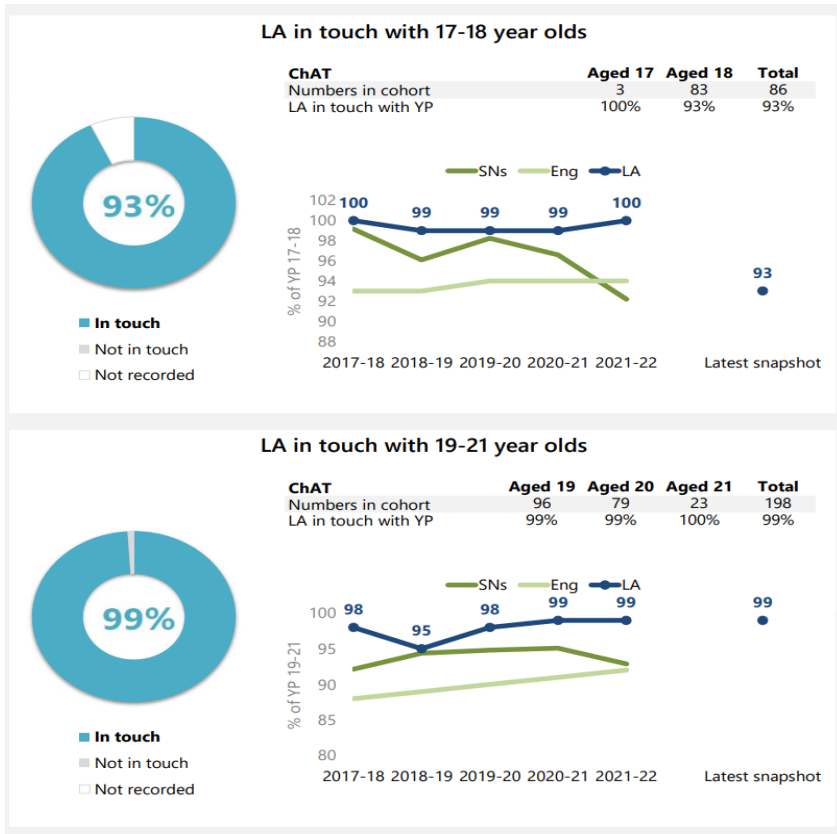
All three cohorts of children share similar characteristics in that many will have experienced multiple placement breakdowns and multiple traumas. The focus and outcomes of the project will be:

- Reducing homelessness
- Reducing the isolation that many young people experience on leaving residential care,
- Improving the mental health of children leaving residential care, and
- Improving engagement and outcomes in education, training, and work.
- The model will include the creation of a Transitions Worker post within the Care Leavers Service. The transitions worker will identify children aged 15-17 and relevant trusted persons and make referrals to the Leaving Care Panel to identify and agree a trusted person for all relevant children leaving care. The transitions workers will engage with the commissioning service, residential providers, young people, and personal advisors (PAs) in the care leavers services to ensure that packages of support are in place alongside the identified trusted person.
- Three 'Staying Close' posts will be created within the Care Leavers Service to build a trusted relationship with young people that will remain once they leave care. This offer will be provided to those young people where all avenues for existing trusted relationships have been exhausted. For example, where a private provider does not have capacity to support. Young people will be identified at 17 and the practitioner will commence early relationship building with them prior to and beyond time in residential or supported living accommodation.

- A Staying Close Framework will be embedded within Pathway Plans to ensure the plan encompasses vital elements of the framework, identifying support to be put in place, including the 'trusted relationship,' and move on accommodation. The offer will link with the guarantor scheme where young people are supported into accommodation pre-18 where the local authority is the guarantor paying the rent to ensure secure tenancies for young people and avoiding homelessness at 18. The Leaving Care Panel will coordinate move on placements in for either supported or independent living. Where possible, placements will be within walking distance of their previous home.
- As part of the model, a psychologist will be commissioned to provide intensive therapy for higher need young people, and reflective group clinical supervision to personal advisors. This specialist psychological therapeutic support will dovetail with current mental health support offered via OOMOO which will provide the young people with positive physical and creative activities, including peer mentoring and digital Cognitive Behaviour Therapy approaches. This would enable a specialist form of ongoing consultation supporting effective work, focussing on young people who are most at risk, e.g., exhibiting self-harm, suicidal ideation, difficulties in keeping safe, and in maintaining positive engagement with community/training and support.
- The psychologist will provide specialist advice and consultation to social workers, managers, and other professionals around the needs of children who are leaving care. The psychologist will provide specialist consultation to the network around the young person, ensuring that a trauma informed approach is applied work undertaken with the young person.
- The 14-19 Team will support care leavers with training, apprenticeships, and education and will encourage young people attend the SKILLZ (life skills programme for young people) at 'Our Space,' which is the dedicated care leaver hub in a central location in the borough. It would also include provision of Care Leaver Peer Mentor to support with employment, education and/ or training options utilising the existing partnership with the National Youth Advisory Service, which has been in place for the past three years. This will provide young people with a volunteer to work with them with job applications, job interviews, CVs, and training.
- In terms of sustainability, it is expected that the transitions worker will be embedded within the Care Leavers team with joint funding across the Permanence and Cared Leavers team to ensure continuity of role. Regarding the Psychologist role, this would

form part of the core offer for mental health support for CLA and Care Leavers and would be an ongoing commitment from Wirral. The aim for the 3 x 'Staying Close practitioners' will be to secure joint funding across public health, children, and potentially adult services to enable posts to become sustainable and integrated, part of the support network.

- Gareth Jones from the 14-19 Team has been meeting with the relevant Council departments and affiliated companies to ensure apprenticeships are available for our care leavers. Specific wording within and outside contracts for the Council need to include ironclad guarantees that care leavers will be offered apprenticeships with companies that are developing areas around the Wirral.
- Gareth Jones will also be looking at developing a mandatory corporate parenting video use across the council. He is working on this in conjunction with our organisational development team.
- We are moving our SKILLZ training offer for independence and life skills for children in care and care leavers into a more accessible version that can be accessed via carers and young people and undertaken within homes. The plan is that the platform will be provided to foster carers for example who will be able to go through the program and support the young person to gain the qualification in the life skills associated with it rather than the expectation that the young people come to a centre to complete the work. This should increase the numbers of young people accessing these courses and fit in with expectations around foster carer roles.
- We are supporting the Care Leavers Covenant to be applied across the Council in terms of embedding support to Care Leavers across all Council Departments and relevant public and private sector organisations and partnerships.
- In terms of contact between the Care Leavers Service and our young people this is illustrated by the information below highlighting a positive impact of engagement and support by the team:

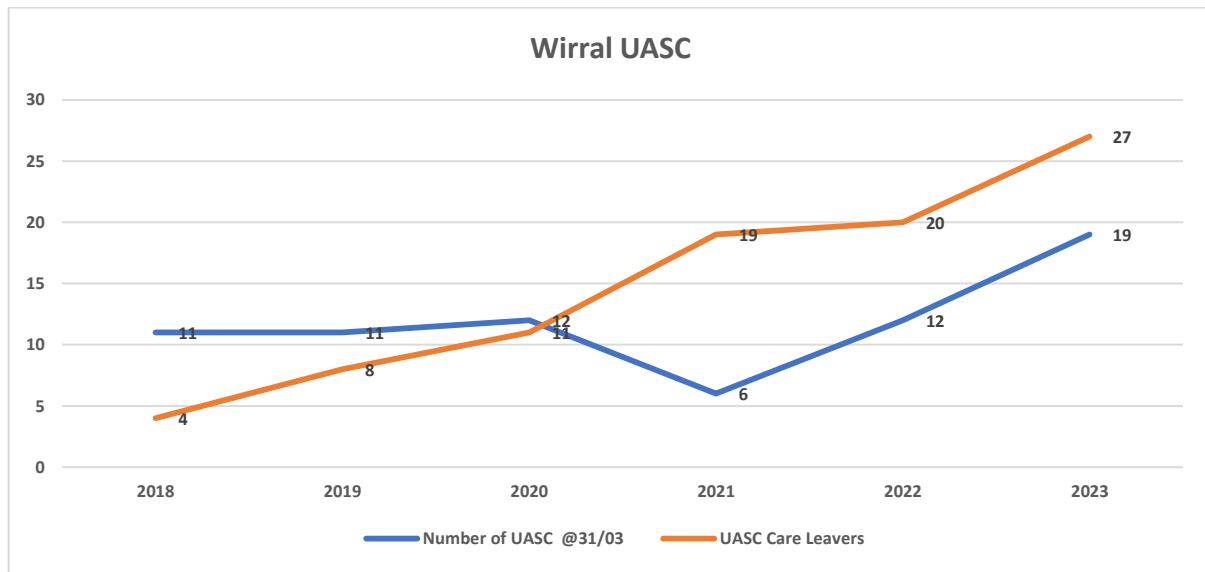


## 5. Unaccompanied And Separated Children

In terms of unaccompanied and separated children who have come to the UK from abroad the numbers have increased significantly over recent years. This is primarily as a result of the national transfer scheme which Wirral is part of as are other local authorities in the UK. This means that Wirral has a quota of young people to take from holding points usually on the south coast of England.



**Graph to illustrate numbers of Unaccompanied and Separated Children looked after and numbers of care leavers has increased in recent years**



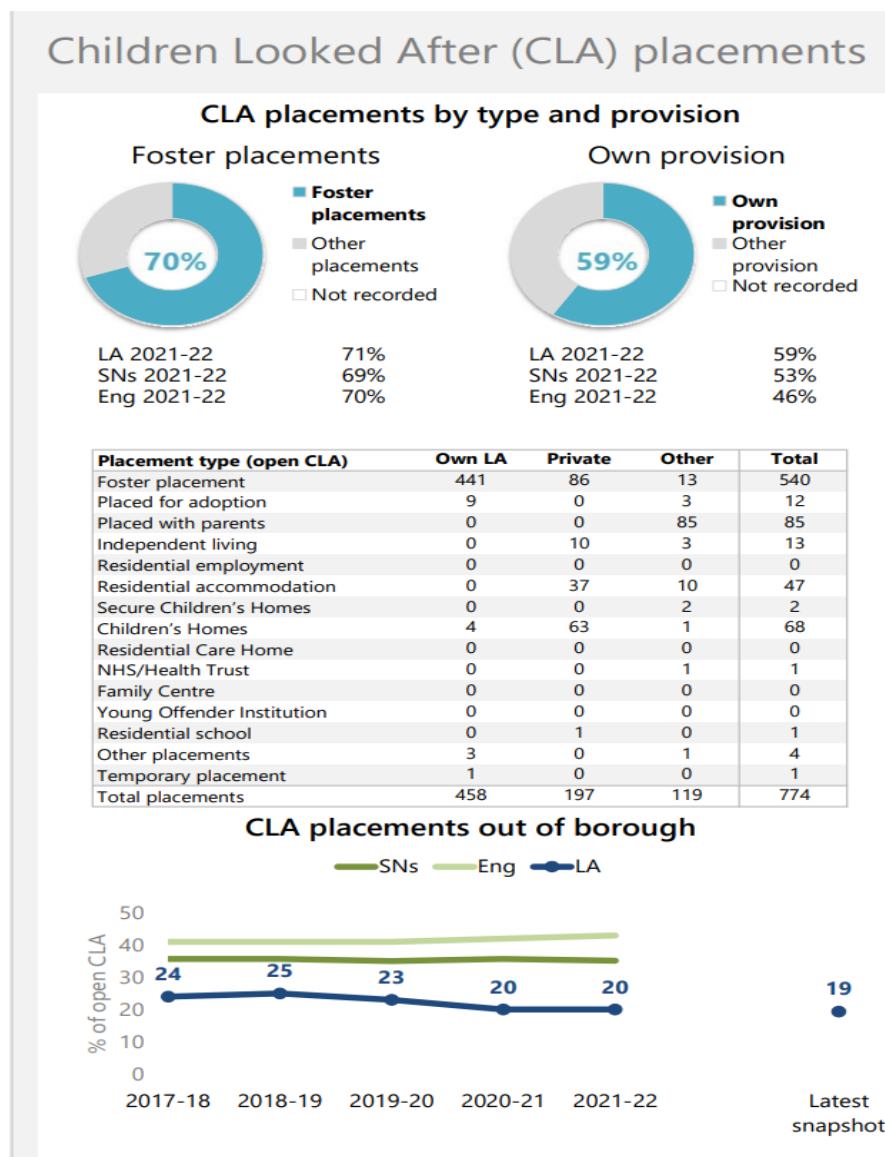
Work is ongoing alongside colleagues within commissioning and housing to support young people to be placed within Wirral rather than in Liverpool where there is more scope for accommodation on offer, but the young people may be more removed from the support locally.

In terms of our support for foster carers, a paper was submitted to senior leadership team outlining significant changes in skills banding payments to foster carers. This is to support the recruitment and retention of foster carers at a time of increasing costs for them and against the backdrop of no increases in these payments for more than 10 years. An uplift in payments across the bandings has been agreed at 11%. We have also provided two new skills banding payments for children with specialist needs (usually teenagers who have experienced significant trauma) and children with complex needs (usually children with significant disabilities and high care needs). The aim of these new skills banding payments are to support children to be placed in foster care rather than in residential care, thereby supporting a more family focussed and less institutionalised setting, whilst at the same time reducing the high costs associated with residential care.

There have been requests for increase mileage allowance from foster carers recently and proposals are being costed currently prior to presentation at the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

## 6. Personal lived experience

The information below highlights how Wirral has more children placed in foster care than comparative neighbouring authorities and in England as well as the fact that a significantly higher proportion of the children placed in foster care are within the LA own provision. This means that we have more children placed with Wirral local authority employed foster carers. Additionally, Wirral has a significantly lower proportion of children placed out of borough than other areas of England.



The first residential home for Juno has opened in May 2023. This is a four bedded residential home run by a community interest company supported by Wirral and other partners. The home is a wonderful bright and airy space with plenty of room and opportunities for relaxing and engaging in positive activities within the community. The staff team is in place and receiving ongoing training and support specifically around children's emotional well-being and mental health. Two children have since moved into the home, with another two children planned to move in within 3 months and matching is ongoing currently.

The three bedroomed respite/crisis home for children learning disabilities/autism is moving forward as a result of the home progressing through probate finally. The project is moving forward and steps are being taken to plan and implement the building modifications and a view to opening the home within a few months.

A further home has been identified via NHS colleagues which is owned by Cheshire Wirral partnership. Work is ongoing with NHS colleagues to identify the best use of this building which is a six bedroomed previously respite home for young people with disabilities. Data were to examine the specific needs of children who would be supported in this home are underway with a focus on short-term care and rehabilitation and community support.

The commission with Kinship to provide additional support to our carers who look after children subject to special guardianship orders ended in April 2023. This was as a result of the contract not being utilised to its full potential (there was not enough demand for the services provided), the contract cost had increased significantly, some of the key benefits of the contract can be accessed free of charge, and Wirral is providing a small and bespoke SGO support team which is currently being developed.

## 7. Education and Employment

The Assistant Director for Education has been meeting with colleagues to codesign key principles in relation to expectations around our children looked after. These principles will be part of the inclusion offer for children supporting children to remain in school and not be excluded, supporting children to have people remaining supporting them rather than losing the supports and having no safe place at times within school hours to go to

**Wirral Virtual School** consist of 10 staff who champion the education of Looked After Children and children with a social worker. As part of their role they ensure that:

- Government Grant Funds are monitored, scrutinised and carefully accounted for and used appropriately and in accordance with all Grant requirements to support vulnerable children to achieve the best outcomes.
- All systems are utilised appropriately and accurately to enable tracking and monitoring of plans for looked after children and ensure all relevant parties are fully informed and involved.
- Accurate and reliable data is collected to inform and drive progress and continued improvement.
- Reporting systems are in place to ensure compliance and accountability.
- Children out of authority are carefully considered and championed by a specific member of staff who is in regular contact with all out of borough schools and who works with all agencies to ensure they do not fall off the radar.
- Children with a plan for adoption are supported via LACES and AIM. Meetings are attended and adoptive parents have full support and guidance of Virtual Head.
- Children in foster care are fully supported and training is planned for the Summer Term 2023.
- We work with all providers to support children in residential settings access education quickly and placements are stable.
- Children with SEND are carefully and meticulously supported and championed by a specific member of the team who liaises with all relevant parties to ensure that the most vulnerable children are accessing the right education with the right support.
- Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children and Young People receive funding and support

whenever necessary.

- 100% completion of Personal Education Plans and are good or better quality
- There have been no children Permanently Excluded from school
- Every School visited to develop relationships and provide support and challenge to raise aspirations and progress of looked after children
- Wirral children in care make better progress generally than other groups of children open to social care. We have plans to address this and support schools and social care to ensure all groups of children attain good outcomes
- We have worked with colleagues in data teams to produce reports showing the educational progress of all Wirral CLA in GLD, Phonics, Key Stages 1, 2 and 4 assessment data. This allows us to see at a glance, who is making progress and to share good practice across the authority. It also allows us to identify those not making progress and to provide further support and challenge to school and settings. Further work is needed to consider comparative internal school data.
- We pride ourselves on our excellent working relationships with schools, social care and all parties involved in the lives of Wirral Children's Services.

## **8. Financial Implications**

There are financial implications for the uplift of skills banding payments to foster carers. We have agreed an 11% uplift across three skills bandings. The danger had we not uplifted is that foster carers will leave the service and we will not attract new foster carers to replace them, thus accelerating the financial commitment of the council to an increase in residential placements.

In terms of the financial implications for the Cheshire Wirral Partnership(CWP) Integrated Home, these are difficult to determine the moment as the planning is at a relatively early stage, however it is anticipated that whatever proposals are made these would result in net savings as a result of support been put in collaboratively across the partnership, and prevention of exceptionally high-cost placements and use of agencies for these young people.

## **9. Engagement/Consultation**

Young people have been consulted around the strategy prior to its finalisation, and were involved from the outset in its design. Young people are regularly consulted with via the children in care Council and the Participation and Engagement Team to better understand feedback around each aspect of the strategy and its impact, as well as any other issues that are of renewed or new importance to young people.

Further to this range of internal partners and external organisations are involved in the design and review of the strategy.

## **10. Conclusion**

The Children Looked After and Care Leavers strategy has assisted significant numbers of children looked after and care leavers in all areas of their emotional and physical health and well-being, their independence and transition to adult hood, their personal lived experience and in relation to education and employment. There are significant decisions that need to be made around future commissioning compared with in-house options around supporting this cohort children within Wirral and the corporate parenting Board will be advised of further recommendations in relation to the areas outlined in this report. There are various areas of expertise around psychological support to children where overlaps across services may mean that in house services closely linked with commissioned providers and CAMHS may offer a more flexible, responsive and integrated service band the positives and negatives of such approaches will be considered further by the Senior Leadership Team in advance of contracts ending in December 2023.



## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

WEDNESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> JULY

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>CARE LEAVERS LOCAL OFFER</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

The report provides a updated Wirral Care Leaver's Local offer which better reflects the support and opportunities available from the council and wider support agencies.

As corporate parents, it is our responsibility to make sure care leavers know what services are available to them, and what they can expect to receive.

The local offer being presented in this report has been informed and developed through consultation with the members of the Care Leavers Council.

The local offer for care leavers relates to the following six key areas, these include:

1. Health and wellbeing
2. Relationships
3. Education and training
4. Employment
5. Accommodation
6. Participation in society

The work outlined in this report delivers against the following priorities of The Wirral Plan 2021 – 2026:

- Brighter Futures
- Safe and Pleasant Communities
- Active and Healthy Lives

This decision affects all wards. It is not a key decision.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to endorse the updated Care Leavers Local Offer and the work undertaken to date to ensure that the local authority and partners are effective corporate parents.



## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 Approval of the revised and updated Local Offer for Care Leavers by the Corporate Parenting Panel is required to ensure the Council meets its statutory requirement to produce and publish a Care Leaver Local Offer.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Do nothing: This has been discounted as it ensures transparency and legitimacy for the work of the Council and partners in undertaking their roles as corporate parents.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Wirral Care Leaver Local Offer was last drafted in June 2019. The Offer has been redesigned in May 2023 with input from young people from the Care Leavers council.
- 3.2 Young people requested an “easy to read” document, in a simple format and it be available in young people’s spoken language (Offer will be available in a range of dialects).
- 3.3 A “Young Person guide” has also been produced in conjunction with the Local Offer.
- 3.4 This revised and updated version of the Care Leavers Local offer has been simplified, condensed, and outlines all the services available to Wirral Care Leavers, including any financial support.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the updated Wirral Care Leaver Local Offer be published on the Councils website, The Right side of Care website and issued to all Wirral care experienced young people.
- 4.2 The Wirral Care Leaver Local Offer will be further reviewed and updated, June 2024.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Statutory guidance requires local authorities to provide a leaving care allowance, to enable care leavers to purchase essentials (such as furniture, white goods, and carpets/curtains) when they move into their first home.
- 4.2 Department for Education guidance currently recommends that local authorities should pay a minimum of £2,000. Following the independent review into children’s social care the minimum recommended amount was uplifted to £3,000 from April 2023. This change will equate to approximately an additional £50,000 per annum.

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There is a statutory requirement for Councils in England to produce and publish a Care Leaver Local Offer.
- 5.2 The Children Social Work Act 2017, places a legal duty on local authorities to publish a Local Offer for Care Leavers: -
- (1) A local authority in England must publish information about:
    - (a) services which the local authority offers for care leavers as a result of its functions under the Children Act 1989.
    - (b) other services which the local authority offers that may assist care leavers in, or in preparing for, adulthood and independent living.
  - (2) For the purposes of subsection (1), services which may assist care leavers in, or in preparing for, adulthood and independent living include services relating to—
    - (a) health and well-being.
    - (b) relationships.
    - (c) education and training.
    - (d) employment.
    - (e) accommodation.
    - (f) participation in society.
  - (3) Where it considers appropriate, a local authority in England must publish information about services for care leavers offered by others which the local authority has power to offer as a result of its functions under the Children Act 1989.
  - (4) Information required to be published by a local authority under this section is to be known as its “local offer for care leavers”.
  - (5) A local authority must update its local offer for care leavers from time to time, as appropriate.
  - (6) Before publishing its local offer for care leavers (or any updated version) a local authority must consult relevant persons about which of the services offered by the local authority may assist care leavers in, or in preparing for, adulthood and independent living.
- 5.3 Section 2 requires local authorities to publish information about the services it offers to care leavers which may assist them in preparing for adulthood and independent living. These services may include health and wellbeing, education and training, employment, accommodation, and participation in society. It is distinct from the special educational needs and disability (SEND) local offer stipulated by the Children and Families Act 2014.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 There are no resource implications arising out of the report.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 It is vitally important that the council publishes an up-to-date local offer for care leavers both from a statutory duty perspective but also to ensure Wirral care leavers can access the right support at the right time to enable them to flourish and achieve.
- 7.2 Without access to an up to date well publicised local offer Wirral care leavers could be disadvantaged from a health and / or economic wellbeing perspective.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 Young people were fully consulted in preparation of the Wirral Care Leaver Local Offer, and the Care Leaver Council approved the final draft version of the Local Offer.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The local offer will be available and accessible for care leavers for whom English is not their first language and for those with special educational needs and / or disabilities. A full Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no environment and climate implications.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no community wealth implications.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Peter Rogan  
Leaving Care Manager  
peterrogan@wirral.gov.uk

## **APPENDICES**

Draft 2023-24 Local Offer for Care Leavers

The PDF file may not be suitable to view for people with disabilities, users of assistive technology or mobile phone devices. Please contact [peterrogan@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:peterrogan@wirral.gov.uk) if you would like this document in an accessible format.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Children and Families Act 2014  
Children Social Work Act 2017

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

This report is being considered by the Corporate Parenting Panel in accordance with the following extract of its Terms of Reference:

“A Sub-Committee... with delegated authority to exercise responsibility for the Council’s functions relating to the delivery by or on behalf of the Council, of Corporate Parenting functions”.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

Council Meeting	Date
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# Wirral's Local Offer for Care Experienced Young People

Wirral Council's Local Offer tells you about support that we have for you as a Care Experienced young person. We want to make sure that you feel safe and supported and know where to go for advice and help.

Wirral Care Leavers and the Care Leavers Council have been involved in developing the Local Offer. The Local Offer will be reviewed every 12 months. This document is available in your first language.

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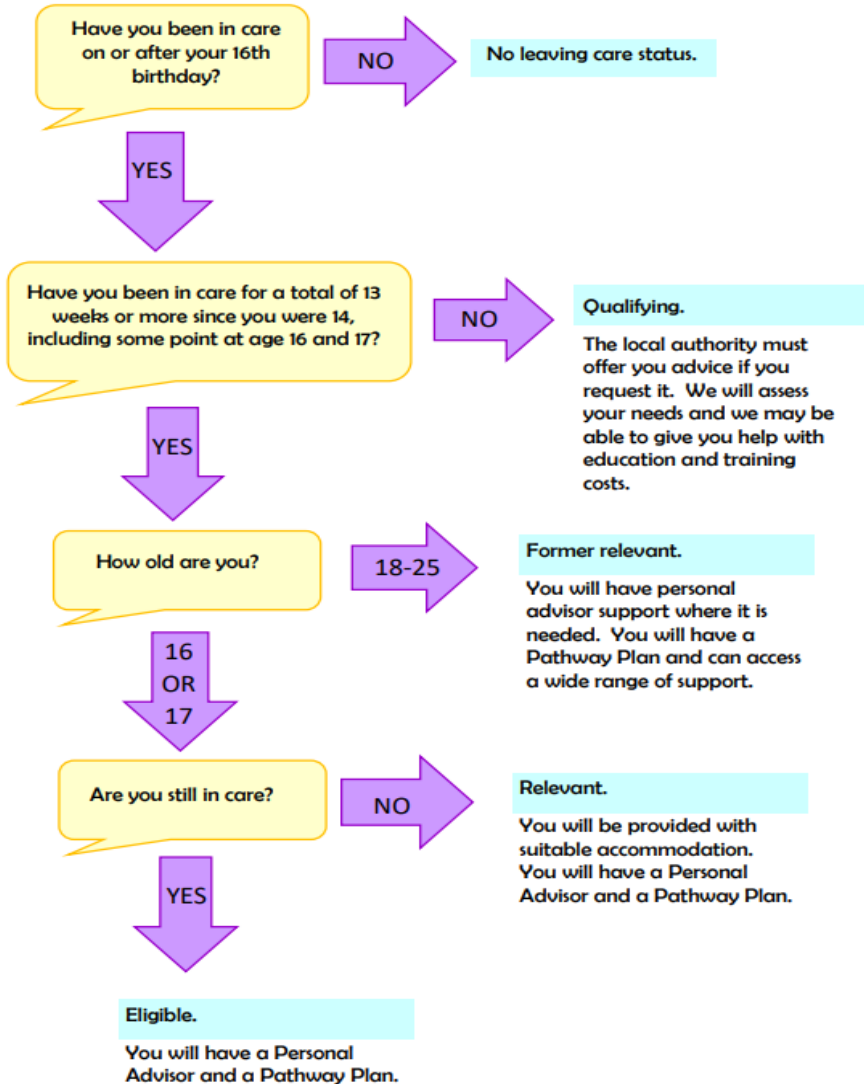
Tài liệu này có sẵn bằng ngôn ngữ đầu tiên của bạn.

Dokumentigan waxaa lagu helayaa luqadaada hooyo.

 The Local Offer should be read along with the Wirral Care Leavers' Guide.

# Am I a Care Leaver?

To be able to get the support, you must be in care for at least 13 weeks between the ages of 14 and 16, including your 16th birthday or 13 weeks after your 16th birthday.



## Corporate Parenting Principles

There are seven corporate parenting principles that Local Authorities must keep in mind in relation to children and young people who are Care Experienced. They are as follows:

- To act in the best interests and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.
- To encourage children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
- To take into account the views, wishes, and feelings of children and young people.
- To help children and young people gain access to and make the best use of services provided by Wirral Council and its relevant partners.
- To promote high aspirations and to seek to secure the best outcomes for children and young people.
- For children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships, and education or work.
- To prepare children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

## Support for Care Experienced Young People

### Personal Advisor (PA)

If you are a Care Leaver, we will make sure you have a leaving care Personal Advisor to support you. It is their job to keep in touch with you, check you are alright, help you get what you need, ensure your accommodation is suitable, and encourage and support you in your education, training, and employment.



Your Personal Advisor is there to help and advise you with your plans and make sure you have support while you move from being a young person to a young adult.

We will allocate a 'Personal Advisor' to support you from your 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, or shortly after.

We will try not to change your PA. In theory you might have the same PA for 9 years!

You will have a Pathway Plan to set out your aspirations, views, support needs and help plan for your future. This will include who is going to help you, anything you or others are worried about, and what your next steps may be.

Your Pathway Plan will be reviewed with you at least every 6 months. It will be updated to reflect your circumstances or any significant changes regularly.

Your PA will keep in touch with you; at least once every 56 days until you are 21, but more often if needed. After 21 you can decide and agree how often your PA contacts you.

If you need extra support after you turn 21, the Leaving Care team will work with you to identify what extra support you may need. Some examples of extra support needs are:

- You have special educational needs or a disability. If you currently have an Education Health Care plan (EHCP) or have had in the past you may find the SEND local offer helpful: <https://localofferwirral.org/> .
- You are an unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child (UASC) and your immigration status is unclear.
- You are in or leaving custody or you have had contact with the criminal justice system.
- You are a young parent.
- You are going through a difficult time in your personal life.



# Our Space



Our Space is a building dedicated to you. This was one of the most important things care experienced young people told us they wanted. Our Space is a safe, friendly place that you can come to for events, staff support, and more.



### Here at Our Space we offer:

- Duty Team of Personal Advisors are available every weekday between 9am-5pm.
  - Facilities including Games, Chillout room, kitchen, washing facilities, and internet access.
  - A café with free drinks and snacks.
  - Access to Computers with free WIFI in our fully equipped digital suite.
  - “OUR SHOP” where you can do a weekly shop for cupboard essentials, cleaning supplies, fresh meat, fruit and veg, and personal hygiene supplies. This is funded by the government Household Support fund.
  - Have your tea at Our Space; every two weeks a freshly cooked meal will be available in a warm space, with games, staff, and other young people.
  - Celebration events including Listen to Me awards, Open Mic nights, Care Leaver’s Week and lots more.
  - Social evenings, Sewing and Cooking courses, and a SKILZ course where you can learn essential skills for life.
  - ‘Stay and Play’ for parents with babies/toddlers.
  - Sexual health Brook advisory drop-in sessions.
  - Education, Employment, and training support and advice.
  - Job Centre plus appointments with a dedicated Care Leaver work coach.
- Details of helplines, apps, and websites that are free to access.

## Your right to be heard and listened to.

You have a right to be involved in decisions about your plans for Leaving Care. You have a right to be supported by an independent advocate to talk about or challenge decisions about the support we give you.

## Your Voice

It is your right to be involved and to have a meaningful voice in the decisions made about your life. Using your skills, talents, and experience to make a difference to others is something many Care Leavers and young people feel is important to them.

We can help you by:

- Listening and taking account of your views about how we support you.
- You could join the Care Leaver Council.
- Asking you about your views in surveys and taking account of what you say.
- Asking you to be on an interview panel when we recruit new Social Care staff.
- Recognising and celebrating your achievements in Awards ceremonies and events.
- Attend Corporate Parenting Board so that senior leaders can hear feedback about the service directly from a Care Leaver.
- Giving you information on groups and clubs you may wish to join.

## Advocacy

Independent Advocates can inform you about your rights and help you to be heard in meetings. They are separate from Children's Services and the Leaving Care team.

You can request an Advocate from Barnardo's WAIV (Wirral Advocacy Independent Visitor) Service with support from either your Social Worker or Personal Advisor.

**Barnardo's WAIV Service**

**Phone: 0151 650 5488**

**Email: [wirralervices@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:wirralervices@barnardos.org.uk)**

**<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/services/wirral-advocacy-children-looked-after-child-protection>**

## Complaints

If you aren't happy about something, we would encourage you to talk to your Social Worker, Personal Advisor, or other trusted adult. You can also contact the Leaving Care Team Manager or make a formal complaint to the complaints officer who will talk to you about your concerns. You can have support from an Advocate or adult you trust to help you with this.

### Leaving Care Team

#### Manager

**Peter Rogan**

**Phone: 0151 606 2814**

**Email:**

**[peterrogan@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:peterrogan@wirral.gov.uk)**

### Complaints Officer

**Rob Blackburn**

**Phone: 0151 666 4340**

**Email: [cypdcomplaints@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:cypdcomplaints@wirral.gov.uk)**

## Compliments

We welcome compliments or feedback from you, if you feel things are going well or you have been well supported.



The Care Leavers' survey is run annually. It gives you the opportunity to let us know how we are doing; we welcome any suggestions to improve our service.

You can send feedback at any point using the QR code below

## Access to records

You have a right to see the information we keep about you. This includes the files and records written about you while you are care experienced.

Your Personal Advisor can support you to make a request to access your records and support you through the process.



# Health & Wellbeing

We care about your health and wellbeing. We understand that looking after your mental health is as important as your physical health.

## Support available to you may include:

- Help to register with a doctor, dentist, and optician.
- Attending appointments with you if you need.
- Access to information about healthy living, and healthy eating advice and guidance.
- Information on getting help to pay for prescriptions (NHS low-income scheme).
- Support you to move from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) to adult mental health services.
- Information about counselling services that are available, and support offered to attend.
- Help with transport costs when attending health appointments.
- Access to sexual health support.
- Ongoing support from your former “LAC nurse”.
- Work with you and the LAC (Looked After Children) Health Team to develop a ‘health passport’.

## Gym Pass

We know that physical activity is beneficial for good mental health, and we will provide you with a Wirral Leisure card. This will give you free access to some of Wirral Council’s leisure services, including gyms and swimming pools.

## Health Passport

We will work with you and the LAC (Looked After Children) Health Team to develop a 'health passport'. This will contain key information from your childhood. For example, when and if you have had immunisations, and your current health needs. Your PA can also assist you to access "NHS App" where you can see all your health information and records.

**If you are a young parent**, we will encourage and support you and your family. You will be welcomed to "Stay and Play", an informal parent and toddler/baby group at Our Space. Stay and Play is led by Care Experienced young parents, with the support of a dedicated Personal Advisor. The group gives an opportunity to share and learn new skills and meet new people in a friendly environment. Agreed speakers will attend to provide information and have included Baby First Aid and Healthy Eating. We may support you with travel if you would like to attend.

We will support you to attend important appointments about your child.



**If you find yourself either remanded or sentenced to custody** your social worker and PA will continue to visit you and ensure the best plans are made for your discharge, as detailed in your pathway plan. If you are 16 or 17 you will receive a monthly allowance of £20 to purchase items from the prison canteen and shop. If you remain in custody after you are 21 you will remain open to the service, and we will continue to work with you and other agencies to plan for your discharge.



## Mental Health

Your mental health is important to us, we have a dedicated counselling service for Care Leavers provided by Polaris. There are a number of free to access crisis cafes just for young people and mental health agencies that we will support you to access.

## Education and Training

Whatever your aspirations are, we want you to thrive, enjoy learning new skills, and increase your knowledge.

### **Some of the support available to you:**

- Advice and guidance from your Personal Advisor about your education and training needs and options.
- Access to a Personal Employability Coach for Careers Information, Advice, and Guidance.
- Up to date information about current education and training opportunities.
- Support to complete applications.
- Support to attend open days or interviews with colleges/training providers.
- Support you to enrol on your chosen course.  
Access to computers in “Our Space” .

### **If you are planning to attend University, your Personal Advisor or Employability Coach will support you by:**

- Helping you consider your options.
- Providing information sessions with local Universities.
- Linking with local University Mentor schemes.
- Attending Open Days.
- Helping with UCAS applications.
- Helping with student finance forms.

- Researching scholarships and additional bursaries you may be entitled to and supporting you in applying for these.
- Looking for suitable accommodation to meet your individual needs.

Being Care Experienced, may entitle you to access bursary payments from your college or training provider. Your Personal Advisor or Employability Coach will provide you with a supporting letter detailing your eligibility to this funding.

If you need uniforms or equipment to complete your course, then your Personal Advisor will complete a financial assessment if the college/training provider does not offer this.

## Employment:

Working is a great way to earn money, increase confidence, and help you get to where you want to be in your adult life.

**You will have access to a specialist service who provide you with a Personal Employability Coach, working with your Personal Advisor, they can help you be “work ready” by:**

- Giving you good quality up to date careers advice.
- Access to employer talks and information sessions.
- Support with writing a CV that records your key achievements and skills.
- Supporting applications and interview preparations.
- Help with clothes that are suitable for the job you want.
- Communicate regularly about job opportunities, events, and job fairs, and support you to attend.
- Supporting you to travel to an interview or job opportunity.

Department of Work and Pensions (Job Centre) are based at “Our Space” twice a week and offer support with matters relating to employment or benefits. An advisor from the Job Centre is on hand to help with any change in circumstances to your employment status.

Wirral Council offers several apprenticeship opportunities reserved just for Care Experienced Young people (“ring fenced”), this is subject to eligibility criteria and engagement in the recruitment process.

We will support you to access apprenticeships and employment with companies who work in partnership with Wirral Council.

We will encourage you to gain experience, to achieve your aspirations, and support you with accessing volunteering or work shadowing. If we can do this within Wirral Council, we will do our best to progress your chosen career.

If you have Special Educational Needs, we will make sure you receive help and support to access inclusive opportunities including Supported Internships.

Support will be provided to understand your rights and entitlements when employed.

### **Other support available to you:**

- Advice about budgeting money you receive from employment.
- A reference for employment applications.
- Access to any internal courses or programmes we deliver to support you into employment.
- We will provide any Special Clothing (PPE) you may need for work if your employer is unable to do so.



## Participation:

Listening to Care Experienced Young People is crucial in shaping and developing our service.

### Care Councils (CICC & CLC's)

The Children in Care Council (CICC) and Care Leavers Councils (CLC and CLC 21+) are groups of young people who have all been in care, who have had different experiences, and have a view of how things could change.

### What CICC and CLC's do?

The CICC and CLC's are always looking for new members. Meetings are at least once a month, and they are an opportunity for you to make sure your views and ideas are heard by decision makers in Wirral Council.

The CICC and CLC's are involved in lots of interesting projects that make a difference for young people. It could give you the chance to meet new people and have your voice heard.

### Reasons to get involved with Children in Care or Leaving Care Councils:



- The CICC and CLC's contribute to recruitment, training, and selection of professionals.
- You will have the opportunity to attend the corporate parenting panel. Ensuring that the voice of care leavers is heard.
- You will have the opportunity to attend celebration events throughout the year.
- It encourages and helps you to enrol on the Electoral Register, so you can vote in elections.



# Relationships:

We understand that feeling supported and having good healthy relationships is important to everyone. We would like you to have a strong network of trusted people to support you.

## Support available to you:

- 
- 
- Help and advice to help you regain or maintain contact with friends, family, or previous carers.
  - We promote family time (where appropriate). In some circumstances we will financially support you with travel to contact immediate family members.
  - Advice and support to work with specialist support services, who can help you to learn about positive, healthy relationships.
  - If you are studying away at University, we may help with your transport costs to return to Wirral.
  - We will invite you and encourage you to attend activities and events throughout the year at Our Space.
  - Encouraging you to engage with your PA and the Leaving Care team.

Anyone that you consider to be important to you in your life can be invited to your Pathway Plan reviews.

## Accommodation:

We care about where you live, how you manage, and that you feel safe in your home.

### Before you reach 18:

We will encourage you to stay “in care” until you are 18. If you choose to leave care before age 18, the law says we must

provide you with suitable accommodation. If you decide you want to leave care, we will ensure we provide you with the best support possible.

- Your views of where you want to live will have been discussed with you by your Social Worker and recorded in your Pathway Plan. Your Social Worker and Personal Advisor will look at what you want and need and try to identify suitable accommodation.
- All Care Experienced Young People are discussed at a 16-18 Leaving Care Panel before they are 18, to ensure there is a post 18 accommodation support plan in place.
- Your Personal Advisor will encourage and support you to register with **Property Pool Plus** from the age of 16. You will be eligible for Band B Status (this will become Band A from September 2023) when bidding on properties within Wirral.
- You will be invited to attend independent living skills workshops (Skilz Course) at Our Space. The Gold Skilz is also available for you to complete online.
- From the age of 16 you can register for **Mainstay Accommodation** which enables you to access supported accommodation in Wirral, including Forum Housing, The Links Projects, and Wirral Supported Lodgings.

### When you turn 18:

- If you are in a Foster Placement and you would like to stay living there when you turn 18, this is called “**Staying Put**”. We will promote this and do our best to make it happen.
- We can help you access to “**Supported Lodgings**” accommodation. This is where you have your own room in a provider’s home. They will work with you to support you as a young adult until you are ready to move on to other accommodation.
- Wirral Care Leavers who remain living in Wirral are exempt from Council Tax charges until you are aged 25.

- You will be supported to access and appropriately spend your First Home Grant allowance.

**A rent guarantor scheme is currently being developed and we hope to implement this in 2023.**

**A local housing officer will be available for advice and support at Our Space weekly.**

## Finances:

Making sure you have the right financial support available to you is important to us.

- If you are a relevant care leaver (aged 16 or 17) you will receive a weekly living allowance.
- If you are a relevant care leaver your rent will be paid in line with current housing benefit rates.
- You can meet your Job Centre Plus work coaches in Our Space twice a week to access benefits advice.
- If you do not have a Job Centre Plus work coach your PA can support you with benefits advice.
- In winter months (1 October – 31 March) you will be eligible for a winter fuel payment; this financial support is provided via the Government's Household Support Fund. Please discuss this with your Personal Advisor.
- If you get into financial difficulties, crisis support may be available. Please discuss this with your Personal Advisor.
- You can request financial support towards driving lessons.
- A full breakdown of financial support available, including entitlements and discretionary payments, can be found in your Young Person's Guide.

If you are studying at university on an undergraduate course, we have an agreed financial package.

Your Personal Advisor will complete a budget planner with you. They can refer you to the CAB if you have any debt issues.

## Preparing to “Leave Care”

We know it can be a daunting time and we will do our best to support your transition to adulthood and independence.

Before turning 18, we will ensure your Social Worker or PA has supported you with:

- A current passport.
- National Insurance number.
- A provisional driving licence or relevant age ID card.
- A copy of your birth certificate.
- A bank account.
- Details of your Junior ISA (individual saving account).

## Care Leaver Covenant:

Care Leaver Covenant- Departments, organisations, businesses, and individuals can commit to offer a support package to care experienced young people that is tailored to their own specific expertise, underpinning their commitment to the Covenant with a specific ‘offer’, or ‘pledge’ setting out what it can provide. In return the Care Leaver Covenant organisation will use their expertise to support organisations or individuals with advice and guidance. Wirral Corporate Parenting Board have agreed to move



forward with the Care Leaver Covenant self-assessment and Wirral will use the toolkit to formalise arrangements with employers who hold contracts with the council and engage a larger number of them to offer employment support and opportunities to our Care Leavers.

## Care Leaver Covenant Connects

The Care Leaver Covenant is about more than just employment – although that is one thing that they can help with! They have created over 2000 opportunities covering employment, training, support, free tickets, discounts, giveaways and help with DIY! Some of these will be local and some will be national – you can search the opportunities on the website. If you are a care experienced young person aged 16 – 25, all you need to do is register with “Connects” – it is free and really easy to use. Your Personal Advisor can also join up so that you can use this together. Accessing Connects is really simple and takes just a few minutes.







## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

WEDNESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>CORPORATE PARENTING WORK PROGRAMME 2023-2024</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

The report provides members of the Corporate Parenting Panel an overview of the proposed work programme for 2023-2024.

The work programme is aligned to the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-2025.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to:

1. Endorse the proposed work programme for 2023-2024 attached at appendix 1; and,
2. Agree that the delivery of the work programme be undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Board, which will meet four times between September 2022 and March 2023.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To promote the work of the Corporate Parenting Board and receive support for its work programme 2022-23.
- 1.2 To agree delivery for oversight and monitoring of corporate parenting responsibilities to the Corporate Parenting Board.

### 2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Do nothing: This has been discounted as it ensures transparency and legitimacy for the work of the local authority and partners in undertaking their roles as corporate parents.

### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Children and Families Act 2014 and supporting statutory guidance; *“Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers”* introduces the seven principles that local authorities and partners must have regard to when considering support for children looked after and care leavers. The principles are:
  - to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of children and young people.
  - to encourage children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
  - to consider the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.
  - to help children and young people gain access to, and make the 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 children and young people.
  - for children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
  - to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.
- 3.2 As outlined within the Council’s Constitution, the Corporate Parenting Panel acts as the formal Sub-Committee of the Children, Young People and Education Committee. The Panel has delegated authority to exercise responsibility for the Council’s functions relating to the delivery of Corporate Parenting functions except for policy decisions which will remain with the Children and Young People’s Committee.
- 3.3 The Corporate Parenting Board acts as an advisory group to the Corporate Parenting Panel. It meets in private to respect the sensitive nature of information discussed about children looked after (CLA) and care leavers. This is particularly the case as there are young people representatives of the care councils who attend meetings to share stories and real-life experiences about being in care. It us

proposed that the Corporate Parenting Board continues to meet at the Our Space Care Leavers Hub in order to cater to young people representatives' access to meetings.

### **3.4 Work programme 2023-2024**

3.5 The work programme will focus on listening to the voice of children looked after and care leavers. It will dedicate time to hear their views and will be shaped by their emerging priorities. This means it will be flexible to ensure that the voice of children looked after is heard.

3.6 Underpinning this, it is proposed that the work programme focusses on the priorities in the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-2025. These are:

1. **Emotional and physical health and wellbeing** – making sure you are happy and healthy all the way through your childhood and into adulthood.
2. **Independence and transition to adulthood** – Focussing on helping you learn 'life skills' from an early age and getting everything in place so you can be supported if you need it after you turn 18.
3. **Positive Lived Experiences** – Making sure there are enough of the right people to look after you in suitable homes whether this is a short or long stay/time.
4. **Education and Employment** – Ensuring that you do well and have the right support in school and have the right opportunities to access employment.

3.7 The priorities will be explored in detail and officers expected to report on progress and activity to date to promote and support improvements in these areas.

3.8 In addition, the work programme will include consideration of performance data, feedback and consultations from children looked after and care leavers and the annual report of the Head of the Virtual School. Activity will be programmed accordingly. A copy of the draft work programme is attached at appendix 1.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from the report.

5.2 The local authority has a statutory responsibility to have regard to the corporate parenting principles as outlined in guidance and legislation.

### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

6.1 There are no significant resource implications arising from the report.

### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 Failing to ensure robust governance arrangements are in place to our children looked after and care leavers creates a risk that there is insufficient oversight and scrutiny which both gives assurance and drives improvements to improve outcomes.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 There are two co-opted members from the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Council's who are invited to sit on the Corporate Parenting Panel.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from the report.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no environment and climate implications.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no community wealth implications arising from the report.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Work programme 2023-2024

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Children and Families Act 2014

[Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-25](#)

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

This report is being considered by the Corporate Parenting Panel in accordance with the following extract of its Terms of Reference:

“A Sub-Committee... with delegated authority to exercise responsibility for the Council's functions relating to the delivery by or on behalf of the Council, of Corporate Parenting functions”.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>	<b>22.10.2022</b>

## CORPORATE PARENTING WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

### STANDING ITEMS AND MONITORING REPORTS

<b>Item</b>	<b>Reporting frequency</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
Voice of children looked after and care leavers through Children in Care and Care Leaver Councils	Each meeting	Fiona O'Shaughnessy, Participation Manager
Performance and insight report	Each meeting	Tricia Thomas, Performance and Improvement Manager
Report of the Head Teacher of the Virtual School	Annual	Trish Lewis, Virtual School Head

### AGENDA ITEMS TO BE SCHEDULED

<b>Item</b>	<b>Potential timescale</b>	<b>Lead Departmental Officer</b>
Theme 1: Emotional and physical health and wellbeing	September 2023	Eifion Burke, Head of Permanence Laura Caldecott, Designated Nurse for Safeguarding
Theme 2: Independence and transition to adulthood	November 2023	Eifion Burke, Head of Permanence Paul Smith, Head of Service 14-19 Strategy
Theme 3: Positive Lived Experiences	January 2024	Eifion Burke, Head of Permanence
Theme 4: Education and Employment	March 2024	Trish Lewis, Head of Virtual School Paul Smith, Head of Service 14-19 Strategy

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