

Report for: Cabinet 13th February 2018

Title: Care Leavers Strategy and Local Offer

Report

authorised by :



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Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1. The Council's duties as a 'corporate parent' for children in care and care leavers will change from April 2018 as a result of the implementation of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. These new duties are intended to improve the support available to care leavers in the form of access to a Personal Adviser up to 25 and the publication of a Local Offer.
- 1.2. Enabling young people who have been in care to make successful transitions to adulthood is an important role for the council. The number of care leavers has risen in the last five years and the new duties could further increase this cohort. Prior to the enactment of new duties, Haringey as a local authority had begun to consider critically whether our children in care and care leavers are receiving the right support at the right time to make effective transitions to adulthood and what more would need to be done as a council and as a local partnership to make improvements.
- 1.3. Through in-depth user research and engagement with partners, we have identified that the current offer can be too fragmented across the partnership and that the focus on independent living and removing the barriers that young people face does not start early enough or robustly enough to ensure that sustainable arrangements can be made soon after a young person ceases to be looked-after. As the 'corporate parent', the local authority plays a central role, but it has become clear that there is a need to more closely align the work of the local partnership if we are to improve outcomes for care leavers.

- 1.4. Implementing the changes to our statutory duties provides a timely opportunity to clarify and improve our local response and provision for this vulnerable group. In doing so, we will seek to broaden the responsibility and involvement of statutory and non-statutory organisations in the borough.
- 1.5. The local authority will be required to consult with stakeholders in developing our Local Offer to ensure all services that may support care leavers in moving to and sustaining independent living are reflected and that the Local Offer is presented in a way that supports access to information and advice and relevant services for care leavers. Final statutory guidance on the Local Offer is still pending, but the approval of Cabinet to consult is sought in advance of this to ensure that officers are able to finalise a Local Offer as soon as possible after the Children and Social Work Act comes into force.
- 1.6. In addition to compliance with statutory duties, a strategic, borough-wide response is required in order to maximise the collective impact of the Council and our partners on the readiness of young people to leave care and live healthy, long and fulfilling lives. As well as improving our offer over time, a Care Leavers Strategy will help to guide and inform new models of care and support for children, young people and families as they develop in Haringey. As such, approval is sought to utilise the consultation on a Local Offer to inform a Care Leavers Strategy that can be agreed by Cabinet later in 2018.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1. The role of a local authority to act as Corporate Parent for the children in its care is one of the most profound and important duties that Members and officers discharge. Children in care and those with care experience are some of the most vulnerable members of our society and national evidence indicates that far too often their life chances are significantly poorer than for their peers who are raised within a birth family. Like any parent, this responsibility is not just to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child during their childhood, but also extends to preparing them for a happy, healthy and successful life as an adult – and this means providing support beyond the age of 18 when they legally become an adult.
- 2.2. In recent years there has been an even greater emphasis on the support we provide to care leavers in the context of challenging financial circumstances for the council and growing central government expectations about how local authorities and their partners meet the needs of this group. Changes to our statutory duties which come into force from April 2018 have prompted significant exploration of the experiences of our care leavers, the services we provide and the support they can access in Haringey. From April to July 2017, the service, supported by the Priority 1 Transformation Team undertook user-centred research within the Young Adults Service and engaged widely with operational and strategic partners; this ‘discovery phase’ has informed the development of a set of priorities both for the design of the service and the way the council works with others to meet the needs of this vulnerable group.
- 2.3. By approving consultation with stakeholders to inform Haringey’s Local Offer and a new Care Leavers Strategy, Cabinet will ensure that the Council is able to respond both to the new duties set out in the Children & Social Work Act

2017 and to the need to work as a partnership to significantly improve the readiness of our looked after young people for successful adult lives.

3. Recommendations

3.1. Cabinet are asked:

- a) To approve for consultation with stakeholders, including children in care and care leavers, a draft Local Offer and Care Leavers Strategy in line with the outline versions in Appendices 1 and 2;
- b) To delegate to the Director of Children Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Children Services authority to finalise the draft Local Offer and Care Leavers Strategy for consultation with stakeholders;
- c) To agree that a report on the outcome of the consultation be brought back to Cabinet for a final decision on the Local Offer and Care Leavers Strategy.

4. Reasons for decision

4.1. New statutory duties

The *Children & Social Work Act 2017*, is the first major change to the existing statutory duties set out in the *Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000*. The focus on care leavers also reflects recent central government policy and is expected to be reflected in the future Ofsted inspection framework for Children's Services. The majority of leaving care duties from the original legislation remain, but in addition the Act introduces the following:

- **Corporate Parenting Principles** – codifying for the first time the ways in which all local authority departments, not just Children's Social Care, must have regard for the wellbeing and development of Looked After Children and Care Leavers. These are intended to act as a set of tests for helping the council as a whole to deliver services to looked after children and care leavers in a way that mirrors as far as possible the way a good parent would support their child. In Haringey, this has already been given consideration through the Corporate Parenting Pledge that was adopted by Haringey's Full Council on 24th July 2017 and further work to reinforce the Pledge across the local authority will be part of the proposed Care Leavers Strategy.
- **Extension of leaving care duty to 25** – amending the previous upper limit for providing support to the age of 25 for all care leavers, where before it had been 21 unless they were in full-time education; this entitles former relevant care leavers to have an allocated Personal Adviser and support to develop and achieve a Pathway Plan until they are 25 if they request it, with the draft guidance indicating that support is likely to taper as they become older. For those whose cases have been closed, the local authority must also contact them annually to remind them of the support available.
- **Requirement to publicise Local Offer** – this requires every local authority to make available to care leavers a clear statement of any support to which they are entitled, as well as discretionary support available locally. It will need to be available in a range of formats and is

intended to help them achieve a successful transition to independence. This is similar in nature to the Local Offer requirement for children and young people with Special Educational Needs.

- Also relevant to the experience of Looked After Children (including those looked-after on remand) and Care Leavers in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 are changes to multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding children. These emphasise the joint primary responsibility of the three “safeguarding partners” (the local authority, the clinical commissioning group (CCG), and the police) working with other “relevant agencies” locally to ensure children are safeguarded, including co-commissioning of services and promoting cooperation and integration across the wider system, including early years and education institutions, GP practices, adult services and the voluntary and community sector. These arrangements concern the support for children under the age of 18 and their families, but the impact on local arrangements for working together will need to have regard for looked after children and therefore care leavers beyond the age of 18. This new set of working arrangements is likely to influence and inform the development of a Care Leavers Strategy as outlined in Appendix B.

4.2. Consulting on and publishing a Local Offer

4.3. As a result of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the local authority will need to publish a Local Offer for Care Leavers, similar to the existing requirement to produce an SEND Local Offer for children and families. This duty is likely to come into force in April 2018, but draft statutory guidance acknowledged that local authorities will require up to six months to fully implement the requirement.

4.4. The legislation requires that: “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”. The draft statutory guidance sets out a proposed framework for the Local Offer, which is included in Appendix A, and this will guide the consultation.

4.5. Informal engagement with a range of stakeholders, including care leavers, statutory and non-statutory partner agencies and other council departments has already taken place to increase awareness of the needs of care leavers and will inform the formal consultation on a Local Offer.

4.6. The consultation will also cover the views and preferences of children in care, care leavers and professionals about the presentation of the local offer and the options available to the service to ensure this is accessible, engaging and user-friendly. Responses of those with care experience will be weighted more highly in analysis and response to the consultation.

4.7. Providing a wider strategic response

4.8. The Local Offer to be published by Autumn 2018 will need to reflect the entitlements and agreed discretionary support that care leavers can access in

the borough. However, the Local Offer is not expected to be static and it is recognised that the local authority will need to update it from time to time.

- 4.9. Haringey has taken significant measures to assist Care Leavers, including most recently the introduction of a Council Tax Exemption up to 25. Nonetheless, the recent user engagement we have undertaken and evaluation of our current response to meeting the needs of care leavers has indicated that there are further opportunities to improve the availability of and access to a range of support that extends beyond our statutory duties and often that is provided by stakeholders outside the council. It may not be possible to act upon all of these opportunities in time for the initial publication of the Local Offer and some relate to wider challenges of awareness, identification and practice relating to supporting care leavers. As a result, alongside the Local Offer and informed by the same consultation, there is an intention to set out a Care Leavers Strategy, which represents a borough-wide response to the needs and experiences of care leavers and describe how this needs to develop over time.
- 4.10. Part of the Care Leavers Strategy will be setting out how the awareness of Corporate Parenting and the commitment of council departments beyond Children's Services is being increased in line with the new Corporate Parenting Principles and embedding the Corporate Parenting Pledge adopted by Full Council.
- 4.11. This strategic response will also reflect the development of new models of care for children and families in Haringey, which will have direct and indirect impacts on the design of 'leaving care' services. These will be the subject of other processes for consultation and decision, and the outcomes and strategic priorities set out in the outline Strategy at Appendix B will help to guide the development of these wider changes.
- 4.12. The full Care Leavers Strategy, including a delivery plan for implementing new commitments, will be developed by officers and submitted to Cabinet for approval following the consultation.

5. Alternative options considered

5.1. Other options:

5.2. **Do nothing** – in this instance, the ‘do nothing’ option would result in non-compliance with our statutory duties as a local authority when the Children & Social Work Act 2017 comes into force in April 2018; this would mean that care leavers in the London Borough of Haringey do not receive services and assistance to which they are entitled and which other care leavers would receive from other boroughs and would be a major risk to the local authority at any future Ofsted Single Inspection.

5.3. **Minimal compliance with statutory duties** – it would be possible for the Council to pursue minimal compliance with new duties around provision of Personal Advisers and publication of a Local Offer. This would emphasise actions that are within the control of the local authority and reduce the dependencies with other agencies and stakeholders. However, self-evaluation and service user engagement suggest that there are opportunities and gaps that extend beyond the new duties and would enable us to discharge them more successfully. The role of the wider Council and our partners in preparing young people who have been in care and are leaving care has not yet been maximised and by setting out the Care Leavers Strategy we expect to be able to manage future demand pressures more effectively.

5.4. **Delay consultation on a draft Strategy and Local Offer** – postponing the decision to consult on the Local Offer and Care Leavers Strategy until full draft versions can be produced is likely to significantly delay the publication date for the Local Offer and would run counter to the statutory guidance that indicates local authorities will need a published offer in place within six months of the Act coming into force on 1st April. It makes sense to combine the consultations for the Local Offer and any wider Care Leaver Strategy to maximise the responses from stakeholders and clearly distinguish existing commitments from future plans or aspirations.

6. Background information

6.1. Needs analysis and user research

Between May and September 2017, a deep-dive analysis of Haringey’s leaving care cohort was conducted that provided additional information about the prevalence of additional vulnerabilities and the challenges that these young people face. A quantitative analysis of the cohort conducted with social workers and personal advisers highlighted a significant minority of care leavers who are living with multiple and complex needs that are preventing them from moving into employment, or gaining and sustaining tenancies, as well as other outcomes. A wider group have some form of barrier to success, including issues with their mental and emotional wellbeing. Further information is set out in 6.4. below.

6.2. Alongside the quantitative analysis, extensive user and stakeholder research to explore the current experiences of care leavers was conducted, working with the Design Council’s *Design in the Public Sector Programme* funded by the LGA. This included 20 in-depth interviews with young people at different

stages of their care journey, plus focus groups that included younger children in care. While every story was unique, there were a number of common experiences that will inform the development of the Local Offer and have been the basis for the priority areas set out in the outline Care Leavers Strategy in Appendix B which will be developed further:

- The council does not make the offer of support sufficiently clear and encourage take-up of that help;
- Being in care, and particularly leaving care, is a lonely experience and young people acknowledge challenges around isolation, anxiety and depression;
- Some young people want to be independent as quickly as possible but realise later they needed more help;
- Instability of workers throughout the care journey reduces their willingness to engage with formal services;
- Care leavers do not always feel like workers have time for them and for some of them, they do not receive as much contact as they would like;
- Knowing where they are going to live is a priority, often over and above education, work or relationships;
- There are a series of potential 'cliff edges' which for some young people have not always been planned and managed well.

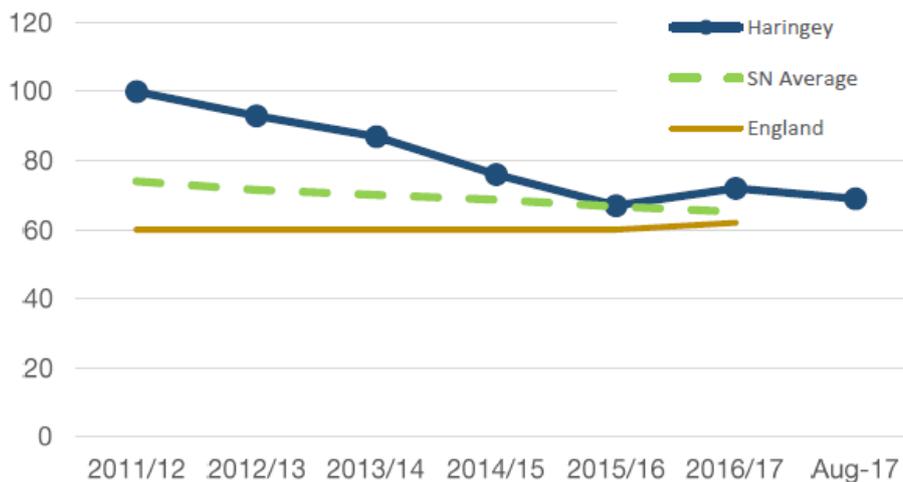
6.3. In addition to interviews, officers undertook three workshops with key delivery partners and initial design workshops with both service users and Young Adults Service staff. Together, these pieces of work have given a comprehensive picture of the profile and experiences of our care leavers that indicates there is further we need to go in meeting their needs during the transition to adulthood.

6.4. **Our leaving care cohort**

A robust Local Offer that improves the timeliness and outcomes of our work with care leavers during the transition to adulthood needs to be informed by the profile of our leaving care population, both now and as it is likely to change over time. A key dynamic that is produced by the new leaving care duties is that a larger number of young people will be eligible for support and for longer in future.

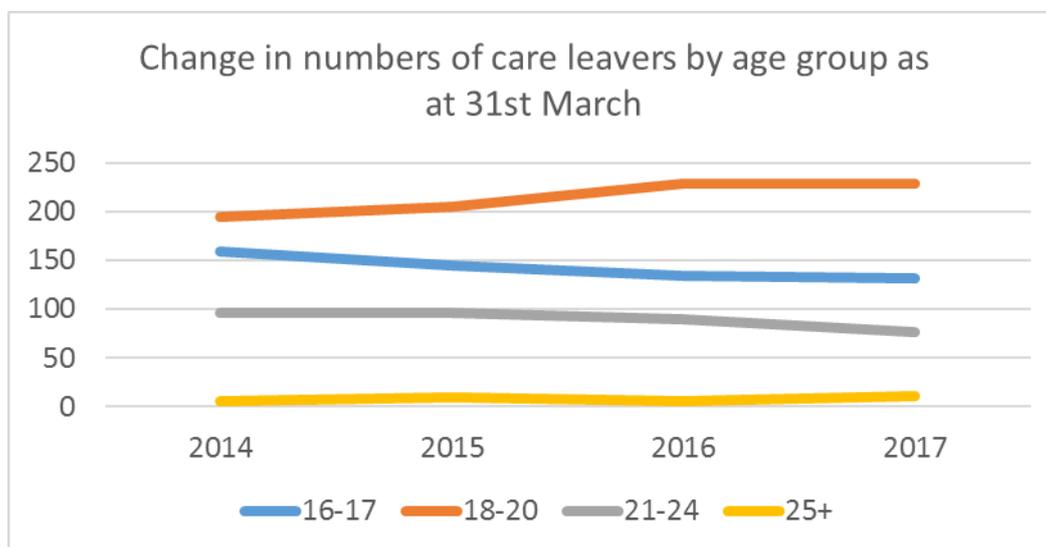
6.5. The number of children in care in Haringey reached a peak in 2011 at over 600 children, following the national reaction to the death of Peter Connelly. These numbers have reduced steadily from that peak and while there will always be some fluctuation there is a more stable number of Looked After Children, with a rate per 10,000 under 18s close to the average for our statistical neighbours:

Figure 1. Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000 of the 0-18 population, comparing Haringey to the national average and statistical neighbours



- 6.6. While these numbers have reduced, there has been an increasing proportion of late entrants into care, including UASC. In August 2017, the largest proportion of Looked After Children were aged between 15-17 years, with 29% of those having been in care for less than 1 year – a further 41% of that age group have been in care for more than 5 years. The most common reason for being Looked After in this older age group is abuse or neglect (43%), as it is for all ages but there is also 28% due to absent parenting. Of the 43 in care for absent parenting, 37 are unaccompanied asylum seekers.
- 6.7. Under the Council’s existing statutory duties, which sees the majority of care leavers having their cases closed around the age of 21, there has been an increasing number of 18-21 year old former relevant young people as those who have been in care for many years reach adulthood.

Figure 2. Number of care leavers with cases open to the Young Adults Service by age group, taken from 2017 statutory return



- 6.8. While there is considerable uncertainty about the likely uptake of continuing support until 25 – particularly from those under 25 whose cases have already been closed – under the new statutory duties there is a potential that the Young Adults Service would need to meet a significantly higher level of demand. The service has estimated that if the extended duty had applied in 2017/18 an additional 126 young people would have been owed a duty from 21-25.
- 6.9. On the measures for care leavers included in the Department for Education’s statutory returns, and therefore comparable with other local authorities, our care leavers are in line with or slightly better than the national average based on the latest data from the service. This performance has improved significantly since the last statutory return from 31st March 2017, with greater focus on staying in touch with care leavers around their 19th, 20th and 21st birthdays.

Figure 3. Outcome measures for care leavers based on statutory indicators reported to the DfE, comparing local Haringey data from November 2017 to national statutory returns from 2017

	Age 19	Age 20	Age 21	LBH total	National data
LA in touch	89%	76%	80%	84%	87%
EET	51%	46%	50%	49%	40%
Suitable accommodation	80%	80%	81%	80%	83%

6.10. **Our leaving care cohort**

The statutory returns for data on care leavers focus on a relatively narrow range of measures. The service has identified the need to use the social work case management system to capture and be able report on a much wider range of information about our children in care and care leavers to inform service development and commissioning. In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of our cohort, in May 2015 a ‘deep dive’ exercise was undertaken with workers in the Young Adults Service to better understand the characteristics and needs of the 419 young people working with the service at that time.

6.11. **Demographics**

- Our care leavers broadly reflect our Looked After Child cohort in gender and ethnicity, with 59% male, 41% female, and over-representation of young people from Black backgrounds at 41% compared to 32% White, and 12% Mixed ethnicity.
- 28% of care leavers aged 18+ are living outside of the borough, and 7% are outside of London; this is a reduction compared to our under 18 LAC cohort.

6.12. **Additional needs and vulnerabilities**

- YAS workers reported high levels of concern around mental and emotional health of care leavers, with 173 identified as having emotional difficulties, 141 with behaviours that challenge, and 53 with a diagnosed mental health condition.
- 83 young people were known or suspected as having substance misuse issues
- 49 young people were known or suspected as being affiliated with a gang
- 16 had been known to Youth Justice prior to 18 and 23 were in prison, all of whom were male.

6.13. Young men were overrepresented in most of the categories of additional needs (even relative to the higher proportion of care leavers who are male), and therefore also overrepresented in the significant minority (108 young people) whom the service found difficult to engage in planning and support.

6.14. There are two other particular sub-groups of our care leaver cohort who require additional support and some tailored services or interventions:

- **Young parents** – 59 care leavers have children, including 20 young fathers who do not always live with their child;
- **Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers** – account for 17% of our leaving care cohort and this is likely to rise as more unaccompanied minors are taken into care across London, with arrangements in place for boroughs to accommodate a proportion of those who present.

6.15. **Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee**

The findings set out in 6.1. to 6.14. regarding the characteristics of and user feedback from our leaving care cohort were presented to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee (CPAC) on 19th October 2017. Initial discussion of the implications of this work and proposals for our local service delivery and wider response have been taken into account in the outline of the Care Leavers Strategy for consultation. It was noted that other services locally, including provision of mental health services, play a crucial role in responding to the needs of care leavers and that there is scope for this to be more effective.

6.16. Further input from CPAC will be sought on the draft Local Offer and Care Leavers Strategy once developed, before they are presented to Cabinet for decision.

6.17. **The financial impact of supporting care leavers**

6.18. As with other vulnerable groups for whom the Council has statutory duties, there are both direct and indirect costs that are incurred from meeting their needs. Many of the indirect costs may result from not acting early enough or having sufficient impact on underlying needs to prevent escalation of complexity and service demand. Provision of an up-to-date Local Offer will need to reflect as broad a range of opportunities and services as possible and be presented in a way that supports care leavers and professionals beyond the leaving care service to navigate what is available as easily as possible.

6.19. **Demand for leaving care services**

6.20. From 2018/19 the Service is committed to meeting its changing duties to allocate a Personal Adviser from the age of 16 and until the age of 25 for those young people who wish to continue receiving support with implementing their Pathway Plan. The Young Adults Service has already begun to offer this extended support to young people who have turned 21 and are not in full-time education since the draft statutory guidance was issued in October 2017. As a result, it is expected that the number of young people with an allocated Personal Adviser will rise in 2018/19, with 70 young people due to turn 21 in the year who may continue to require a PA when previously their cases would have been closed.

6.21. It cannot be predicted how many of these young people will opt-out of continuing support from 21, nor how many young people who will now count as 'former relevant' and be entitled to return to the service between the ages of 21 and 25 will opt-in. It will need to be made clear within the published Local Offer that former relevant young people are entitled to this support up to 25 and how to both end and resume a relationship with the Young Adults Service. As a result, publishing the Local Offer may result in an increase in demand and this will need to be monitored throughout the year. Staffing required to comply with the statutory duties will be met from within agreed resources for Children's Social Care in 2018/19 and the financial impact reviewed prior to the budget being set for 2019/20.

6.22. The Personal Adviser role should be a key enabler in supporting young people leaving care to plan and prepare for the transition and to manage and sustain their independence after the age of 18. A published Local Offer, as well as supporting the ability of care leavers to find information and access services directly, will also enable the Young Adults Service, and Personal Advisers in particular, the ability to maximise access to the right help to implement a young person's Pathway Plan. The improved access to targeted and specialist support from an earlier point in the leaving care journey should reduce the reactive demands on Personal Advisers and the need of care leavers to be accommodated in semi-independent placements.

6.23. **Demands on other services**

Due to inconsistent identification and recording of previous care experience in services for adults, it is difficult to quantify the long-run costs to the public sector of inadequate support to care leavers up to the age of 25. Extensive national evidence is available that clearly indicates the disproportionate prevalence of those with care experience in the criminal justice system, receiving acute mental health or substance misuse treatment and street homeless.

- 25% of the adult prison population has previously been in care (Berman, G. and Dar, A. 2013)
- Looked after children and care leavers are 4 to 5 times more likely to self-harm in adulthood (Department of Health, 2012) and seven times more likely to die between the ages of 18 and 21 (BBC, 2017) with suicide as a major cause.
- More than one in four young care leavers have sofa surfed and 14 per cent have slept rough (CentrePoint, 2017).

6.24. The known and potential impact of fragmented, belated or insufficient support for care leavers is thus a key driver for the development of a wider strategic response to the needs of this group. The Care Leavers Strategy consultation will engage with those statutory and VCS partners who are impacted by demand from adults with care experience and develop a more concerted offer that can prevent escalation of need and improve the life chances of our looked after children.

7. **Contribution to strategic outcomes**

- 7.1. The Care Leavers Strategy and Future Service Design are highly aligned to Priorities 1 and 2 of the Corporate Plan.
- 7.2. **Priority 1: Best Start in Life** – as Looked After Children, it is the Council’s corporate parenting responsibility to ensure that these young people have had the ‘best start in life’ both in terms of keeping them safe from harm, but also in making sure they are supported to receive high quality education, get into employment and receive services to promote their physical and mental wellbeing. Many of these responsibilities for Looked After Children are statutory requirements up to the age of 18.
- 7.3. **Priority 2: Healthy, Long and Fulfilling Lives** – many children who have been Looked After by the local authority return to Haringey as care leavers, so the ways we support them as they leave care will have implications for their life chances and outcomes as adults in the borough. The Priority 2 focus on preventing health and care needs and maximising the independence of our residents should start from the point that young people transition to adulthood, recognising the national evidence of poor health and mental health outcomes for adults who had care experience as children, including higher mortality rates.
- 7.4. Outcomes for care leavers will also contribute to the other Corporate Priorities in a variety of ways:
- 7.5. **Priority 3: Clean and safe borough** – with particular emphasis on the additional vulnerabilities of care leavers, the Care Leavers Strategy will reflect the positive value of community participation, and joined-up service provision that can mitigate the risks of gang affiliation and criminal activity among care leavers and also to reduce their likelihood of being victims of crimes such as exploitation and domestic abuse.
- 7.6. **Priority 4: Sustainable Housing, Growth and Employment** – the education, employment and training rates for care leavers in Haringey, while above the national average, is still significantly behind their peers who have not been in care. There is national evidence to suggest that care leavers are more likely to claim long-term out of work benefits and to remain marginalised from the workforce. The outline Care Leavers Strategy will include measures to help support these vulnerable residents towards economic and social inclusion and to link them to the benefits of a growing borough.

7.7. **Priority 5: Homes and communities where people choose to live** – Many care leavers will be or become Haringey residents. The rules that govern "local connection" and commitments from the Council and Homes for Haringey to provide a quota of social tenancies for care leavers provides one route into permanent housing for our care leavers and others will choose to seek private accommodation in the borough because of advantages such as the Council Tax Exemption. Housing is a top priority for young people leaving care and the Young Adults Service, with the support of other corporate and external partners, is committed both to helping young people be good tenants and to participate in the thriving communities that make Haringey a great place to live. Consulting on the Local Offer will help services to present housing options advice and information in a clear and accessible way.

8. **Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)**

8.1 **Finance [Paul Durrant, Senior Finance Business Partner]**

At this stage in the development and implementation of the council's response to new statutory obligations, it is anticipated that the additional responsibilities will be managed within the current cash limit in 2018/19, through the re-alignment of resources.

Data will however be collated through 2018/19 and if evidence shows that additional resources are required to meet the apparent demand, this would be presented as a formal growth bid to be incorporated in the 2019/20 Medium Term Financial Strategy, only after all possible mitigating actions have been explored to the full.

Any new commitments to be included in the Care Leavers Strategy following consultation will need to be fully costed and resources identified in the context of the council's other financial commitments within the MTFS.

8.2 **Procurement [Barry Phelps, Head of Procurement]**

Strategic Procurement notes the contents of this report. There are no immediate obvious impacts in relation to procurement; however procurement of these services is managed through the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS). The DPS provides flexibility to easily amend commissioning/procurement requirements in this category; therefore, any emerging changes relating to the procurement of these services would likely be managed with minimum effort.

8.3 **Legal [Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense, Assistant Head of Legal Services]**

Under Section 2 (*not yet in force*) of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Council is required to consult on and publish a Local Offer for their care leavers. The Local Offer should provide information about all the services and support that is available to care leavers in the local area where they live. It should include information about their statutory entitlements, as well as any

discretionary support that the Council might choose to provide and that would assist them to prepare for adulthood and independent living. The Department for Education has recently consulted on the Local Offer Statutory Guidance (November 2017). The final Guidance is yet to be published. The draft Guidance provides that the Act “does not specify how soon after commencement of the duty the local offer should be published. However, there will be a duty on the local authority to publish the local offer (subject to the consultation requirements) on commencement and Government’s expectation is that the local offer should be available within six to nine months of commencement...” The recommendation will facilitate the discharge of the Council’s duty to publish its Local Offer.

8.4 Equality [Daisy Daventry, Policy & Equalities Officer]

The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

By taking early action to meet the new legal obligations towards care leavers, with the intention to exceed the minimum statutory requirements, the council is taking action to offer additional support and guidance to a vulnerable group, who are younger and more likely to be BAME (particularly young black men). This action will also lead to improved models of care and support for children, young people and their families. By offering them the opportunity to consult on this provision, this vulnerable group will benefit from being provided a voice regarding their needs.

Equality Impact Assessments will be developed in line with the development of the draft local offer and strategy to ascertain the full impact of the new approach.

9. Use of Appendices

- 9.1. **Appendix A – Indicative Local Offer:** this document was published by the Department for Education as part of draft statutory guidance on the Children

and Social Work Act 2017; it will form the basis for consultation on Haringey's Local Offer.

- 9.2. **Appendix B – Outline Care Leavers Strategy for consultation:** alongside the consultation on the current Local Offer, views and ideas of stakeholders will be sought on a wider strategic response to the needs of care leavers; this document outlines draft strategic priorities arising from stakeholder and service user engagement to date, which will inform the consultation.

10. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

Children and Social Work Act 2017:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted>

DfE Consultation on Corporate parenting, the local offer and personal adviser support:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/children-in-care/corporate-parenting-the-local-offer-and-personal-a/>

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