



By email to: Terry Galloway
terrygalloway@myself.com

Wednesday 23 January 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

The Children's Society strongly encourage district councils to work together to develop their local offer for care leavers for the benefit of all care leavers across the county.

Whilst we acknowledge that there may be additional complexities in developing and delivering a local offer for care leavers shared across districts within a county, we see this as the best approach to ensure consistent and fair support to care leavers, irrespective of where they reside.

Across Derbyshire, The Children's Society estimate that there are 680 care leavers under the age of 25. The corporate parenting approach, set out in the Children and Social Work Act, applies to all of them; as does the provision to have access to the 'local offer' for care leavers.

The provision of the local offer for care leavers presents a fantastic opportunity for local authorities to come together, as corporate parents, to do best by the young people who have left their care but for whom they remain responsible. To work in isolation, does not recognise the reality of care leavers lives; with many living outside of their home authority in 'out of area' or 'distant' placements.

In their guidance, the Department for Education state:

'Some young people who were placed out of area while they were looked-after may wish to remain in that area once they leave care – for example, if they want to Stay Put with their former foster carer. In these circumstances, the well-established convention is that the 'placing' LA continues to meet any costs associated with their on-going support. The requirement to produce a local offer does not alter that long-standing approach and we would expect the local offer to apply equally to those young people.'

'We think there may also be situations where LAs could consider opening up some elements of their local offer to care leavers who are living in their area but who have been placed there, and are supported, by another LA.'

Reflecting on the above, there is a strong case for ensuring that the offer across the county applies equally, as opposed to having eight separate offers with different entitlements. Clearly, no care leaver who was initially looked after because of a decision taken by Derbyshire County Council should expect to receive a different level of support because of the District they reside in.

The offer must consider the following in relation to care leavers: health and wellbeing, relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation and participation in society. The offer must be developed in consultation with care leavers and be available in a format accessible to them. The Children's Society recommend that the local offer for care leavers be developed with relevant local partners and is owned by Chief Executives.

We would always encourage local authorities to consider how their measures include the widest possible range of care leavers, including relevant and former relevant children, and unaccompanied and separated young people within the care of the local authority.

The Department for Education and The Children's Society have both produced guidance setting out the expectations of local authorities. These pieces of guidance are both available online.

The Children's Society are happy to provide advice and guidance as required to support the development of a joint local offer for care leavers across the county.

Yours faithfully,


Matthew Hussey

Public Affairs Manager