

Title of meeting:	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education
Date of meeting:	30 October 2024
Subject:	Care Experienced Local Offer
Report by:	Keely Mitchell, Head of Service, Adolescents and Young Adults
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Suzy Horton, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to inform the Cabinet Member of the reviewed Care Experienced Local Offer as seen in Appendix 1 and to seek approval for the offer.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member:

- 2.1** Approve the revised local offer for our care experienced young people, and that the offer is adopted by the Council.
- 2.2** That the offer is reviewed every 2 years.

3. Background

- 3.1** Section 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 places a statutory duty on local authorities to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers. The local offer provides information about all the services and support that is available to care experienced young adults from the local authority, including information about both their statutory entitlements as well as any discretionary support that a local authority chooses to provide.
- 3.2** The local offer includes details of the services and support that will assist care experienced young adults in, or moving to, adulthood and independent living that the local authority provides in relation to health and wellbeing, relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation and participation in society. Furthermore, each local authority can choose to prioritise different types of non-statutory support, making the offer unique to Portsmouth. The government introduced a set of parenting

principles that require all departments within Portsmouth City Council to work together to support young people in their care having regard to the corporate parenting principles. In Portsmouth we developed this principle a little further and with the Care Experience Voice Group and other young people in our care we developed the Portsmouth Pledge showing young adults what they can expect of us all as corporate parents.

- 3.3** Local Authorities can choose when to update their local offer, however there is an expectation to update at least every two to three years following consultation with care experienced young adults. We are looking to publish our offer in October 2024 and to review 2026
- 3.4** The Portsmouth Local Offer will be made available to all our care experienced young people on the Portsmouth City Council website on our care experienced young adults 'Your Future' page. We can also print a version should they want a hard copy. Their Personal Advisors will share and promote the local offer making sure all our young adults know what they are entitled to.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1** As highlighted it is the expectation that Local Authorities review and update the local care leaver offer every 2 to 3 years. Having reviewed the previous offer, and in consultation with our care experienced young adults it was agreed that small but important changes should be made to add clarity to what young people should expect from us as a local authority. Having reviewed the offer and the policies of other local authorities, there have been several changes to our offer, but it aims to keep the financial implications the same as the old policy. The offer of the bus passes is funded by a two year grant and will be reviewed during this period of time to monitor the use and determine the financial implications should the grant not be extended after the two years.

5. Key Changes to the Local Care Experienced Offer (See offer for detail, Appendix A)

- 5.1** Overall, the majority of the proposed key changes have been positively received by our Care Experienced young adults.
- 5.2** Support with Council Tax
 - 5.2.1** If a care experienced young person lives in Portsmouth, they will be exempt from paying council tax until their 25th birthday. We will also pay the council tax of a young adult living in independent accommodation outside of Portsmouth.
- 5.3** Getting Around
 - 5.3.1** We are encouraging our young adults to use public transport, walk or cycle highlighting the green approach taken by Portsmouth City Council. Whilst we will support young people to take their driving test should they need a car to access

employment or training, we are providing a free bus pass for young adults to move around Portsmouth and will help with public transport costs to access education, training or employment if not available through college bursaries. We are keen to avoid any barriers for our young adults accessing education employment or training.

5.3.2 We are offering to support our young adults to purchase bikes if they need one to access education employment or training or if they need one to move around the local area and if they have not received a bike whilst in the care of the local authority.

5.4 Care Experienced Young Adults in Prison

5.4.1 If a young adult is due for release after the age of 25, we will refer them to the Rees Foundation and pay the fee of £75 to provide advice and support on release.

5.5 Higher Education

5.5.1 We will pay for the UCAS registration fee and transport fees to attend open days for their preferred three universities.

5.5.2 We will pay for the cost of the accommodation for the care experienced young adult during the holidays including with their former foster carers if an option.

5.5.3 We will also pay a higher bursary of £1000 a year up to a maximum of £4000 provided over 4 years.

5.6 Apprenticeships and traineeships

5.6.1 Portsmouth has a dedicated Employability Academy to look at employment and training, they are working in partnership with the local employers to offer opportunities to train in a wide variety of industries.

5.7 Birthday and Celebration Allowance

5.7.1 Every care experienced young adult who retains involvement with us receives a birthday and allowance of £50 and a celebration allowance of £50 each year until their 21st birthday. On their 21st birthday they will receive £150.

5.8 Clothing

5.8.1 We will help with a maximum of £150 for clothing if the young person is experiencing financial hardship.

6. Legal implications

6.1 The legal framework for this is embodied in the report itself. There is a duty to review and consider the needs of Care Experienced young adults and this is consistent with the proposed review and Report.

7. Director of Finance's comments

7.1 The costings for the new local offer have been built on assumptions for the take up of the different areas in the local offer. This will be reviewed as part of normal budget monitoring, and the actual take up and costs should be reviewed when the local offer is next reviewed.

Signed by:

Sarah Daly
Director – Children, Families and Education (DCS)

Appendices:

Appendix A

Care Experienced Young Adult final offer

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by Councillor Suzy Horton, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education: