



## **Appendix 1**

## **Charter for Care Leavers**

### **Leaving Care Services**

Local authorities have a legal duty to support young people making the transition from care to adulthood. There are leaving care services in all English local authorities but they are structured differently and known by different names.

Harrow' Leaving care Team falls within Children's Services, and the current structure means that all care leavers aged 16-18 are held by the Children Looked After Team and once they turn 18 they are transferred to the Leaving Care Team. However joint working starts when the young person turns 17 and a half.

The duties that local authorities have towards their care leavers are set out in the statutory guidance and regulations in Childrens Act 1989 amended by Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. This was replaced in April 2011 by Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers.

### **What do leaving care teams do?**

- Like good parents, local authorities are responsible for giving advice, support and also financial assistance to young people leaving care.
- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 introduced the personal adviser role to support care leavers. Personal advisers develop Pathways Plans with care leavers to meet their support needs and help them prepare for independent living. All the current Social Worker's in the team carry out the Personal Advisor role as well as the social worker role too.

### **Introduction and purpose of the Charter**

A Charter is a set of principles and promises. This Charter sets out promises care leavers want the central and local government to make. Promises and principles help in decision making and do not replace laws; they give guidance to show how laws are designed to be interpreted.

The key principles in this Charter will remain constant through any changes in Legislation, Regulation and Guidance. Care leavers urge local authorities to use these principles when they make decisions about young peoples lives. The Charter for Care Leavers is designed to raise expectation, aspiration and understanding of what care leavers need and what the government and local authorities should do to be good Corporate Parents.

Harrow council has a responsibility to children and young people in its care and to its care leavers. This is represented by the term 'Corporate Parenting'. Harrow Council is the 'Corporate Parent' for all children and young people in its care and its care leavers, Because of this responsibility, Harrow Council make the commitments below:

We Promise:

- To respect and honour your identity
- To believe in you
- To listen to you
- To inform you
- To support you
- To find you a home
- To be a lifelong champion

### **Criteria**

The criteria of case transfer to the Leaving Care Team is the same as the "Eligibility Criteria" set out in the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The Act divides young people Looked After into four main categories.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Eligible</b>	<b>Young People aged 16 and 17 who were looked after for at least 13 weeks (continuous or in aggregate) since the age of 14 and are still looked after.</b>
<b>Relevant</b>	<b>Young People aged 16 and 17 who were eligible but have since ceased to be Looked After.</b>
<b>Former Relevant</b>	<b>Young People aged 18 to 21 (25 if in full time education) who have been either Eligible or Relevant.</b>
<b>Qualifying Young People</b>	<b>Young People aged 16 to 21 who were Looked After for any period of time after reaching 16 but before reaching 18.</b>

## **Pathway Planning**

The initial Pathway Plan should be completed 3 months before the young person's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and then reviewed every 6 months. The pathway plan is an intricate part of formalizing and assessing the young persons need encouraging forward planning for services. The pathway plan should cover the following main areas:

- What the young person would like to do with their life
- What job they would like to do
- What training/education they may need
- What financial help they may need to achieve their ambitions
- Where the young person wants to live
- The young persons health needs
- Where the young person may want to work
- Who is around to support the young person
- Other things that may be important to the young person
- Practical life skills
- Specific support needs e.g. counseling
- Contingency plans for support if independent living breaks down

All young people will have a Pathway Plan in place which will be reviewed 6 monthly by the social worker, young person and all relevant people involved in the young persons life. This will include carers, health, education, housing and YOT / probation.

## Leaving Care Charter – summary of entitlements

<b>Looked After Children Aged 14+</b>		The independent life skills folder to be started at the age of 14. Regular monitoring by CLA SW's and carers to ensure young people are ready to independent living at the age of 18.						
<b>Looked After Children and Leaving Care Aged 16-17</b>	<p><b>Two weeks additional subsistence prior to Summer Term Break:</b> Paid to help find employment training positive activities</p>	<p><b>Travel and Lunch Money :</b> Paid to those attending independent living courses</p>	<p><b>Education:</b> Lunch money term time £3.00 per day to those attending Collage</p>	<p><b>Travel Costs to Education:</b> Free Oyster cards provided via the GLA education programme, covers Zones 1 to 6. Additional £4.50 provided by LCT if college outside Zone 6</p>	<p><b>Education Equipment, Books and Stationery:</b> Funded by UASC and CLA teams</p>	<p>Joint working with LCT worker at 17.5 Ensuring the life skills folder is completed. Joint assessment by LCT and CLA worker about readiness for independence before nomination.</p>		
	<p><b>Education Attainment:</b> £50 for each GCSE. £25 for year long course completed or passed. £10 for every education course attended for 6 x weeks or more. 90%+ attendance required</p>	<p><b>Gym membership (Healthy Living):</b> 100% costs special pricing arrangement in place. Regular attendance required.</p>	<p><b>Provisional Driving Licence:</b> These payments are dependent being in Education Employment or Training for one year with 90% attendance. License and Theory Test funded. No funding for subsequent tests available.</p>	<p><b>Travel costs:</b> Funded up to 6 x year to visit family, carers or significant others funding available if outside Zone 6</p>	<p><b>Additional Personal Development:</b> Such as music lessons, courses. Funding available must form part of Pathway Plan</p>	<p><b>Winter Clothing Allowance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winter clothing allowance £150.00.</li> <li>• Summer Clothing Allowance £100</li> <li>• Birthday Allowance £147</li> <li>• Festival Allowance £147.00</li> </ul>		

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Care leavers Aged 21+</b></p>	<p><b><u>Accommodation</u></b></p> <p><u>Only those in full-time higher education will continue to receive a service from Leaving Care Services post 21.</u></p> <p><u>Those in supported lodgings may remain here until they have completed their course or until their 25th Birthday (whichever comes first).</u></p> <p><u>Those in semi-independence will be expected to move to hall of residence or private shared accommodation.</u></p> <p><u>Those in their own tenancy will have to commute and will need to use their student load to pay their rent.</u></p> <p><u>Those living in halls of residence will be supported with accommodation during the term holidays if required.</u></p>	<p><b><u>Finance</u></b></p> <p><u>All young people in higher education (not including University) will be give a weekly supplement from the Leaving Care Team and their accommodation costs paid for them.</u></p> <p><u>Those in higher education (not including university) must apply for the college bursary.</u></p> <p><u>Those in university must apply for a student loan to pay for their tuition fees and accommodation costs. LCT will pay for accommodation during the term breaks.</u></p> <p><u>Young people in their 1st year of University will receive a one off bursary of £2000.</u></p>	<p><b><u>Health</u></b></p> <p>Young people that require support with health, sexual health, mental health, disabilities and drug and alcohol will be referred to the appropriate services</p> <p>YP that become pregnant may be referred for a pre-birth assessment and may have to be placed in an assessment unit if there are concerns.</p>	<p><b><u>Leisure</u></b></p> <p><u>Young people wanting financial support with a sport, hobby or leisure activity will need to discuss this with their social worker first.</u></p> <p><b><u>ETE</u></b></p> <p><u>Young people will be supported with full-time higher education until the age of 25.</u></p> <p><u>Young people must already be attending a course at the age of 21 years.</u></p> <p><u>Young people wishing to return to higher education post 21 after their case has already been closed must be assessed by a Leaving Care Worker first.</u></p> <p><u>Young people may request support with books and college / university equipment but must be discussed with their social worker first.</u></p> <p><u>Young people attending college will receive £3 a day for lunch and support with travel costs to college, a maximum of</u></p>	<p><b><u>Independent Living</u></b></p> <p><u>Housing: LOCATA nomination when Young are assessed as ready to live independently. Support from Metropolitan Support Trust for the first six months of the new tenancy. Support with benefits claims. Early identification of rent arrears to avoid eviction notice by liaising with the Housing benefits officer.</u></p> <p><b><u>Leaving Care Grant: Recommended Independent Living Grant to increase from £1500 to £2000 for all young people ready to move to independent living</u></b></p> <p><u>Those young people in full-time college will receive a weekly supplement from Leaving Care but must apply Housing Benefit and Council Tax exemption forms.</u></p> <p><u>Those young people in university that are commuting will need to use their student loan to pay their rent and must complete a council tax exemption form.</u></p> <p><u>All young people will be responsible for paying all their utility bills.</u></p> <p><b><u>Contact</u></b></p> <p><u>All young people in higher education will be supported with travel costs to see their family six times a year.</u></p> <p><b><u>Case Closure</u></b></p> <p><u>Young people will stop receiving a service at the age of 25 whether they have completed their course or not.</u></p> <p><u>If the young person completes their course sooner their case will be closed one month after their completion date.</u></p>
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				<p><b><u>£18.80 a week.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Those in university will not receive lunch or travel and must use their student loan.</u></b></p>	
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## **Support Services**

Complaints – 0800 136 104 / 020 8424 1503

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) - 020 8424 0999

Advocacy Services – 020 8868 5629

Independent Visitors – Speak to your social worker

Mentoring – Speak to your social worker

Citizens Advice Bureau - 0844 826 9711

DSS – 0845 604 3719

Housing Benefit / Council Tax– 020 8901 2610

Counselling Services – GP / or speak to your social worker

Drug and Alcohol Services – Compass 0208 861 2787 / Each 020 8861 3884

Mental Health Services – Honeypot Lane 020 8951 3770/ Atkins House 020 8422 9443 / Mind 020 8426 0929

Sexual Health Services – Caryl Thomas Clinic 020 8863 9004 / NPH (GUM clinic) 020 8869 3142

