

## **Harrow Care Leavers Strategy v2 including action plan**

The Harrow Care Leavers strategy has been developed following the publication of the Government Care Leavers Strategy in October 2013.

We have responsibility with our partners to meet the needs of care leavers by making sure that they are provided with the support, advice and guidance that allows them to achieve their potential. Ultimately this allows them to develop as young adults able to look forward to a future where they feel valued and involved economically and emotionally and able to contribute positively to the communities in which they live.

Nationally many young people feel that mainstream and specialist services do not support them, and many care leavers believe they leave care too early and often feel isolated and lonely. The first decade into adult life is often disrupted, unstable and troubled.

An action plan to deliver the strategy has been developed and considers education, employment, financial, health, housing, justice and on going support for our care leavers.

### **Our Vision**

Harrow council and our partners are ambitious as corporate parents for our care leavers who require the same level of care and support that other young people get from their parents.

We want our young people to work with us, along with their parents and carers in shaping how we manage and organise the planning, resources and services that support and care for them.

We want our young people to be happy and healthy, to be safe and protected from harm and sexual exploitation and be supported into adulthood.

We want our young people to achieve their potential especially in education, to make the most of the opportunities offered and to participate in the decisions affecting their care and their lives.

We want our young people to be in placements that are as close as possible to their homes where they feel safe, happy and taken care of.

We want our young people to be supported in maintaining their culture, ethnicity and religion and to be supported to maximise the opportunities available to them.

We want young people leaving care to be prepared for independent living , and supported to participate fully as active citizens into adulthood.



## **Our Pledge to Care Leavers.**

We pledge to work together to provide young people with the best possible care and support to help young people be the best they can in their life, now and in the future.

To do this we will

Provide young people with a safe home to live in where they feel happy and taken care of

Provide young people with the support to do well in education

Listen to young people about things in their life and about the care they receive

Be honest about the things that have happened in young peoples lives and about the care they receive

Help young people to develop good relationships with people they care for and the most important people in their lives

Provide young people with support and opportunities to enjoy their lives and have their own interests and hobbies

Provide young people with the support they need when leaving care to become independent and be the best they can

Leaving Care Guidance		Actions	Outcomes	By whom	When
<p><b>Education</b></p> <p>A good standard of education is a key driver towards achieving positive employment outcomes into adulthood.</p>	<p>Ensure children in care and care leavers get the support they need from schools, colleges, universities and the local authority to maximise educational attainment and employment opportunities</p>	<p>Virtual school tracks all young people who are looked after and problems are identified at an early stage and resolutions reached</p>	<p>Increase in the number of young people remaining engaged with education and training and other opportunities to improve employability</p>	<p>Head of the virtual school.</p>	<p>September 2014</p>
	<p>The core purpose of the Virtual School is to promote the best possible outcomes and the attainment of all CLA in Harrow, including those placed in schools in other</p>	<p>All young people have detailed pathway plans which are developed using a multi –agency approach which are aspirational</p>	<p>Improved access to further education</p>	<p>Team Manager CLA and Team Manager of LC/UASC team.</p>	<p>September 2014</p>
		<p>Provide care leavers with a Personal Advisor where they wish to resume education up to the age of 25</p>	<p>Increased support whilst at college or university</p>	<p>Divisional Director.</p>	<p>September 2014</p>
		<p>Aim Higher Project in partnership with 5</p>	<p>Young people aware of the</p>	<p>Team Manager Leaving Care and UASC.</p>	<p>June 2014</p>
					<p>April 2014</p>

	authorities.	<p>other London Boroughs including arranging visits to specific universities.</p> <p>Creative use of the pupil premium.</p>	<p>opportunities available to them and able to make informed choices.</p> <p>Enables young people to have access to additional support to fulfil their potential.</p>	<p>Head of the Virtual School.</p> <p>Head of the Virtual School.</p>	<p>March 2014</p>
<p><b>Employment</b></p> <p>The benefits of employment include providing structure, sense of purpose, progress, achievement, self confidence and personal responsibility and a way out of poverty</p>	<p>Ensure that young people are informed of the opportunities available to them and are supported to access those opportunities.</p>	<p>Designated worker with young people who are NEET to engage with them and help move to ETE.</p> <p>The Catch 22 Programme was introduced 2 years ago as a follow on from the Lifeskills Folder. The Catch 22 Folder was put together to give young people who are in or leaving care information and advice to help prepare them for adult life. The Catch 22 provides</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of young people who are NEET</p> <p>Increase in the readiness of young people to make the successful transition to adulthood.</p>	<p>Connexions Worker</p> <p>Team Managers Looked after children, leaving care and UASC.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

		<p>information around, health, EET, money management, accommodation, having you say, lifeskills and family relationships.</p> <p>The lifeskills workshop brings together professionals from health looking at sexual health, drug and alcohol and mental health, housing and benefits and EET all providing information as well as young people undertaking practical skills such as cooking, budgeting, writing CV's and interview skills. (Preparation for independence is currently being reviewed.)</p> <p>Focus on attainment and achievement</p>	<p>Young people make a successful transition to adulthood.</p>	<p>Service Manager leaving care and UASC.</p>	<p>October 2014</p>
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<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>Care leavers are adequately supported financially in their transition to adulthood.</p>		<p>Care leavers aged 16-19 receive a £1200 Further Education Bursary</p> <p>Young people attending university have access to a Higher Education Bursary of £2000</p> <p>Young people leaving care have a setting up home grant of £2000</p> <p>Young people have access to “My Bank” training which is an accredited course and ensure young people are financially aware.</p> <p>Looked After children and young people who have been in care for at least one year and do not have a</p>	<p>Young people are financially secure</p> <p>Young people are in suitable accommodation.</p> <p>Young people are aware of and manage their finances so that they are financially secure and do not accrue rent arrears or other debts.</p> <p>Young people from an early age are aware of their financial situation and their</p>	<p>Divisional Director.</p> <p>Team Manager Leaving Care and UASC Team.</p> <p>Team Manager Leaving Care and UASC Team</p> <p>Service Manager Looked after children and Head of Finance</p>	<p>July 2014</p> <p>Immediate</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Immediate</p>

		<p>Child Trust Fund receive £200 to be invested in a Junior ISA which matures at the age of 18.</p> <p>Pathway plans include a comprehensive assessment of financial needs and how these will be met.</p>	<p>responsibilities.</p> <p>Young people are financially secure.</p>	<p>Responsible social worker</p>	<p>July 2014</p>
<b>Health</b>	<p>Young people entering care with poorer levels of physical and mental health than their peers.</p>	<p>Children and young people who are looked after have access to specialist child and adolescent mental health therapists, sexual health advice and prompt access to substance misuse services as required.</p>	<p>Care leavers have timely access to mainstream and specialist health services to meet their physical and mental health needs</p> <p>Young people are healthier when they leave care than when they entered care</p>		

		<p>Working in partnership with the sexual health nurse we offer advice and information in respect of sexual health. There is a drop in service and she attends the lifeskills course annually.</p> <p>Care plans and pathway plans include an assessment of their physical and emotional health needs and how these will be met.</p> <p>Young people have access to confidential youth friendly health advice.</p>	<p>Young people have a good understanding of sexual health.</p> <p>Ensuring information is available to enable assessed needs to be met.</p>	<p>Sexual health Nurse</p>	
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<b>Housing</b>	Care leavers are a vulnerable group of young adults who have particular needs in relation to housing	<p>Staying put policy enabling young people to remain with their current carers</p> <p>Consultation with young people at the leaving care forum about what makes a good placement has taken place and an action plan is in place.</p> <p>Provision of a range of semi-independent accommodation with support.</p> <p>20 Nominations for care leavers with LOCATA</p> <p>Range of accommodation provision with support for young people managing their own tenancy</p> <p>Sufficiency Strategy to</p>	<p>Young people are living in appropriate accommodation which is safe, affordable and does not impact negatively on their health and well being.</p> <p>Young people have a choice of accommodation options.</p> <p>Young people are provided with practical support with moving and setting up in accommodation</p> <p>Young people are in suitable accommodation to meet their needs, and they have the skills to live independently.</p> <p>Young people are in</p>	<p>Harrow Service Placements, Manager Care</p> <p>Service Placements. Manager</p> <p>Team Leaving Care and UASC. Manager</p> <p>Team Leaving Care and UASC. Manager</p>	<p>Housing, Manager Service Leaving</p> <p>Manager</p> <p>Care and</p> <p>Care and</p>	<p>April 2014</p> <p>September 2014</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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		<p>ensure that with partners where reasonably practicable there is sufficient accommodation for children and young people who are looked after.</p>	<p>placements which meet their needs and they are appropriately prepared for the transition to independence</p>	<p>Service Manager Placements.</p>	<p>April 2014</p>
		<p>The housing sub group has been running successfully for 12 months now which takes place quarterly, with representatives from housing, LCT &amp; UASC, housing benefit, council tax, MST and more recently supporting people. This contributes to the provision of appropriate accommodation</p>	<p>Young people are in accommodation where they receive appropriate support and they make the transition to independence successfully.</p>	<p>Team Leaving Care and UASC. Manager Care and</p>	<p>April 2014</p>
		<p>Decisions about moves to supported accommodation is based on assessed need and reflected in the pathway plan with</p>	<p>Young people are able to make decisions about their living arrangements which best suit them and their</p>	<p>Team Leaving Care and UASC and Team Manager Children looked after. Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

		a contingency plan.	situation.		
<b>Justice</b>	Young adults who have been in care can be particularly vulnerable particularly if they are known to the criminal justice system.	Task and finish group looked at young people who are in care and known to the Youth Offending Team identified the need for earlier multi-agency intervention.	The number of looked after young people who are first time entrants to the criminal justice system reduces.	Service Manager Youth Offending Team.	July 2014
	Care leavers are vulnerable to being drawn into crime  Care leavers can be particularly vulnerable to becoming the victim of crime.	A review of preparation for independence is currently underway, this will include access to a range of services provided by EIS including Triage, Gang Prevention & Support and Tender Choice Project .	Young people have the skills to access a range of services to support them in positive activities to deflect them from offending behaviours.	Service Managers Children looked after and leaving care Youth Offending Teams.	October 2014

			Young people are in appropriate accommodation, engaged in education, employment and training to build resilience and to be able to as far as possible keep themselves safe.		
<b>On going support</b>	Care leavers require support and guidance before and after they turn 18	Responsibility to stay in touch with young people until they are 21.  Leaving care charter details the support available to young people (charter has been reviewed in April 2014)	Young people receive high quality on-going support  Young people experience high quality on going support.	Team Manager Children Looked after and leaving care and UASC.  Team Manager Children Looked after and leaving care and UASC.	Ongoing  August 2014

		<p>Leaving care forum has reviewed the leaving care charter on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2014, charter to be amended and re-launched August 2014..</p> <p>Junior individual savings account of £200 for young people who have been looked after for a year (introduced 2012)</p> <p>Setting up home allowance of £2000</p>	<p>Young people have financial stability</p> <p>Young people are financially supported to make the transition to living independently.</p>	<p>Service Manager Looked after children and leaving care and UASC.</p> <p>Team leaving care and UASC. Manager</p>	<p>August 2014</p> <p>June 2012</p> <p>July 2013</p>
<p><b>Young people influence and shape service delivery.</b></p>		<p>Leaving care forum.</p>	<p>Young people participate fully in decision making, planning and decision making in relation to plans that affect them</p>	<p>Team Leaving Care and UASC. Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

		<p>Participation strategy</p> <p>Children in Care Council Beyond Limits.</p> <p>Advocacy service</p>	<p>Re-launched June 2014</p>	<p>Participation Officer.</p> <p>Service Manager Commissioning</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Diversity</b></p>	<p>Services address the needs of disabled young people, unaccompanied asylum seekers, young parents, young people from black and minority ethnic groups, gay and lesbian young people, young offenders and other disadvantaged groups of young</p>	<p>Pathway plans include provision for meeting young peoples diverse needs.</p> <p>Young people are supported to develop skills to recognise and challenge discrimination.</p>	<p>Young people have provision of services to meet their assessed needs.</p>	<p>Service Manager for leaving care and unaccompanied asylum seekers, and children looked after.</p>	<p>June 2014</p>

	people.				
<b>Corporate Parenting</b>	Provide good quality information about care leavers to corporate parenting panel to help them to understand leaving care issues.	Ensure that regular annual reports are provided to the Corporate Parenting Panel highlighting positive outcomes for young people and identifying challenges.  Young people have the opportunity to attend and report their experiences to the corporate parenting panel	Young people influence those who are their corporate parents	Service Manager Leaving Care and Children Looked After.  Participation Officer	December 2014  December 2014.

June 2014.