



**Notice of a public meeting of  
Corporate Parenting Board**

- To:** Councillors Fitzpatrick, Cuthbertson, Heaton, Hunter, Musson, Rowley, Runciman and D Taylor
- Date:** Tuesday, 18 February 2020
- Time:** 5.00 pm
- Venue:** The Thornton Room - Ground Floor, West Offices (G039)

**AGENDA**

**1. Declarations of Interest**

At this point, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests,
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

**2. Minutes** (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 26 November 2019.

**3. Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak regarding an item on the agenda or an issue within the Board's remit can do so. The deadline for registering is **5pm on Monday 17 February 2020.**

## **Filming or Recording Meetings**

Residents are welcome to photograph, film or record Councillors and Officers at all meetings open to the press and public. This includes the use of social media reporting, i.e. tweeting. Anyone wishing to film, record or take photos at any public meeting should contact the Democracy Officer (whose contact details are at the foot of this agenda) in advance of the meeting.

The Council's protocol on Webcasting, Filming & Recording of Meetings ensures that these practices are carried out in a manner both respectful to the conduct of the meeting and all those present. It can be viewed at [http://www.york.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11406/protocol\\_f\\_or\\_webcasting\\_filming\\_and\\_recording\\_of\\_council\\_meetings\\_20160809.pdf](http://www.york.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11406/protocol_f_or_webcasting_filming_and_recording_of_council_meetings_20160809.pdf)

- 4. Pathway Team Update** (Pages 7 - 42)  
Members will receive an update on the work of the Pathway Team.
- 5. Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team Update** (Pages 43 - 48)  
Members will receive an update on the developments and work of the Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team, supporting strategies to support Good Safe Placements.
- 6. Assessing Permanent Carers Team Update** (Pages 49 - 56)  
This report has been completed to provide an update to Members regarding Fostering Recruitment.
- 7. Urgent Business**  
Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

### Democracy Officer:

Name: Louise Cook

Contact Details:

- Telephone – (01904) 551031
- E-mail - [louise.cook@york.gov.uk](mailto:louise.cook@york.gov.uk)

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

**This information can be provided in your own language.**

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date	26 November 2019
Present	Councillors Fitzpatrick, Cuthbertson, Heaton, Hunter, Musson, Rowley, Runciman and D Taylor

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### **17. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members were invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in relation to the business on the agenda or any other general interests they might have within the remit of the Board.

Cllr Fitzpatrick declared a personal non prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 4, Personal Education Plan, in that she had worked, previously, with the Virtual School Headteacher, on the School Improvement Team at East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

### **18. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board, held on 3 September 2019 be approved and then signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **19. Public Participation**

It was reported that there was one registration to speak under the Councils Public Participation Scheme, in relation to the Boards remit.

A long-standing Foster Carer spoke on his knowledge and experiences and the current foster carer remuneration. He questioned the lack of regulation and requested that the current fees and allowances be reviewed.

### **20. Personal Education Plan (PEP)**

Members considered a report that updated them on the developments in the personal education plan (PEP) process.

The Virtual School Headteacher was in attendance to give an update and she highlighted the new process that had been introduced to ensure all looked after children from pre-school age to eighteen had a current, high quality, effective PEP that was accessible to education settings, social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's) foster carers and care providers. She confirmed that a personal education plan was an integral part of every looked after child's care plan and was an evolving record of what needed to happen for looked after children to enable them to make at least expected progress and fulfil their potential.

The Headteacher informed Members that she had consulted with schools, social workers and young people in care regarding the developments of the new PEP process and that early feedback from children and young people showed they were in favour of the new system and liked the way the ePEP recorded their views, wishes and feelings about education.

Members noted that the ePEP was not completed until the virtual school had signed off the quality and provided feedback to both social workers and schools through a red, amber or green rating with comments.

In answer to Members questions it was confirmed that:

- The new attendance monitoring service was provided by Welfare Call Ltd and would enable the Virtual School Headteacher to ensure effective systems were in place to maintain an up-to date roll of our looked-after children who were in school or college settings and regularly report on educational placements, progress and attendance.
- Consultation and briefing sessions with schools had taken place and it had been reported back that they liked the new system and were regularly adding to the PEP to ensure a green rating.
- A Social Worker would initially input and complete the PEP on the new system with schools submitting data as and when required.
- Information regarding a child's mental health was currently provided by their school.
- The Virtual school had a system in place to ensure that PEPs were of high quality and that they were reviewed regularly.
- The system automatically reminded both schools and social workers when a PEP was due for review and

allowed reports to be generated regarding children and young people's learning needs and Pupil Premium Plus requests for additional support.

Members thanked the Virtual School Headteacher for her update and noted that the new system would allow for a more detailed and better quality PEP than the previous system, which should lead to better outcomes for children and young people in care.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

## **21. Health Report**

Members received an update on the arrangements in place across York to meet the health needs of Children in Care.

The Designated Nurse and Doctor for Safeguarding and Children in Care were in attendance to give an update and inform Members of the statutory guidance promoting the health and wellbeing of Looked After Children. They explained how Looked After Children had many of the same health issues as their peers but that the extent of these were often greater because of their past experiences.

Officers addressed various sections of the report, where it was noted that:

- The relaunch and staged introduction of the Health Passports in 2018 supported children, young people and their carers' in understanding their current and future health needs. An audit was planned to take place during the early part of 2020 to establish how well they were used and how this impacted on the health care experienced by children and young people in Care.
- The timeliness to ensure that all children and young people received an Initial Health Assessment (IHA) remained challenging. Members noted that the reasons for the delays were complex and multifactorial and that Officers were meeting bi-monthly to examine the data and agree actions to address specific issues.
- All Paediatricians at York Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, who completed IHA's, received annual training on how to undertake a quality Initial Health Assessment.

- There was a pathway followed by health practitioners should a young person decline their initial or review health assessment.
- In 2018 Harrogate District Foundation Trust (HDFT) developed a specific Looked After Children's Dental Pathway to ensure that Children in Care across York and North Yorkshire could access the HDFT Community Dental Service via direct referral from professionals involved in their care.
- The North Yorkshire and York Children in Care Health Professionals Network was chaired by a Designated Doctor for Children in Care and they met bi-monthly. The key function of this network was to continually strive to improve the health outcomes for all children in care in our area.

Members expressed some concerns in the analysis data, attached as appendix 1 and 2 of the report, and in answer to their questions it was noted that:

- The main holder of a child's Healthy Passport were advised on keeping the document safe and confidential.
- The delays in offering paediatric appointments were a concern and that the Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group had worked with York Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to introduce key performance indicators which would allow greater scrutiny of the access to paediatric appointments. A new Single Point of Contact post within the Local Authority would support Social Workers in managing health assessment requirements, requests and liaison with those involved to request assessments in a timely manner.
- The Sexual Health Services and the Specialised Nursing Team for Looked After Children were developing expertise and effective health care responses for unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people.

Members thanked Officers for their update and agreed that health assessments were a comprehensive document that required a number of practitioners to be actively involved in completing them.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.



## **22. Scorecard**

Members received a report that provided an update on the scorecard that contained relevant indicators which illustrated practice across Children's Services in relation to children in care, over the year 18/19 and preceding years.

Officers gave an update and confirmed the scorecard was part of the Quality Assurance data management framework that enabled workers, managers and Members to track practice.

Officers highlighted the scores around children in care where it was noted that placement stability, health assessments, dental checks and cases reviewed within the required timescales were improving and that work would continue to increase all outcomes.

The Board thanked Officers for their update.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

## **23. Work Plan**

Members consider the Boards work plan for 2019-20 municipal year.

Following discussion regarding the remuneration of Foster Carers it was agreed that the Chair of the Children, Education & Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee would raise the subject at the next Scrutiny Committee meeting due to take place on 27 November 2019.

Members were informed that the next Corporate Parenting Board, due to take place on Tuesday 11 February 2020, would clash with the Shine Awards. The Democracy Officer agreed to reorganise the date of the next Corporate Parenting Board meeting.

Members discussed the work plan and agreed to receive a Personal Education Plan update on Tuesday 28 April 2020.

Resolved:

- (i) That the remuneration of Foster Carers be raised at the next Children, Education & Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee.
- (ii) That the Board be emailed regarding a new February 2020 meeting date.
- (iii) That the work plan be approved, subject to the changes above.

Reason: To keep the Board's work plan updated.

Cllr Cuthbertson, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 7.00 pm].



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**Corporate Parenting Board****18 February 2020**

Report of the Manager of the Pathway Team.

**Pathway Team Update****Summary**

1. Update of Pathway Team work in 2019.

**Background**

2. The Leaving Care Act (2000) requires local authorities to: assess the needs of young people previously looked after; appoint a Personal Advisor for them and to develop and keep under review a pathway plan. This support available to care leavers to age 21.
3. The 2014 Children & Families Act introduced the 'Staying Put' duty. This requires local authorities to support young people from age 18 to remain with their former foster carers up to age 21 where both the young person and the carer want the arrangement to continue – allowing those young people to enjoy continuity in their care arrangements and a more gradual transition to adulthood.
4. The Social Work Act 2017 introduced new duties for local authorities to negotiate and publish a 'Local offer' to care leavers and to extend Personal advisor support up to the age of 25.

**Options**

5. For Members to note this paper.

**Council Plan**

6. The work of the pathway Team is in line with the Council's Plan 2016/20 [The Children and Young People's Plan](#)

**7. Implications**

- Financial - None

- Human Resources (HR) - None
- Equalities – None
- Legal - None
- Crime and Disorder - None
- Information Technology (IT) - None
- Property - None
- Other - None

**Risk Management**

8. There are no implications or risks involved.

**Recommendations**

9. For Corporate Parenting Board to note the paper.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

**Contact Details**

**Author:**  
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Pathway Manager  
01904 555309

**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

Amanda Hatton  
Corporate Director of Children,  
Education and Communities

**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 19.01.20

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Annexes:**

Annex A: Pathway Team and Service for Care Leavers Update  
Annex B: Care Leavers Offer



## **Pathway Team and Service for Care Leavers**

### **Update for Corporate Parenting Board: February 2020**

The Pathway Team is made up of;

- 1 practice manager
- 5 Personal Advisors (known in York as Pathway workers)
- 1 Accommodation officer
- 1 Education, Training & Employment officer (ETE).

The Team works with young people previously looked after by the Local Authority, City of York Council. Currently the Pathway Team is working with 121 young people.

73 care leavers age 16-21

38 care leavers age 21-25

10 young people in Care age 16-18 preparing to leave care.

This update is to provide information about the main areas of the work: Accommodation; ETE; Health; Young People's Voice and the 'local offer'.

#### **Accommodation**

The Local Authority offers a range of accommodation options based on the assessment of individual need and ability.

#### **Staying Put**

Staying Put is well established and embedded as the first consideration when planning future accommodation for young people post care.

Currently 12 care leavers are Staying Put with their foster carers. This is a valuable period for the development and consolidation of key skills in preparation for future independent living, with many more young people making positive moves into their own tenancies and a greater proportion maintaining positive education, training and employment.

## Taster & Trainer flats

The taster flat offers a 4 to 6 week fully supported opportunity to experience living in the community. This flat has been in constant use throughout 2019 and is currently booked up to July 2020. We have recently added Wi-fi to enable young people to do college work and communicate with friends and family.

The trainer flat provides the opportunity to live in a council property for 6 months, giving a very real experience of independent living. At age 18 the young person can either sign up for the flat or move to a different property. Taster & trainer flats have been hugely popular and successful in 2019.

## Independent Living

Care leavers when ready for independent living are awarded gold band status for allocation of Local Authority housing. Currently 45% of the former relevant population are in Local Authority or private rented accommodation. The team continue to work hard to support young people to maintain their tenancies and to be a valuable part of the local community.

## Other options

In addition to Staying Put and independent options the Pathway Team and Housing colleagues have developed a range of accommodation options for our young people. This includes Howe Hill for young people, SASH supported lodgings, Robinson court and Scarcroft Road.

Care leavers requiring 24hr support are referred to Howe Hill for young people (HH4YP) a 26 bed Hostel which provides daily youth education sessions to develop independence skills. We currently have 3 care leavers resident at Howe Hill. Howe Hill also provides crash pad beds for emergency accommodation.

The Local Authority, in partnership with NYCC has commissioned bespoke accommodation from SASH for unaccompanied asylum seeking children and refugees. This is in addition to the existing supported lodging arrangements with SASH. Currently 5 young people are in SASH arrangements.

### Quote from a Care Leaver

“It’s a scary time but the Pathway Team know tons about housing and help you with everything”.

The team are proud of their work supporting young people in their transition from foster care / residential care to supported and independent living arrangements in the community

### Education, training & employment

The team have high aspirations for care leavers with 68% currently engaged in education, training and employment this is significantly better than the national average of 49%.

The Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) figure 32% includes 13 % who are young parents and 5% who are unable to work due to health or mental health conditions leaving 14% actual NEET.

### NEET

We acknowledge the NEET figure has risen this year. In real terms this equates to 3 young people and includes 2 uasc who have made the decision to move to London. It also reflects the end of the Lottery funded Springboard project and York Universities Starting Blocks programme.

On a positive note Starting Blocks has recently been awarded new funding and Future goals are offering tailored support to prepare young people for education & employment. Additionally we have now developed a good relationship with the Job centre who are also now signposting care leavers for courses to help them into employment. One young person has recently passed a course to enable him to work as security at events.

### Higher Education

We currently have 6 care leavers at Universities across the country, studying degrees from nursing to law. To support young people in Higher education we pay their accommodation fees and provide a £2000 bursary. We arrange for them to return to their staying put placement in holiday periods or support them with other vacation accommodation if required.

In 2019 three care leavers gained degrees with one starting a PGCE course in September. One of the care leavers was 27 when she achieved her degree having started it at age 23, giving strong evidence of the Local Authorities role as a good corporate parent. (The LA supports care leavers to complete their education / training which they started before they were age 25)

### Apprenticeships

Due to its size the Local Authority is able to support apprenticeships on case by case bases. Our children in care and care leavers, upon assessment of being ready, are guaranteed an interview. In such circumstances the Pathway Team support with interview skills, appropriate clothing and travel to the interview.

The Local Authority is working closely with business and partners across the city including York and York St John Universities, to promote and provide ETE opportunities for care leavers.

The team are planning an event with the Director Amanda Hatton to encourage and invite the local business community to offer their support to our care leavers.

### Health

The roll out of the Health passport has now been achieved. The first wave has started with those coming into LA care however has not yet reached the older teenage group leaving care, therefore continue to write to them detailing how to access their health records.

Care leavers are supported to access community health resources via their GP however there is no bespoke mental health resource for care leavers within the Pathway team. This is an area of priority for both the ISM and SMTIM groups who consistently flag the emotional difficulties faced by care experienced young people. Further evidence of this is an increase in young people coming into care at 16 & 17 struggling with mental health issues.

### The Local offer & the voice of care leavers

The Team has a real and genuine investment in consultation and participation with care leavers. The team support the I Still Matter forum



(ISM) to have a voice about the service they receive and how it can improve and evolve to meet the changing demands of the society and environment they live in. This is very evident in the 'Local offer' and was highlighted at a National Leaving Care Conference for including the voice of care leavers across all the area topics.

The local authority care leaver offer (see attached) has now run a full year and is currently under review with the ISM and care leaver population. We are very proud of the local offer which shows a real commitment from the Local Authority as a corporate parent and the team in facilitating it.

The Local Offer 2019 outlines the support the Local Authority provides and reassures care leavers they are not alone and their future matters to us. Some of the main issues discussed and responded to for 2019 were, mental health, isolation and accommodation. The Local Authority agreed:

- A bus pass for all care leavers to age 21, this reduced isolation , enabled travel to family, friends, social events, appointments and importantly providing safe travel home at night. The feedback from care leavers informs this provision has been invaluable to them.
- Accommodation, the corporate parent agreed to decorate Care leavers first flat, this has provided a blank canvas for care leavers to move into and create their own identity.
- From April 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 the LA agreed to pay the first year's Council tax for care leavers 18-21.
- From April 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 an increase in the setting up home grant to £2500, in recognition of the rising cost of carpets, white goods and furnishings.
- The ISM were supported to provide a newsletter to all care leavers to inform of social events and services.
- The team recently hosted an excellent Christmas celebration at the Dean Court Hotel whose staff and management also fully supported the occasion. Care leavers all received Christmas presents and all had somewhere to be on Christmas day. To reflect the team and corporate parent commitment for care leavers this was checked out personally by the Director, AD, and Group manager to ensure no one would be alone.

### Future work

1. At the last inspection 2016 Ofsted assessed the City of York Leaving Care service as 'good'. They commented positively on the standard of pathway plans, the team has continued to work hard to improve to ensure individual plans are aspirational and have SMART actions to achieve the young person's goals. The team are currently reporting an average of 94% plans in date. The plans are recorded on Mosaic but are not very young person friendly when printed and this is an area the team would like to develop in 2020 with the care leaver forum 'I Still Matter'. The team feel this will give the care leavers more ownership of their plans.
2. The team have an excellent record of developing relationships and keeping in touch with care leavers, however we live in a digital world where young people communicate and work in a many different ways. The current number care leavers living independently age 16-21 is 22. We will explore with procurement and IT colleagues the cost of supplying Wi – Fi for all care leavers living independently.
3. Enhancing the local offer to care leavers around mental health in 2020, is clearly an area of need and consistently high on the agenda of both the children in care and children leaving care forums. We will explore all options including those requiring investment.

David Purcell








# ANNEX B



## Local Offer: Care leavers 2019



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## Introduction

We know that it is a big step to move to living on your own. We want to make sure that you know where and who to go to for advice and help.

The care leaver's forum 'I still matter' (ISM) was consulted and helped design this local offer, we will continue to listen to care leavers views to make sure the services we provide are what you need.

To be able to get the support detailed here, you must have care leaver status with the City of York, this means you will have been in care for at least 13 weeks between the ages of 14 and 16 (including your 16th birthday) or for 13 weeks after your 16th birthday. If you are unsure whether you have, then ask your social worker or contact the Pathway Team.

*“We want our children and young people to have everything that good parents want for their children. In other words: to be happy and healthy, safe and protected, and supported each step of the way to adult life”.*

This information is available on the City of York Council YorOk website at [www.showmethatimatter.com/i-still-matter.htm](http://www.showmethatimatter.com/i-still-matter.htm), or you can email [pathwayteam@york.gov.uk](mailto:pathwayteam@york.gov.uk) to request a copy. You can discuss the local offer with your social worker or pathway worker.



**The support  
we must give  
you by law**

## **A Pathway Worker**

Following changes introduced through the Children & Social Work Act 2017, you will be able to ask to have support from a pathway worker up to the age of 25 whether you are in education or training or not. This is to try to make sure care leavers receive similar support to young adults who live with their families.

We will try to let you keep the same pathway worker, though this will not always be possible. The amount of support that you receive from your pathway worker will depend on what you want and your circumstances.

## **A Pathway Plan**

Your pathway plan is written by the local authority after consultation with you and important people in your life. Your pathway plan is unique to you, It sets out your needs, your views , your future goals, and exactly what support you will receive from us. We review your pathway plan with you regularly so that it is kept up to date.

## **Leaving care before turning 18**

We will encourage you to stay in care until you are 18. Most young people still live at home with their families at this age.

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If you choose to leave care before age 18, we must provide you with suitable accommodation.

## **Support to engage in education, training or employment (ete)**

We want to make sure every young person leaving care has the support to achieve their goals in life.

The law says we must provide you with assistance with expenses linked with employment, education and training. In particular:

- We will provide you with a Higher Education (HE) bursary of at least £2,000 if you go to University.
- We will provide somewhere for you to stay during University holidays (or funding for this if you would prefer to make your own arrangements) if you are in HE or in residential further education.

## **Your right to be heard and taken seriously**

You have a right to be involved in all decisions about your plans for leaving care. You have a right to support from an independent advocate if you are thinking about challenging decisions about the care we give you. You have a right to see the information we keep about you, including the files and records written about you when you were in care.



## Glossary of main terms

### **A needs assessment**

A needs assessment identifies the areas of your life where support and resources will help you in your transition to adulthood.

Your social worker will take account of your wishes, feelings & aspirations, and the views of the important people in your life. They will gather the information in a needs assessment which will then inform your pathway plan.

### **A Pathway Plan**

We aim to fully involve you in the development of your pathway plan and will support you to express your wishes and views.

- For your pathway plan to be effective it will be based on the assessment of your needs. It will set out the support you will be offered and the actions required to achieve your goals & aspirations, including contingencies should your circumstances change
- It should cover how we will help you achieve the things you want in life; such as going to college, university or getting the job that you want, choosing where you would like to live, being healthy, and keeping in touch with people that are important to you.

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Your pathway plan will be regularly reviewed with you, at least every 6 months. These meetings will check that your goals and milestones are still right and are being met.

## **The Pathway (Leaving Care) Team**

The pathway team offer information, advice and support for you to access, accommodation, education and training, work experience, health services, financial advice, relationship advice and social opportunities. The team work with other agencies to help you achieve your goals and ambitions. The team is made up of, 5 pathway workers, an accommodation officer and an education training and employment officer (ETE) and a manager.

- The Pathway Team provides a duty service Mon – Fri 1pm – 5 pm , so if your Pathway worker is not available you can ring for support or drop in at the office 136 Acomb Road, York, YO24 4HA . If we are busy leave a message and we will get back to you ASAP.

## **Social Worker**

Up until you are eighteen, whilst 'looked after' you will have a social worker from the Children in Permanent Placements team. As part of their statutory duties the social worker will be responsible for care planning and arranging child care reviews, which will be chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). Near to your 16th Birthday they will assess your needs and develop your 'pathway plan' offering support, advice and guidance . The social worker has lead responsibility for safeguarding.

## **Pathway worker**

A pathway worker will be identified for you after you become 17, so you can build a relationship before they become your allocated worker when you turn 18.

Your pathway worker will keep in contact and arrange meetings with you; they will visit you at home and also arrange to meet you in the community. Your pathway worker will provide you with advice, information and guidance to help you make the best choices and decisions. The relationship between you and your pathway worker is important; make the most of the support they can offer.

## **Accommodation officer**

The pathway accommodation officer supports young people in care and care



# ANNEX B

leavers with their accommodation options. The Pathway Accommodation Officer will offer information and advice on range of accommodation options to ensure your future accommodation is appropriate for your individual needs. The pathway accommodation officer can support you and your foster carer to set up a staying put arrangement and as required make single access point (SAP) referrals to SASH Howe Hill and other accommodation projects.

## **Education, training & employment (ETE) officer**

Whatever your goal or ambition or if you are unsure what you want to do in the future, the pathway ETE officer can provide 1:1 support and guidance to young people in care and care leavers. They have up to date knowledge of local provision, apprenticeships, training providers, colleges and universities. The ETE officers can also offer support to you if you are already in education, employment or training but may be wishing to change career or improve your prospects.

## **Independent Advocate**

Independent advocates can inform you about your rights and help you to be heard in meetings. As the title indicates they are independent / separate from social services.



## Care Leaver Charter

The City of York Care Leaver Charter was written in consultation with care leavers and the 'I Still Matter' group.



**As a corporate parent;**

### To support you

- We will offer you with a named Pathway Worker until you are 25.
- We will provide you with the information you need, when you need it.
- We will be clear and honest about your options.
- We will help you to make the right decisions for you.
- We will support you with your move to independent life and will be there for you no matter how many times you come back for support

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## To listen

- We will take time to listen to you, give you information and advice and make sure you are in contact with the right professionals.
- We will make sure that you are aware of your rights and entitlements.
- If you are unhappy, we will support you to access independent advocacy.

## To respect you

- We will respect your beliefs and culture and support you in whatever path you choose to take.
- We will not judge you.
- We will value and respect your important relationships and support you where possible to maintain these.

## To help you plan for your future

- When you are ready to move into independent living we will do all we can to help you feel safe and secure. We will provide support and encourage your plans.
- We will help you to access education, training and employment including apprenticeships and help you to achieve your goals.
- We will always listen and offer advice and information whatever your age.

## To help you plan for your future

- When you are ready to move into independent living we will do all we can to help you feel safe and secure. We will provide support and encourage your plans.

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- We will help you to access education, training and employment including apprenticeships and help you to achieve your goals.
- We will always listen and offer advice and information whatever your age.



# Explanation of Care Leaver Status Statutory terms

(Eligible, Relevant, Former  
Relevant, Qualifying)

## Eligible

### You are eligible if:

- You are currently looked after aged 16 or 17 and;
- You have been looked after for 13 weeks since age 14 and you are still looked after.

## Relevant

### You are relevant if:

- You are no longer looked after by the local authority, you have been eligible and are aged 16 or 17.
- Immediately before being detained or in hospital you were eligible or
- Lived for a continuous period of 6 months or more with a parent or someone with parental responsibility and where those arrangements broke down.

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## Former Relevant

### You are former relevant if:

- You are aged 18 years or above and either been a relevant or eligible child when under 18
- If at the age of 21 or before reaching the age of 25 you are in education or training you will remain former relevant until the end of the agreed programme.
- You have been either been a relevant or eligible child when under 18 and requested support between the age of 21 and 25.

## Qualifying

### You are qualifying if:

- You are at least 16 but under 21, and;
- You were looked after immediately prior to the making of a special guardianship order which was in force when you reached 18.
- If at any time after you reached 16 but while you were still a child was no longer looked after or accommodated or fostered.
- You were privately fostered but considered to be a child in need.

## If you are:

### Eligible

- Near to your 16th Birthday, your social worker will, after discussion with you and other important people in your life complete an assessment of your needs and write your pathway plan.
- Your social worker will be responsible for reviewing your pathway plan until your status as a Child or Young Person in Care (CYPIC) ends.
- You will be allocated a pathway worker from the Leaving Care Team at Age 17 ½ or earlier if your plan is to leave care before 18.
- Your Pathway worker will support you to age 21 or up to 25 if you feel you still require support in certain areas of your life.
- 'Eligible' status also means that if you and your foster carers are agreeable, we will

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support you to continue to live with them at 18. This is what we call a 'staying put' arrangement and can be up to age 21. A staying put arrangement allows you time to focus on your education, training or employment and develop independence skills at a gradual pace, whilst having continued support from the people you know and trust. You can talk with your social worker or foster carer about staying put and the pathway accommodation officer can give you more details.

## Relevant

- As a 'Relevant' care leaver you will be supported by a named pathway worker.
- Your pathway worker will be responsible for reviewing and keeping your pathway plan up to date every 6 months or more frequently if required.
- Your pathway worker will support you to age 21 or this can be extended to 25 if you feel you still require support in certain areas of your life.

## Former Relevant

- As a 'Former Relevant' care leaver you will be supported by a named pathway worker.
- Your pathway worker will be responsible for reviewing and keeping your pathway plan up to date every 6 months or more frequently if required.
- Your pathway worker will support you to age 21 or this can be extended to 25 if you feel you still require support in certain areas of your life.

## 21 to 25 Support for Former Relevant

This new duty enables the City of York to respond positively to requests for support from care leavers aged 21-25 who may be continuing to require help in certain areas of their lives whilst they make their transition to adulthood and independent living. It also recognises care leavers growing stability and maturity between the ages of 21 and 25, during which, many care leavers are able to lead successful lives without pathway support and may not need continuing contact with their local authority.

## Care leavers aged between 21 up to age 25.

If you request leaving care support at any point after the age of 21 and up to the age of 25, we will assess your needs and depending on your identified needs;

- develop a pathway plan setting out the support to be provided,

# ANNEX B

- allocate a named pathway worker. (Although we will try, we cannot guarantee this will be your previous worker)

The amount of support and the frequency of contact that you receive from the pathway worker will depend on your individual circumstances.

## Care leavers who reach age 21 after April 1st 2018.

- As you approach 21, your pathway worker will discuss support beyond the age of 21 with you. If you do wish support to continue, your pathway plan will be reviewed and updated to reflect your support needs. Support will continue to be provided for as long as it is required, or until you reach age 25. (Although we will try we cannot guarantee this will be your current worker)

The amount of support and the frequency of contact that you receive from your pathway worker will depend on your individual circumstances.

## Qualifying

- Qualifying young people are entitled to an assessment of their needs, to establish whether they require advice and assistance. Where following assessment support is identified as required over a period of time, a pathway plan will be completed to detail the support to be provided.



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## What we offer

### Accommodation:

We will encourage you to stay in care until you are 18. Many young people still live at home with their families at this age. Your social worker, pathway worker and the pathway accommodation officer will help you to plan for future accommodation.

#### We offer;

- Staying Put arrangements, if you are eligible and both agree, you can remain with your foster carer at 18 under a 'staying put' arrangement, which can last up to 21.
- Advice about a range of accommodation options including, taster & trainer flats, supported, semi supported and independent accommodation.
- When assessed as ready 'Gold Band' status on the CYC housing register.

#### Tips from care leavers

Check out your options with your pathway worker. It is important you have the information you need to make choices about your future accommodation.

Prepare for your future, use the opportunity in your placement or staying put arrangement to develop your independence skills.

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- Practical support to paint / decorate your first CYC flat
- A setting up home grant (SUHG) for essential items and advice on how and where to get the best value for your money.
- Support with moving into and furnishing your new home.
- Support with managing a tenancy, managing your front door, budgeting to ensure your important bills are paid and you avoid rent or council tax arrears.
- If you are not in employment we will support you to apply for universal credit at 18 for housing costs.
- Support if you have a housing crisis or need emergency accommodation.

It's a scary time; use the support available from the Pathway team they know tons about housing stuff and they are really helpful.

Make sure you know how much your rent is and how it is paid. It will be your responsibility whether you are working or in receipt of benefits, it's really important.

Keep to your tenancy agreement. Your first year is an introductory one so remember "you are responsible for your self and the behaviour of your visitors"

"It's your place, be proud of it and be a good neighbour"

## Education, Employment and Training:

We want to make sure every young person leaving care has the support they need to achieve their goals in life.

### We offer;

- Careers information and advice.
- To write your CV.
- To prepare for interviews.
- To attend interviews in appropriate clothing.

### Tips from care leavers

"Aspire to more "

If you are unsure what you want to do the ETE officer can help you look at your options. Ask about taster and work experience opportunities

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- Transport costs when travelling to training, school/college, apprenticeships or job interviews.
- Tools, equipment, essential clothing, and books.
- Opportunities to explore work experience, apprenticeships and employment within the council.
- Informing you about voluntary work that we think you may be interested in.
- Information about courses that run at different times of the year; “not all courses start in September”.
- Support to apply for FE bursaries. [NB: Care leavers are a priority group for the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund administered by FE colleges, which pays a bursary of up to £1,200 a year to support vulnerable young people to participate in education or if over 19 the discretionary bursary for costs associated with your course].

Your Pathway worker or the ETE officer can help you job search.

Make sure you have a good CV and are prepared for interviews. Voluntary work is good experience and good for your CV.

Make sure you attend college, training or your job, not just to learn, but so you receive your bursary or wage!

## For Higher education we offer

- If you plan to go to university we will help you choose the right course and university that matches your talents & interests.
- Support if you choose to study higher education alongside; your employment or whilst remaining in your own accommodation. (speak with the pathway ETE officer for details).
- Support you to attend interviews and open days.

## Tips from care leavers

Courses vary at each university so do your research make sure it's the right course for you.

Check out the University visit the city to make sure you will feel ok living there.

Most universities have care leaver bursaries that you do not have to pay back so always apply for these!

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- Advise and support you to apply for tuition fees, loans and bursaries available from Student Finance, the individual HE establishment and Care Leaver trusts.
- Pay university accommodation costs for campus student accommodation or equivalent Student house arrangement\*
- If you attend university, a bursary of £2,000 to help with the cost of books and materials spread over the length of your course.
- We will support you with travel costs at the start and end of term and offer assistance to transport your belongings to and from University.
- The Pathway ETE officer will liaise with tutors & support services over the period of your course to ensure you receive all possible support to successfully complete your degree.
- We will on completion of your degree help with the cost of photographs and your cap & gown.
- Gold band status on the CYC housing register if returning from your course to live in York.

*\* We offer financial support for one course of higher education. This will be paid in the same way as National Funding, e.g. the length of the course (plus one extra year if required).*

## Post Graduate Courses

- A needs assessment, to identify financial support and resources to enable you to undertake post graduate studies.

Going to university can be scary, especially if you move out of area, so remember you are still entitled to Pathway support; speak to your pathway worker or the ETE officer if you have any worries, concerns or issues about university.

Remember Study hard and enjoy your time at Uni!!!!

Don't be afraid to use the support available for care leavers at uni, ask the ETE officer about it.

## Tips from care leavers

Talk with your University and the Pathway ETE officer to fully research the requirements and to ensure it is the right course to support your future aspirations.

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## Exceptions:

- *Qualifying young people are entitled to an assessment of their needs, to establish whether they require advice and assistance to maximise their right to national grants, bursaries and student loans. Where, following assessment, support is identified as required over a period of time, a plan will be completed to outline the support to be provided.*
- *Qualifying young people will not as a right be entitled to higher education financial support such as the student bursary or accommodation fees.*

## Money / Finance

We will try to help you financially, in a similar way to how parents would support their own children.

### We offer

- If you are age 16 to age 18 living independently and unemployed we will pay you a weekly allowance equivalent to the Universal Credit payment. (currently £60p/w)
- If you are age 16 to age 18 we will pay your accommodation rent costs if living in a placement agreed by the Pathway Team.
- Support you to access the childrens independent savings account (ISA) set up in your name by the department for education (DFE)
- Provide or inform you about relevant money management courses or one to one support to help you budget your income and prioritise your essential outgoings.
- Support you to gain knowledge about different bank accounts, savings, ISA's, loans and credit cards.

### Tips from care leavers

It's always best to leave care in a planned and supported way, to know where you will live and how much money you will have to support yourself.

Make sure your accommodation is affordable and safe.

Its £200 you can keep adding to it or cash it in. Ask you pathway worker about it.

Keep on top of your bills! Pay the essentials first!

Have a budget plan and stick to it.

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- Support to understand your wage slip when in employment
- Provide a leaving care grant to help you buy essential things when moving into your own home, which the government recommends should be a minimum of £2,000. In York we pay £2,250 which includes the purchase of your first TV licence.
- Pay for the first year's Home contents insurance when a young person moves into their own property.
- Provide a birthday present or gift voucher.
- Provide a gift or voucher for religious celebrations e.g. Christmas & Eid.
- We will support you with 10 driving lessons or to pass your CBT
- Participation Work; Young People can be paid for their time when involved in consultation, recruitment interviews, designing publicity materials for CYPIC and care leaver events.
- Young people in custody can receive up to £20 per month in the form of a postal order for personal needs and phone credit.

It's great to save! But.... so easy to get over drawn and into debt if you don't know enough about bank cards, credit cards or loans.

It's a great sense of pride earning your own income.

White goods (fridge, washer, cooker) and carpets are very expensive. Your pathway worker can support and advise you on how and where to get the best value for your money.

It's important to set up a payment scheme to insure your possessions in the second year.

To celebrate special occasions!

To celebrate more special occasions!

10 driving lessons are a great help in learning to drive but you may need more, so it is important to save in advance as you can often get a reduction if you book / pay for blocks of 5 or more.

If you want to be more involved, contact details are on the SMTIM and ISM news letters and web pages. Or just speak to a member of the ISM, your social worker or pathway worker. Get in Touch! Your views are important and really valued.

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We hope you never need this, but if you do, remember the Pathway team will continue to support you, visit you and plan for your release if you are in custody.

## Important documents

We can support you to gain important documents & identification.

### We offer

- Your social worker will support you to apply for your National insurance number (NI NO).
- Pathway can support you with one passport or travel document
- One provisional driving licence
- One birth certificate
- To open a bank account

### Tips from care leavers

Your National insurance number is very important, and you will be required to produce evidence of it for employment or benefit payments. “Keep it safe”.

Passports & driving licences are very expensive Pathway provide one of each “keep them safe”.

To open a bank account you need to provide ID.

Keep all your documents; tenancy agreement, bills and letters in a safe place. Keep your ID documents safe

Never give anyone your bank card or PIN.



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## Health and wellbeing

We want you to be happy and healthy.

### We offer

- Support you to register with a GP.
- Give information on getting help to pay for prescriptions.
- Support you to register with a dentist
- Support to move from children's to adult mental health services
- Information about counselling services that are available locally.
- Information on healthy living and where to get advice (including sexual health).
- A bus pass
- Free Gym membership
- If you are a young parent, take an interest in your child/ren and support you to do the best for them.
- Give you information about health drop-in centres

### Tips from care leavers

If you move area when you leave care you may need to register with a different GP practice.

It is really important to attend your dentist every six months, if you miss your appointments you may have to apply to a new practice for NHS treatment.

Your mental health is important. Pathway can support you to arrange and attend appointments.

It's important to have know about your physical, emotional and sexual health to keep well and to be safe.

Having a bus pass means you are not socially isolated, you can get to visit your family and friends and not have to worry about the weather or getting home at night.

Care Leavers up to the age of 25 are entitled to a FREE gym and swim membership which you can use at Energise Leisure Centre and Yearsley Pool

If you do not have a dentist or GP there are drop ins where you can get help, advice and emergency treatment.



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## Relationships

As well as support from a pathway worker, we may be able to offer you additional practical and emotional support, such as;

### We offer

- an advocate; available to care leavers up to the age of 21.
- Peer mentor.
- Independent visitor
- Help to maintain or regain contact with people special to you or who cared for you in the past, like former foster carers or social workers.

### Tips from care leavers

An advocate can help you to have a voice, understand your rights and to make a complaint if things can't be sorted out any other way.

Peer mentors are care experienced young people. They have great knowledge about the options and realities when leaving care.

You may already have an independent visitor. They can continue working with you when you leave care.

Its important to have people you know and trust in you life and to build a good support network. There are many reasons why we lose touch with people, we can help you get back in contact.

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## Being involved

We want to hear your views, we want you to have the opportunity to enjoy social events and be a part of the great city you live in.

### We offer

- A bus pass from the age of 16 to the age of 21.
- Participation and consultation meetings.
- To invite you to care leaver social events.
- To help you participate in positive leisure activities.
- Support you to attend and have a voice at meetings about you.
- To help you to enrol on the Electoral Register, so you can vote in elections.
- Giving you advice and helping you to challenge any discrimination you face.
- Inform you about voluntary work that we think you may be interested in.

### Tips from care leavers

Being involved usually requires having to travel. The provision of a bus means you can get to work, events, meetings, appointments and importantly, get home safely at night (especially in winter) This is great!

Your views are important and you can help shape services to best meet the needs of care leavers in York.

Social events are great and we get to choose and organise them e.g. summer trips, meals out, cinema, Christmas lunch.

At 18 you have a right to vote on how the country is run, "have your say"

No one should suffer discrimination for any reason, especially not for being a care leaver.

Doing voluntary work is a great way to get to know people and contribute to the community you live in.

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## Who can help: Key contacts

**The Pathway Team**

- Pathway leaving care team
- Pathway Workers
- Pathway Accommodation officer
- Pathway ETE officer
- Peer mentors

[Pathwayteam@york.gov.uk](mailto:Pathwayteam@york.gov.uk)

136 Acomb Rd, York YO24 4HA.  
01904 555389

**Social worker**

West offices, Station Rise, York YO1 6GA.  
01904 551550

**I Still Matter (ISM)****York Care leavers forum**

[www.showmethatimatter.com/i-still-matter.htm](http://www.showmethatimatter.com/i-still-matter.htm)

Speak with your pathway worker if you would like further information or would like to attend.

**Show Me That I Matter (SMTIM)****York's children in care council**

[www.showmethatimatter.com/whohelpsyouleavecare](http://www.showmethatimatter.com/whohelpsyouleavecare)

Check out the website.

**Advocacy for care leavers**

**Advocacy support is now available for Care Leavers up to the age of 21 from the Speak Up Service**

[speakup@york.gov.uk](mailto:speakup@york.gov.uk)

For information please call / text Nikki  
07769725174

**(Young peoples services)****30 Clarence Street****16–25 service including counselling**

[fis@york.gov.uk](mailto:fis@york.gov.uk)

01904 555400 / text 07624802244

The service also runs Drop in sessions at 30 Clarence Street, York YO31 7RB on: Mondays 12:30pm-4:30pm, Tuesdays 12:30pm-4:30pm, Fridays 11am-3pm

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## The Haven

### Mental health, out of hours support 16-25

[Haven.mhm@nhs.net](mailto:Haven.mhm@nhs.net)

30 Clarence Street, York YO31 7RB

The service is open from 6pm to 11pm, seven days a week, 365 days a year, including bank holidays, with no formal referral or appointment required

## York District Hospital (YDH)

Wiggington Rd, York

General number 01904 631313

Urgent care centre at York Hospital based in the emergency department.

8.00am - 10.00pm daily. 01904 726066

Out of hours GP service at York Hospital; phone NHS direct 111 for an appointment (this is not a drop in service)

## Dentist (NHS)

(to locate/register with) NHS direct 111 or [www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Dentists/LocationSearch/3](http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Dentists/LocationSearch/3) for local dentists

## Emergency Dentist

If you require emergency dental treatment when your dentist is closed, please call NHS Direct on 0845 600 3249.

## York Sexual Health Centre

Monkgate Health Centre, 31 Monkgate York YO31 7WA

[www.yorsexualhealth.org.uk](http://www.yorsexualhealth.org.uk) or [www.nhs.uk/worhtalkingabout](http://www.nhs.uk/worhtalkingabout)

## Changing Lives

### (Drug & alcohol service)

[york-info@changing-lives.org.uk](mailto:york-info@changing-lives.org.uk)  
01904 464680

## York College

[www.yorkcollege.ac.uk](http://www.yorkcollege.ac.uk)

Sim Balk Ln, Bishopthorpe, York YO23 2BB  
01904 770200

## Askham Bryan College

Askham Bryan, York YO23 3FR

[www.askham-bryan.ac.uk](http://www.askham-bryan.ac.uk)

01904 772277

## York Learning

[yorklearning@york.gov.uk](mailto:yorklearning@york.gov.uk)

West Offices, Station Rise, York YO1 6GA.  
01904 554277

## YH Training, including Military Prep

[www.yh-group.co.uk](http://www.yh-group.co.uk)

15 Clifford St, York YO1 9RG  
01904 666713

## Apprenticeships

- [York.apprenticeships@york.gov.uk](mailto:York.apprenticeships@york.gov.uk)
- [www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide](http://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide)
- [www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)

## Higher Education

- [www.university.which.co.uk](http://www.university.which.co.uk)  
(help with choice of University)
- [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)  
(UCAS – info about Universities and how to apply)
- [www.gov.uk/apply-for-student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/apply-for-student-finance)  
(info about student finance and how to apply)
- [www.yorks.ac.uk](http://www.yorks.ac.uk) (York St John)
- [www.york.ac.uk](http://www.york.ac.uk) (York Uni)

## Universal credit

[www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit)  
03456000723

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## Citizens Advice (CAB)

Mon, Tues, Thurs: 9.30-12.00

[www.yorkcab.org.uk](http://www.yorkcab.org.uk)

advice line; 08444111444

Mon - Fri: 9.30-4pm

West Offices, Station Rise, York

## The survival guide

Young peoples guide to services in York,

contact [mail@yorksurvivalguide.co.uk](mailto:mail@yorksurvivalguide.co.uk)

Survival Guide to York—a little book full of things you might need to know or make decisions about

## Police

National Non-Emergency

Tel. 101

## Supporting Victims

**If you have been victim of a crime**

[www.supportingvictims.org](http://www.supportingvictims.org)

[help@supportingvictims.org](mailto:help@supportingvictims.org)

Tel. 01904 669276

Out of these times: Tel. 0808 168 9293

## IDAS

[www.idas.org.uk](http://www.idas.org.uk)

[info@idas.org.uk](mailto:info@idas.org.uk)

Tel. 0300 011 0110

24 hr advice line: Outreach: Mon–Fri:

9.00am–5.00pm

Tel. 01904 646036

## Traveller and Ethnic Minority Support Service

[ruth.robson@york.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.robson@york.gov.uk)

01904 554335 or: 07881 678062

## Gov.uk

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

information about benefits, crime and justice, student finance, job vacancies, tax and NI, careers advice, voting, employment rights etc

## York Mind

[office@yorkmind.org.uk](mailto:office@yorkmind.org.uk)

01904 643364

## Kyra

**Counselling support for young women**

[contact@kyra.org.uk](mailto:contact@kyra.org.uk)

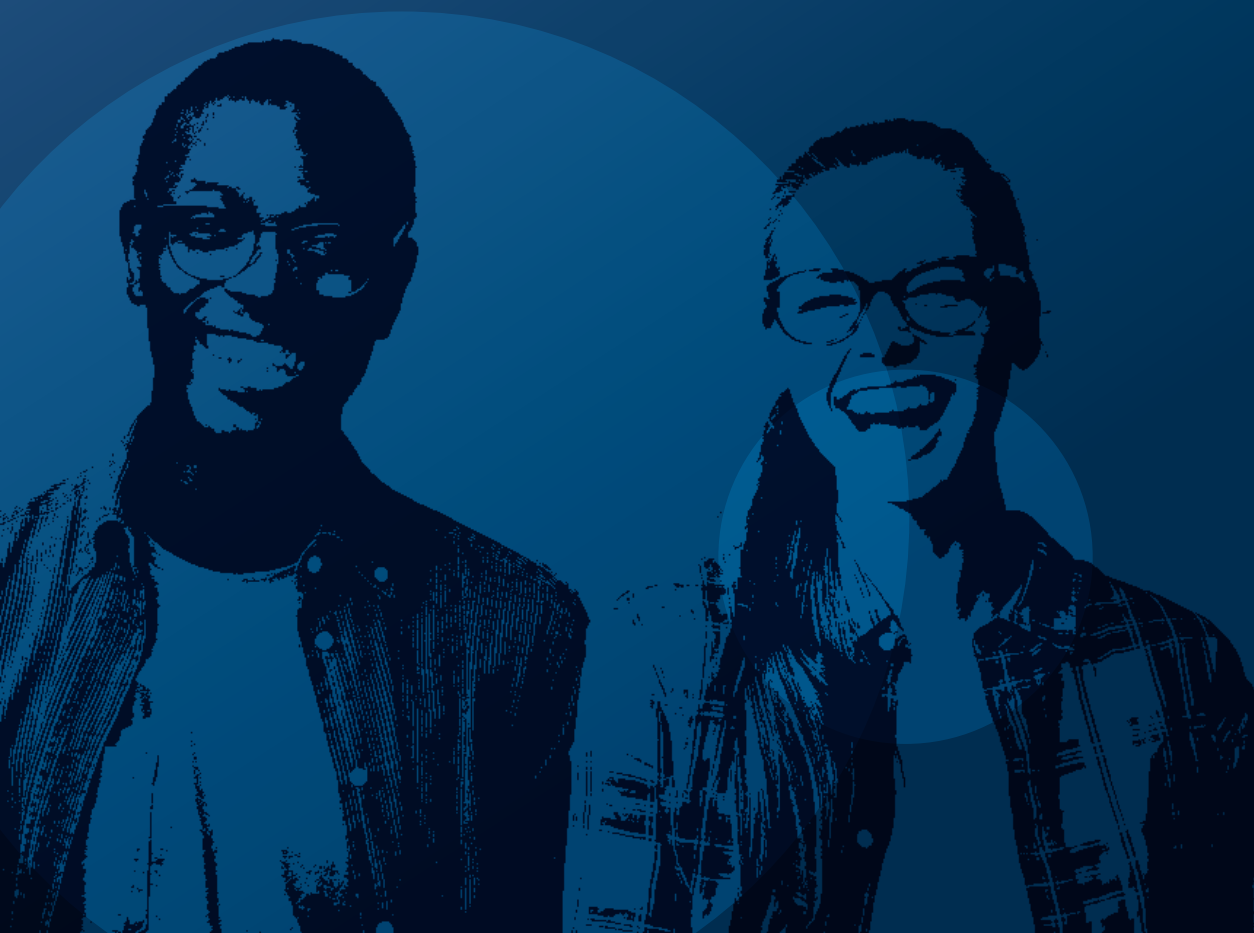
[www.kyra.org.uk](http://www.kyra.org.uk)

Central Methodist Church, St Saviourgate, York YO1 8NQ

01904 632332

07587 155678

# ANNEX B





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**Corporate Parenting Board****18 February 2020****Report of the Service Manager, Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team****Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team Update****Summary**

1. The attached report provides an update on the developments and work of the Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team, supporting strategies to support Good Safe Placements.

**Background**

2. The Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team has responsibility for supporting and training approved foster carers, matching placements and for commissioning placements.
3. The report clarifies the enhanced training and support offer and provides information about children in care and foster carer numbers.

**Consultation**

4. The report refers to the Placement Review carried out in 2018. City of York Foster Carers have been consulted through the process of the review.

**Council Plan**

5. This reports links to the Council Plan - a focus on frontline services - to ensure all residents, particularly the least advantaged, can access reliable services and community facilities.

**6. Implications**

- **Human Resources (HR)**

There are no HR implications as Foster Carers are not City of York Council employees.

- **Equalities** - None specific to this paper
- **Legal** - None specific to this paper
- **Crime and Disorder** - None specific to this paper
- **Information Technology (IT)** - None specific to this paper
- **Property** - None specific to this paper

### **Risk Management**

7. The implementation of the Placement Review may be viewed negatively by some carers

### **8. Recommendations**

Corporate Parenting Board are asked to note the paper.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

### **Contact Details**

**Author:** Gill Hall  
Service Manager  
Placement Finding  
Commissioning and  
Support Team  
01904 554388

**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**  
Amanda Hatton  
Corporate Director of Children, Education and  
Communities

**Report Approved:** X      **Date:** 19.01.20

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:** None

### **Annexes**

**Annex A:** Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team





**Corporate Parenting Board February 2020**  
**Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team – Gill Hall**

The Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team have responsibility for supporting and training approved foster carers. This report is to provide an update to the Children in Care Strategic Partnership

At the year-end 31.12.19 we had:

172 children and young people in care.

100 Foster carers (68 mainstream carers / 62 connected households)

In order to provide safe and secure placements for our children and young people in care, we have a duty to provide appropriate support and training to the carers who are approved by City of York council. Our offer and ongoing developments are as below.

Training

Increased learning, development and training opportunities have been made available for Foster Carers including, revised core training modules for all Foster Carers to cover the basics of fostering and the statutory requirements of the role, leading onto more specialised training for Foster Carers. Therapeutic Crisis Intervention was offered to all carers and a dedicated course is being offered to Connected Carers in 2020. In addition to this carers attended two courses of the NSPCC Reflective Fostering training and Mental Health First Aid training.

## Support

Support has been increased for Foster Carers through 2019, Foster Carers have been made aware of the York Foster Carer Association (YAFCA) and the support they provide. In addition the Fostering team provides a range of support groups for carers which includes Gateway Events, Meet the Team events and support groups for main stream and connected carers. There has also been an Improvement in links between Foster Carers and the City of York Virtual School

## Changes to fees received

The Placement review made changes to the fees paid to Foster Carers. The child allowance set by the government remained the same, as did the basic Foster Carer fee with changes to the levels, however, in addition we have now implemented:

- Increase the payment for multiple placements
- Carer illness payment
- Emergency placement payment
- Delegated authority payment (0-4 aged children by request, 5-10yrs - £750, 11-15yrs £850, 16-17yrs £900) which has now replaced additional allowance requests for children's leisure activities and hobbies.
- The payment of Long Service awards for carers
- The additional school holiday allowance has been reduced from £400 to £300
- Foster Carer mileage claims removed in relation to the first 200 miles per month.

There is now increased clarity around Foster Carer role and expectations, the names and descriptors of each Foster Carer level have changed to level 1 to 3 ( 3 being the equivalent of the Advanced level) and the tasks and responsibilities, experience and knowledge, expectations regarding training requirements are now clearly defined.

### Short Breaks Foster Carers

Short Break Foster Carers have continued to be paid at their existing level and have now aligned in terms of expectations regarding support and training with mainstream carers. The main difference is that the delegated authority payment will not apply to Short Break Carers as birth families will pay for hobbies and specific items.

### Connected Carers

Connected Carers are treated the same as mainstream Foster Carers as they are approved under the Fostering Regulations. They are paid the government set child allowance and the Foster Carer fee for the appropriate level. They will also be expected to participate in the training and support provided to all Foster Carers, in recognition of the distinct differences in their role, a separate Connected Carers support group is established and certain courses are being offered separately to Connected Carers. Connected Carers will be eligible for the carer illness payment, delegated authority payment and emergency payment if they take an additional emergency placement.

### Foster Carer Fees

Foster Carer fee amounts have remained the same and are now more closely linked to the expectations for different carer levels.

In April 2019 an annual increase of Foster Carer fees was not agreed, this was appealed by Foster Carers, and following an independent review it was agreed to pay a 2% uplift to level 1 and 2 carers in order to strengthen the recruitment strategy.

Gill Hall  
Service Manager  
PFCS team.

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**Corporate Parenting Board****18 February 2020**

Report of Team Manager, Assessing Permanent Carers Team

**Assessing Permanent Carers Team Update****Summary**

1. This report has been completed to provide an update to Members regarding Fostering Recruitment.

**Background**

2. In 2019 a report was submitted to Members which informed them of the work of the Assessing Permanent Carers team regarding Foster Carer recruitment, and identified aims for the coming year.

This report serves to update Members as to developments in the last year and will set out the aims and objectives for the year ahead.

**Consultation**

3. The Group Manager for the Achieved Permanence group has oversight of all developments relating to Foster Carer recruitment. York Association of Foster Carers are consulted and both the Assistant Director and Director of Children's Services have sign off with regard to significant projects.

**Options**

4. No options to consider.

**Analysis**

5. Not applicable.

## **Council Plan**

6. The Statement of Purpose for Fostering Services (2019) states '*City of York Council's Sufficiency Strategy ensures that there is an adequate supply of placements for children and young people across the range of resources. The main aim of our Fostering Service is to provide safe, high quality foster placements to meet the diverse needs of the children and young people who are unable to be cared for within their own families or where their families need a break*'.
7. The report enclosed forms part of the plan for York to approve Foster Carers to meet the needs of children and young people.

## **8. Implications**

- Financial - None
- Human Resources (HR) – None
- Equalities – None
- Legal – None
- Crime and Disorder - None
- Information Technology (IT) – None
- Property – None
- Other – None

## **Risk Management**

9. No implications or risks involved – for information only at this point.

## **Recommendations**

10. No recommendations set out in the report. It is for information only at this point.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

**Contact Details**

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**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

Sophie Wales  
Assistant Director of Children Services

**Report Approved:** X      **Date:** 19.01.20

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

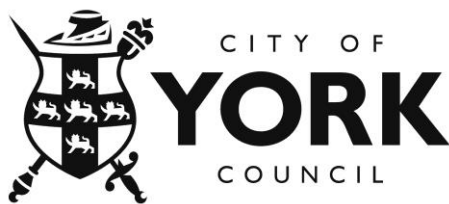
**Background Papers:** None

**Annexes**

Annex A - Assessing Permanent Carers Team

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## Corporate Parenting Board February 2020

### Assessing Permanent Carers Team

#### **Recruitment update**

The team consists of the Service Manager, one Senior Practitioner, and 4 full time Social Workers. Foster Carer recruitment sits alongside the assessments of mainstream foster carers and Connected / Kinship carers and those where a Special Guardianship is being considered for the young person.

#### **Strategy**

Throughout 2019 the service has maintained a regular 'drumbeat' about fostering in general. This has been achieved by providing a steady stream of information to the general public so that there is a continued awareness of what fostering is. The following techniques have been used

- Posters are on notice boards / rotating electronic screens in council buildings.
- A number of bus stops in the city feature the You Can Foster adverts. These posters are targeted at potential applicants who wish to provide a placement for teenagers.
- The Communications Team has arranged for press releases with photo ops from councillors / chief executives.
- The team has maintained a presence at local Jobs Fairs where people can ask questions about fostering for York.
- We held a stall at York Pride highlighting the need for LGBT Foster Carers.
- Regular posts on Facebook and Twitter about Fostering in York.

The posts on Facebook and Twitter have helped us reach a wide audience. We have been able to target these to demographics most likely to consider fostering so as to improve their effectiveness.

## Initiatives

In February 2019 we launched our *Foster Carer Ambassador* scheme by bringing two of our experienced Foster Carers on-board to help support the team in recruiting new carers. So far they have provided ideas and supported at recruitment fairs and at other events. We hope to further develop this in 2020.

March 2019 saw us roll out our *Show Me That I Matter home visit tool*. We want young people that have directly experienced the care system to be able to speak to those that are applying to become foster carers during the assessment process. This has been used on a number of occasions and has helped the assessor to prepare future carers for some of the realities of caring for young people and we also obtain the voice of young people in our assessments.

In June 2019 we developed a *Fostering Friendly Employers* scheme where we reach out to organisations and ask them to sign up and support their staff with time off for training / development if they wish to be foster carers for City of York council. We have rolled this out to members of staff at the council and aim to approach other employers in the city in 2020.

In July 2019 York were part of a *Faith in Fostering* pilot alongside our colleagues at Leeds and Kirklees Council and also Christian and Muslim fostering recruitment agencies. The aim of this was to encourage people of a faith background to consider fostering for their local authority. In October we followed this up by attending the York Interfaith Group open evening and talking about the importance of recruiting new Foster Carers.

## Facts / Figures

### **Enquiries**

In Quarter 1 2018 21 enquiries.

In Quarter 2 2018 32 enquiries.

In Quarter 3 2018 32 enquiries.

In Quarter 4 2018 23 enquiries.

In Quarter 1 2019 40 enquiries.

In Quarter 2 2019 25 enquiries.

In Quarter 3 2019 30 enquiries.

In Quarter 4 to date 30 enquiries.

### **Approvals / De-registrations**

2017 and 2018 saw an overall increase in fostering households but the majority of these were connected carers. This reflects the national picture.

In 2017 we de-registered 7 mainstream carers and approved 2.

In 2018 we de-registered 8 mainstream carers and approved 3.

In 2019 we de-registered 11 mainstream carers and approved 9.

2019 figures are a significant improvement on previous years and is attributed to the focus on a designated duty system resulting in quicker responses to foster carer enquiries and an expectation of full assessment within 8 months.

### **Future Recruitment direction**

In October 2019 we appointed two companies to lead on developing a Foster Carer recruitment campaign for 2020 and beyond. The Elephant Room have been appointed to develop a digital campaign and have consulted with our existing foster carers in order to appeal directly to the audience we are trying to reach.

This campaign will be delivered by George and Co with an expected roll out at the end of January 2020. It is expected that the number of 'high quality' enquiries that come through to the Fostering team will at least double (target of 180 in the first 6 months of the campaign and a further 120 in the following 6 months).

This would therefore lead to an increase in demand on the Fostering Team and discussion has been taking place as to how to meet this in the event that George and Co deliver as expected.

James Lee  
Service Manager – Assessing Permanent Carers Team

07/01/2020

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