

REPORT TO:	CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL Wednesday 8 January 2014
AGENDA ITEM NO:	7
SUBJECT:	REPORT ON EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PERFORMANCE OF CARE LEAVERS
LEAD OFFICER:	Paul Greenhalgh, Executive Director For Children, Families and Learning
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Tim Pollard, Deputy Leader (Communications) & Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Learning
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT: Children and Families Partnership Priority	
FINANCIAL IMPACT: None	
FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: None	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS: to note this report

2. Executive Summary

The Leaving Care Service is working towards achieving sustained improved performance in the education, employment and training of care leavers. This is a corporate responsibility and only a whole systems approach across the council and its partners will achieve best outcomes for care leavers. By initiating innovative partnership initiatives with Care2Work and the DWP, the Leaving Care Service will deliver improved education/ training / employment

opportunities for all care leavers based on their needs. The aim of the service is to increase the number of care leavers in EET to 95% from the current 89% overall but impacting particularly on improvements for indigenous care leavers.

3. Report on Care Leavers, Employment, Education and Training

The Corporate Parenting Committee has asked for regular updates on the EET performance of care leavers to be provided verbally. This update is being presented in report format by Paul Chadwick, Head of Service, LAC, and John Martin, Delivery Manager for the Leaving Care Service, to enable a more detailed communication of the current situation and of the next steps being progressed.

The LAC Leaving Care Service supports 784 care leavers aged between 16- 25 yrs.

16-17 Year olds

The information about the 16-17 year olds (UASC and Indigenous) shows that 92% (UASC) and 71% (Indigenous) are in education or training.

18-20 year olds - Indigenous

We have 149 indigenous young people currently in our service, out of which 119 are aged between 18-20 years. There are 65 (54%) indigenous care leavers between 18-20 yrs., in education, employment or training, of which 13 (9%) are in Higher Education, and 25 (21%) are in training or employment. (Indigenous report dated Oct 2013). Compared to the previous year, there is a dip in the numbers attending University or Higher Education (from 20 to 13). However, for the size of the indigenous care leaver population 13 young people on degree courses remains impressive.

18 – 20 year olds UASC

Out of the 449 UASC care leavers between the age group of 18-20, 333 (74%) are in education, employment and training. 257 in Further Education, 21 in employment and training. There are 26 (5%) in University/ Higher Education and around 30 (32%) care leavers over 21 years in University / Higher Education.

The total number of care leavers in FE has increased from 241 in 2012 to 322 in 2013. There is a decrease in the number of care leavers in employment or training from 62 in 2012 to 46 in 2013. The total number of care leavers in University or Higher Education is 69 which is a slight decrease from the previous year (71 to 69).

40 care leavers graduated in 2013 compared to the 24 in 2012.

Out of the 178 care leavers who are 18 years, 144 (80%) are in education and training programmes, and 6 are in employment or apprenticeship. (Virtual School report dated 12/08/13)

The information available from March 2013 onwards shows that there is a fluctuating but definitely an upwards trend in the EET performance amongst UASC care leavers (18-20 yr. olds) from March 2013 (288 care leavers 80%) to October 2013 (326 care leavers 89%). However, this does not apply to the indigenous care leavers, and there has been a downward trend to the current 54% EET as the table below demonstrates.

Month	UASC 18-20s EET		Indigenous 18-20s EET	
	No	%	No	%
March	288/356	81%		
April	286/354	81%		
May	270/374	72%		
June	288/356	81%		
July	389/344	84%		
August	276/340	81%	93/164	57%
September	297/353	84%	85/148	57%
October	326/364	90%	63/120	53%

It is evident that we need to focus much more on care leavers in the NEET category and support them into their preferred choice of education, training or employment to maximise their life chances. Bluetouch Consultancy was commissioned to undertake a small pilot project for the period July- Dec 2013, to work with indigenous care leavers with difficult and complex needs, and to support them into EET. Out of the 12 that were referred to this pilot scheme only 4 have accessed and remained in EET.

There has been a change of staff in the Leaving Care Service with new personal advisors joining the team following the restructure in April 2013. The new personal advisors have been provided with an induction programme that enabled them to understand the importance of effective planning to achieve best possible EET outcomes for all care leavers. Pathway Plan training is underway for personal advisors which will look at the skills and knowledge required to complete this task as well as the quality of the assessment and the plan. Since the reorganisation in May of this year, there have been changes to the management of the service with 3 of the 4 unit managers being new to the role, and the appointment of John Martin to the new role of delivery manager.

Positive steps to improve EET performance include partnership working with the IYSS NEET Team and the Go4it project team based at the Turnaround Centre. The Leaving Care Service is jointly working with Care2Work Scheme from Catch 22, to develop the best employability support to care leavers, and this includes working with practitioners and managers to identify the training / employment needs of care leavers, identify the diverse groups who require additional support, staff training, linking care leavers to the new Catch22 Route to Work programme, providing pre-apprenticeship and employability opportunities. The Leaving Care Service is also building strong partnerships with Drive Forward, who are working with care leavers to provide them with career opportunities, including NEET mothers and young people who are NRPF.

The Leaving Care Service is also pioneering an innovative arrangement with Job Centre Plus, with an Employment worker from the Job Centre/ DWP being based full time in the team to ensure that care leavers who are on benefits (JSA / ESA) are supported into employment and training opportunities. This should see a huge change in life opportunities for care leavers and will enhance their life outcomes.

Case Studies

The Corporate Parenting Committee has asked for data and information to include actual descriptions of the experiences of children and young people of our services to demonstrate the improvements made to their lives, and the following cases have been included as examples:

JD, aged 20

JD has been evicted from his supported accommodation where he thrashed the property and has been charged with criminal damage. He became intentionally homeless due to the above reason, and hence housing department would not consider his application for a landlord bond scheme or homelessness route. Once he became homeless, JD started engaging with different services like the alcohol and drugs team, Adult Mental health team, and started to make positive decisions and stopped taking alcohol and drugs. He went back to live with his father, and few months later he was supported to move into a studio flat by the Leaving Care Team. JD had also been in touch with the press, made complaints about his homelessness situation and did agree to take responsibility for any future tenancy.

MO, aged 20

MO is a University student, however struggling with her finances. She has been informing her personal advisor that she might stop the course due to the financial problems. Her personal advisor is now doing a financial assessment and working with her to develop a budget plan taking her income and expenditure into account and exploring any other resources to help MO. Her personal advisor also will be looking at cheaper accommodation options with the University Students Welfare Officer.

AS, aged 20

YP is working as the main chef in a restaurant in Swindon. His photo was in the local papers along with the team from his restaurant, during the launch of the restaurant. He is also planning to do part time studies in Business Management as he wants to run his own business in future. His personal advisor visits him in Swindon and supports him with his ambition.

HM, aged 18

HM is living with his cousins in Bristol and attends University there. His personal advisor supported him with his move from his foster placement in London to Bristol and visits him at his cousin's place and provides him with support and advice and follows through his pathway plan. HM also has an

advocate from Refugee Council, with whom the personal advisor keeps in touch with.

IG aged 19

IG had a record of poor engagement and procrastination. In the past six months, workers engaged him on a qualified hospitality employability course with Lifetime Training. He successfully completed the course, his first ever achievement, and has passed the application stage for four jobs but failed at interview stage. To reinforce his CV, IG has undertaken some voluntary work with LNK painting and decorating. With IG's improved application, Workers awarded IG a free gym membership with Fusion. For the past four months, IG has attended gym 2/3 times per week. His health and engagement has proved immeasurably.

I feel more positive about my future and feel closer to getting employment. My gym membership has improved my fitness and commitment.
IG

CIEP first worked with him on an intensive job finding/interview skills course that IG attended. This has led to a number of interviews for apprenticeships and jobs in the restaurant sector which the Pilot set up for him - Ivan is interested in pursuing a career in restaurant sector. As yet IG has been unsuccessful with the interviews he has attended but he has received some valuable feedback from them
Dan McCulloch, Personal Advisor

DM aged 19

DM had proved notoriously difficult to engage and was continually provocative in his dealings with LAC. He became a father in August and has had to adjust to parenthood quickly, undertaking many of the responsibilities with a sick child. Despite all these pressures DM enrolled at Croydon College Level 2 Mechanics. Even this proved fractious, as the Course was oversubscribed. Workers were able to placate DM and secure a place. The pressure of parenthood and providing for his family has meant DM's attendance at College has been erratic, particularly early in the term (see below) but we have remained in regular contact with the College to support DM.

DM's attendance is currently at 57%. However, this figure is the result of his poor initial attendance. Currently he is attending very well and he is up to date with his course work. He has consistently applied himself in all set knowledge practical assessments to date.
Brian Higgins (Croydon College Tutor)

SR aged 20

SR had been in custody, had only just recently moved into the Borough and was having trouble settling feeling his personal safety at risk. We were able to enrol him at Croydon College, much to his surprise, by supporting him through the application process, and being open about his criminality. To reinforce this

success, SR was granted a Fusion gym membership and this has greatly improved his confidence and well-being having attended 3/4 times per week at Thornton Heath Leisure Centre. SR has had an outstanding charge committed before his move to the borough hanging over him and this has hampered his progress. Finance and landlord issues are recurring problems but overall SR shows encouraging progress.

DW aged 19

DW was living in Lambeth post custody. His lifestyle was chaotic and money issues were always a problem. Through our Job Centre Plus contacts we were able to facilitate a smooth process with his JSA application and arrange a potential building course qualification. Unfortunately, DW's placement broke down and he has recently been resettled in Thornton Heath. Again, we have arranged the transfer of his JSA application and are liaising closely with his Job Centre Advisor.

4. **COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER:**
None
5. **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT:** None
6. **EQUALITIES IMPACT:** None
7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:** None
8. **CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT:** None

CONTACT OFFICER: John Martin, Delivery Manager for the Leaving Care Service
Ext 13437

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: