

<b>Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	
<b>Thursday 23 May 2019 at 10.00 am</b>	
<b>Cabinet Suite - Shire Hall, Gloucester</b>	
<b>Care Leavers Offer</b>	
<b>Author – Mark Bone 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019</b>	

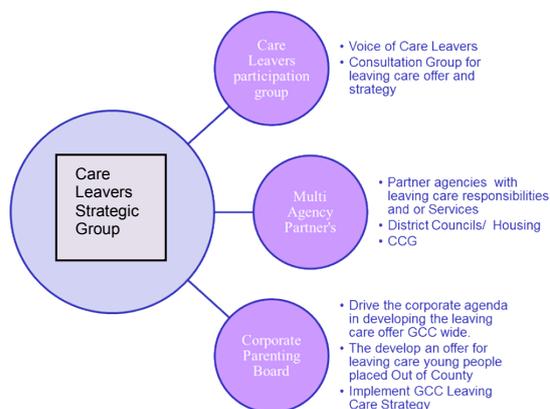
## Background

Through the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Government introduced the requirement for local authorities to publish a 'Care Leaver Offer' which outlines the services for care leavers available within the local authority area.

The Act received Royal Assent, becoming law on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The local authority was required to publish its local offer by December 2018. The local offer should provide information about all the services and support that is available to care leavers, including information about their statutory entitlements as well as any discretionary support a local authority chooses to provide. Services relating to the following should be covered:

- Health and well-being
- Relationships
- Education and training
- Employment
- Accommodation
- Participation in society

A care leaver's strategic group was formed to oversee the development and publicise Gloucestershire's local offer for care leavers.



## Current Position

Gloucestershire's local offer for care leavers was published and launched at a care leaver's celebration event in October 2018 during care leaver's week. The development of the offer was supported by:

- Care leavers participation group
- Care experienced ambassadors
- Partners from District Councils, Housing services and Health services.
- Children's commissioning services
- Corporate Parenting Board
- Cabinet champion for care leavers
- Staff and managers from Gloucestershire Leaving Care Service (11+ Service)
- National Young People's Benchmarking Forum hosted in Cheltenham by Gloucestershire ambassadors

Supporting information to help inform the local offer was accessed from the following:

- BrightSpots survey completed in March 2018, 30% of Gloucestershire care leavers completed the survey
- 'Care leavers views on their transition to adulthood' a rapid review of around 80 studies that explored care leavers experiences and feelings conducted by Bristol University and Coram Voice.

The local offer is accessible via GCC website <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-young-people-and-families/care-leavers-offer-2018/> and is now available in 5 other languages to reflect our cohort of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). There is also an easy to read care leavers offer summary available. We have also published copies of the local offer to distribute to care leavers and have these accessible in all of our offices.

Following the publication of Gloucestershire's local offer the following services have now been added to the offer:

- Financially supporting care leavers who take up apprenticeships to ensure they receive the equivalent of the minimum wage linked to their age. (This has now been completed and implemented in December 2018)
- Council Tax Exemption, work with the six district councils to offer care leavers up to the age of 21 exemptions from council tax. (This has been completed and implemented in April 2019)

Work has continued with young people and partner agencies to develop the local offer currently the following is being developed:

- Leisure offer work continues to agree with six district councils and leisure providers what offer we can give to care leavers.

- Housing offer, work to look at preventing need for homeless applications, alternatives to the use of Bed & Breakfast, better access to independent accommodation and privately rented accommodation.
- Development of a mentoring scheme, to enhance current Peer Mentoring project and develop an offer where care leavers can be matched with a range of mentors including education mentors and business mentors.