

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY REPORT

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

19 September 2022

Scrutiny Board Report – Transition to Adulthood

Paula Jemson, Head of Service for Looked After Children and Corporate Parenting

Summary

Attached report to be presented to Scrutiny Board detailing services provided to looked after children and care leavers to support their transition to adulthood.

Introduction

Please see attached report.

Evidence / Discussion

Please see attached report

Conclusions

Please see attached report

Scrutiny Board

Transitions to Adulthood - Pathways

September 2022



Owner – Rachel Farnham, Middlesbrough Council, Director of Children’s Social Care

Author – Paula Jemson, Head of Service for Looked After Children and Corporate Parenting

Pathways Care Leaving Service supports care leavers so that they can live successful independent lives (This includes young people with disabilities). A care leaver is a young person who has been in the care of the local authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday

Personal Advisor

Section 3 Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires local authorities to provide personal advisors to care leavers up until the age of 25. Our Personal Advisors are here to help our care experienced young people to understand everything they need to positively transition to adulthood. Our team strive to give our young people the best start to adult life and show Middlesbrough children that they matter.

A Personal Advisor's role is to:

- provide advice (including practical advice) and support to the young person;
- participate in reviews of the young person's case;
- liaise with the responsible authority in the implementation of the pathway plan;
- co-ordinate the provision of services and take reasonable steps to ensure the young person makes use of such services;
- remain informed about the young person's progress and wellbeing;
- keep full, accurate and up to date records of contacts with the young person and services provided;
- provide information about financial capability-how to manage day to day finances;
- provide housing options available to the care leaver;
- support in finding further education, employment or training;
- keep in touch with the young person.

Needs Assessments and Pathway Plans

Every eligible care leaver has a right to a Needs assessment. This is completed by the social worker when the child is 16 years old. This assessment considers the young person's independent living skills and ability to manage their own finances. The aim of the needs assessment is to ensure that they leave care at a time that is right for them.

Relevant children have a Pathway Plan, which will set out the support that will be provided to the care leaver once they have left care.

This must be based on the Needs Assessment carried out.

The Pathway Plan should include:

- the nature of and level of contact and personal support to be provided;
- the young person's health needs and how these should be met;
- arrangements to support the young person in further education or employment;
- arrangements to support the young person in sustaining and developing family relationships;
- arrangements to ensure the young person is properly equipped for taking greater responsibility towards their independence;
- an assessment of the young person's financial needs and capacity and any financial assistance provided;
- arrangements to ensure the young person is living in suitable accommodation; and
- any 'Staying Put' arrangements.

Local Offer for Middlesbrough Care Leavers

The Local Offer for Care Leavers in Middlesbrough is designed to tell our care experienced young people about their entitlement and the support available to them to help them in every area of their adult life.

The Local Offer was created in October 2020 following consultation with young people and is in the process of being reviewed and updated to ensure that it is relevant to the needs of our young people.

Areas of Support Considered within the Middlesbrough Care Leaver Offer

- **Relationships** – we understand that feeling supported and having good healthy relationships is important to every person
- **Education and Training** – we want to see all of our young people thriving and learning new skills and knowledge
- **Employment** – Working is a great way to earn money, increase confidence and help young people get to where they want to be in their adult life
- **Emotional Wellbeing** – We recognise that supporting young people to take care of their emotional wellbeing is very important. Emotional health is as important as physical health.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – Being healthy is important
- **Accommodation** – We work to ensure that all of our young people are safe and secure in accommodation appropriate to their level of need.
- **Finances** – Pathways provide financial support and advice to help young people prepare for their transition to adulthood and independence
- **Participation** – We work to ensure that young people are active members of society and to have all the chances in life that other young people have.

Independence

- Pathway Plans for each care leaver setting out their needs, views, goals and what support they will receive
- Access to financial support depending on needs
- Computer and internet access
- Support to open a bank account
- Support to be provided with a form of ID – passport, birth certificate and driving license
- Access to money management and support to develop budgeting skills
- Personal allowance
- Financial assistance for university students
- Invites to social groups
- A Care Leavers forum to provide an arena for your views to support service development

Employment, Education and Training

- NEET panel
- Work Readiness Support
- Guaranteed interview for jobs and apprenticeships
- Support to: access bursaries, purchase college equipment, produce CVs, purchase clothing for interviews
- Support to understand rights and entitlements
- Work experience opportunities
- Additional financial support to ensure that there is a financial benefit to working
- Support to travel to interviews
- Support to attend local job fairs, college open days
- Work with Adult Care Social Worker to access Services for young people with Disabilities

Health

- A dedicated worker who can offer additional support regarding emotional wellbeing within Pathways
- Support with referrals to other agencies
- Support to attend appointments and speak to the doctor
- Free access to Middlesbrough leisure services
- A health passport with key information about young people's health
- C cards
- Support to register at a doctor, dentist and optician
- Advice and guidance regarding LGBT and signposting to support services
- Work with allocated Adult Care Social Worker or Health Lead Professional if young adult with disabilities

Housing

- Staying put allows young people to stay with foster carers post 18
- Access to Supported Lodgings provisions
- Young people's housing panels supporting access to multiple housing options
- Council tax exemption up to the age of 21
- Setting up home allowances
- Support with removal costs
- An in-house unregulated supported accommodation provision for children over the age of 16 with self-contained flats (for 9 young people) – Daniel Court
- A regulated in-house care provision for children over the age of 16 to gradually transition them to an independent flat where they will be supported to be responsible for the tenancy and live with floating support at a pace that meets their needs - Rosecroft

Finances

- A local Council tax exemption up to the age of 25 years
- Setting home allowance of up to £2000 to support young people to purchase necessary furniture and equipment in their own home
- Support with removal costs
- Personal allowances of £66.66 per week for children over the age of 16 years living in supported accommodation – this is in lieu of benefit entitlement
- Financial assistance for university students , higher education bursary including a tuition free loan and maintenance loan from student finance departments. Extra bursary provided by the LA of £X, three times a year.
- Weekly allowance of £66.66 for university students living away from home
- Support to purchase college equipment
- Children in residential and supported accommodation are engaged in an independence programme including budgeting
- PA's will offer 1:1 budgeting advice
- Recent access to £40 housing support grant to purchase groceries