

Date: Friday 9 February 2024 at 10.00 am

Venue: Jim Cooke Conference Suite, Stockton Central Library, Stockton on Tees,
TS18 1TU

Cllr Lisa Evans (Chair)
Cllr Carol Clark (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Pauline Beall
Cllr Mick Moore
Cllr Sally Ann Watson

Cllr Alex Griffiths
Cllr Hilary Vickers

AGENDA

11 Employability Pledge for Care Experienced Young (Pages 7 - 10)
People Aged 16-25

Members of the Public - Rights to Attend Meeting

With the exception of any item identified above as containing exempt or confidential information under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A(4), members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and/or have access to the agenda papers.

Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting, including the opportunities available for any member of the public to speak at the meeting; or for details of access to the meeting for disabled people, please

Contact: Scrutiny Support Officer Rachel Harrison on email rachel.harrison@stockton.gov.uk

KEY - Declarable interests are:-

- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's)
- Other Registerable Interests (ORI's)
- Non Registerable Interests (NRI's)

Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance



Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

- a) any unpaid directorships
- b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- c) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

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AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

9 February 2024

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

EMPLOYABILITY PLEDGE FOR CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16-25

SUMMARY

Leaving home is a challenge time for everyone, but young people leaving care often do so without the help, support and guidance of a loving family. As a Corporate Parent the Council's responsibility extends beyond in care, to all care experienced young people aged 16-25, to ensure they receive the help and support so they do not enter adulthood alone and in preparing the young person for life and ultimately thrive with independent living.

Through the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Government introduced the requirement for local authorities to publish a 'Care Leaver Offer', which outlines services which may assist care leavers in, or in preparing for, adulthood and independent living include services relating to health and well-being, relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation, and participation in society.

As the local authority, we have a statutory requirement to provide support with finding accommodation and with any costs of participating in education, training, and employment. We want to go beyond our statutory duty, offer over and above to help ensure our care experienced young people are better prepared and supported to live independently and achieve financial stability.

The Council have already developed a new scheme "No Limits: The Giving Of ..." to enable all our employees to play a role to ensure we are the best 'corporate parent' we can be and support children in our care or leaving our care to take part in the same activities and experiences that we would expect for our own children.

To help prepare and support care experienced young people into employment, the Council have committed to the following additional local offer for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council care experienced young people aged 16-25.

- Employability support - 1:2:1 discussion with Employment & Training Hub
- Up to 10 paid Work Placements within the Council: 1 week – 12 months duration
- Priority access to Council Apprenticeship Vacancies
- Guaranteed interview for Council Job Vacancies when they meet the essential criteria.

This support will be facilitated by the assigned Personal Advisors working in partnership with the Employment & Training Hub and the Learning & Development Team within Human Resources.

It is hoped that our pledge can be promoted wider to partners / local businesses who can be encouraged to develop their own specific offer and sign up to the national Care Leaver Covenant <https://mycovenant.org.uk/about/>

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Note the Council's Employability Pledge commitment to support care experienced young people aged 16-25 in the transition to living independently
2. For a formal signing of the Employability Pledge to take place at the Council Meeting on 20th March 2024.

DETAIL

1. Entering employment can be a daunting experience. Many young people who have a secure home environment have role models to support them in their transition from education to employment, but our care experienced young people do not always have the benefit of this.
2. The Council's Employability Pledge looks to help bridge the gap to help care experienced young people with employability support, work experience opportunities and longer-term employment prospects.
3. The aims of the Employability Pledge is to ensure our care experienced young people:
 - are better prepared and supported to live independently.
 - have improved access to employment, education and training.
 - experience stability in their lives and feel safe and secure.
 - achieve financial stability and independence.
4. The Council have pledged to offer the following Employability support (over and above our statutory responsibilities) to help ensure our Care Experienced Young People are better prepared and supported to live independently and achieve financial stability.

4.1 **Employability Skills Support** from the Employment & Training Hub

To assist the young person to become "work ready". Support with CV writing, Interview skills, and Job searches. Provide access to skills training – such as confidence building, communications skills and workplace behaviours. Advise on appropriate pathways into employment.

4.2 **Paid Work Experience Placements** within the Council

The Council will provide paid (national minimum wage for age) work placements for care experienced young people. The placement will be flexible in terms of hours of work (2-7.5 hours per day) and duration (1 week – 12months) to support the individual needs / circumstances. This could include:

- Short term placements (1 - 8weeks): to provide work experience to young people in education during holidays or to those who are work ready a short period of work experience to boost their CV before moving into employment.
- Medium term placements (2-6months): for those who require a longer work placement to develop work skills and determine career aspirations of the young person prior to an apprenticeship / employment
- Long term placement (6-12months): to support University 'sandwich' degree students requiring a one-year placement within a relevant industry or provide longer term support prior to an apprenticeship / employment.

It is envisaged that the Council would be able to accommodate up to 10 placements across Council services at any one point in time. Examples of work experience placements include: Adults & Children's Social Care work, Libraries, Administration, ICT and Care for your Area.

4.3 Priority access to the Council's Apprenticeship Vacancies

Apprenticeship vacancies will be made available for Care Experienced Young People to apply for in the first instance, and be interviewed for the vacancy (where they meet the essential criteria) before going out to external advert.

4.4 Guaranteed interview for any council job vacancy.

This offer has been in place for some time. The young person is required to make a self-declaration on the application form and meet the essential criteria for the role.

5. We are please to report that we have already placed one young person on an 8 month paid work experience placement with our HV&E service. Our Young Person is interested in a career in trade, and this opportunity will give them experience of a variety of trades to help determine where they wish to focus their career. Additional support will also be made available to assist with applying for an appropriate apprenticeship.
6. **Promotional Event:** We will be holding an event for our Young People called "Love your Future" on Wednesday 14th February 2024 at the No Limits Hub to promote the Employability Pledge and our work placement opportunities. The Employment & Training Hub will be present to discuss the Employability Support, and will have a number of work placement examples available to discuss and offer our young people.
7. **Care Leavers Covenant:** In July 2016, the Government published a major policy document "Keep on Caring" to support young people from care to independence. A key commitment in the paper is a strategic pledge to introduce a Care Leaver Covenant which organisations can commit to - <https://mycovenant.org.uk/>. Each organisation that commits to the Care Leaver Covenant outlines its specific "offer" setting out what support it is prepared to provide. The Council will sign up outlining our Employability Pledge.
8. Through our networks and partnerships, we also wish to encourage other organisations to pledge their own employability offer, and sign up to the National Care Leaver Covenant.
9. Signing up to the Employability Pledge / Care Leavers Covenant at Full Council: We would like the Council to formally sign up to the Care Experienced Young People's Employability Pledge / Care Leavers Covenant at the Council Meeting on 20th March 2024. If the board are in agreement arrangements will be made to sign up to the Pledge at this event

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. The financial costs of the work placements will be meet from the Children's transformation fund as identified within the MTFP report to cabinet in December 2023.

£75,000 funding has been set aside for 2024-25 to cover the costs of the work placements within the Council with the ability to increase to £100,000 should the demand require. This funding will be kept under review throughout the financial year.

11. The cost of any apprenticeships is already covered through existing Service Area budgets and the apprenticeship salary support of 50% accounted for within the MTFP.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12. There are no employment law implications associated with offering our Young People paid work experience or priority access to apprenticeship opportunities

RISK ASSESSMENT

13. The Employability Pledge is deemed as Low Risk

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

14. We envisage a positive impact for our Young People as a result of this Employability offer.

COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

15. Supporting our Care Experienced Young People is a Council priority.
16. Through the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Government introduced the requirement for local authorities to publish a 'Care Leaver Offer', which outlines services which may assist care leavers in, or in preparing for, adulthood and independent living include services relating to health and well-being, relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation, and participation in society.
17. As the local authority, we have a statutory requirement to provide support with finding accommodation and with any costs of participating in education, training, and employment. We want to go beyond our statutory duty, offer over and above to help ensure our care experienced young people are better prepared and supported to live independently and achieve financial stability.

CONSULTATION, INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

18. N/A

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