

Notice of Meeting

Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Mrs Birch (Chairman),
Councillor Brossard (Vice-Chairman),
Councillors Ms Gaw, Gbadebo, Mrs Hamilton, Ms Hayes, Ms Merry,
Skinner and Temperton

Monday 14 June 2021, 6.00 - 7.00 pm
via Zoom



Agenda

Item	Description	Page
1.	Update on recommendations	1 - 4
	Cllr Dr Gareth Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning and officers from the People Directorate will provide an update on implementation of the recommendations. Feedback is provided in the attachment.	

Sound recording, photographing, filming and use of social media is permitted. Please contact louise.connelly@bracknell-forest.gov.uk so that any special arrangements can be made.

Published: 10 June 2021

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Appendix A: Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel: Care Leavers

	Recommendation as agreed by Executive on DATE	Update provided	Chair observations / Panel observations
1	<p>Review the Housing Allocation Policy 2015 to include consideration of priority being awarded to care leavers where the authority has a Corporate Parenting role, particularly those who opt to 'stay put' with their foster family.</p> <p>Timescale identified: To be reviewed by 01/02/2021</p>	<p>The Council's Housing Allocation Policy sets out who is awarded priority on the 'My Choice' Housing Register. In 2020 the Policy was updated to reflect the latest homelessness legislation and duties brought in by the Homelessness Reduction Act.</p> <p>A full review of the Allocations Policy is underway. This is a significant undertaking and will include consideration of the needs or, and priority awarded, to a number of specific groups, including Care Leavers and will require a detailed public consultation which will inevitably take some time to complete.</p> <p>For new build housing developments, in negotiating local lettings policies for affordable housing, the Council is consistently seeking agreement to letting a quota of properties to care leavers to secure a stream of suitable move-on accommodation.</p>	
2	<p>Review life skills and money management information to ensure consistency of provision: information available on the Local Offer Care Leavers website and consider frequency of visits to prepare care leavers for independence.</p> <p>Timescale identified:</p>	<p>The life skills booklet has been relaunched and finance information has now been added to the Local Offer Care Leavers Website https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-and-family-services/fostering-adoption-and-looked-after-children/care-leavers/finances</p> <p>This ensures there is a consistency in terms of the offer for care leavers. The line</p>	

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	To be reviewed 01/12/2021	management for all Children Looked After aged 17.5 years has now moved to the Assistant Team Manager for Leaving Care to help prepare them for adulthood. This means that visits are increased as they receive visits from their social worker as well as their personal advisor.	
3	Revise the Staying Put Policy using plain English; develop an easy-read version with foster carers and care leavers and consider extending the three-month time limit when a care leaver can return to their foster family.	The policy for Staying Put is now accessed via Tri-X. This means the policy is not only more accessible to all but is now consistent with how most other Local Authorities. There is also guidance through the Fostering Network and Coram BAAF to help with understanding. The Assistant Team Manager for Leaving Care has developed and delivered two training sessions for foster carers around Staying Put and these will continue to be part of the foster carers training programme.	
	Timescale identified: To be reviewed by 01/12/2020 with any identified changes to policy to be implemented by 01/02/2021)	The limit in terms of returning to foster family is very much a case by case discussion and we would also focus on what is best for the care leavers in terms of returning.	
4	Review the joint protocol between Children's Social Care (CSC) and Housing Team for assessing and meeting the needs of homeless young people.	Practice and policy have been reviewed and a new joint protocol drafted which has been shared with relevant teams in both Children's and Housing Services. Internal practice and joint working in assessing and meeting the needs of homeless 16/17 year olds is strong.	
	Timescale identified: To be reviewed any policy changes implemented within agreed timeframes with the housing team, no later than 01/02/2021.	Housing and Welfare Services have also instigated a weekly drop-in for Children's Services staff (across the front door, social	

		care and early help) to consult on cases, which facilitates closer working. Prior to the onset of the pandemic, Housing also attended the MASH once a week and this will resume when services are operating normally again.	
5	Enable care leavers' achievements to be acknowledged and give them the opportunity to participate by replicating the offer to Children Looked After.	We are in the process of planning for an annual awards ceremony for Care Leavers and also extending the participation offer to care leavers.	
	Timescale identified: To be reviewed by 01/12/2021.	The leaving care team are now using Braccan Walk as a location for Care Leavers to walk in to meet with PA's as well as a PA being based with Rainforest Walk. This is a means of proactively seeking out to support Care Leavers as opposed to them having to come to us for help and support.	

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