

Public Document Pack



**Service Director – Legal, Governance and
Commissioning**

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Friday 3 November 2017

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Corporate Parenting Board

The **Corporate Parenting Board** will meet in the **Drop in Centre, Old Registrars Building, High Street, Huddersfield** at **10.00 am on Monday 13 November 2017**.

The items which will be discussed are described in the agenda and there are reports attached which give more details.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Muscroft', on a light-colored background.

Julie Muscroft

Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning

Kirklees Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair/Clerk of their intentions prior to the meeting.

The Corporate Parenting Board members are:-

Member

Councillor Erin Hill (Chair)

Councillor Karen Allison

Councillor Andrew

Marchington

Councillor Fazila Loonat

Councillor Gemma Wilson

Jo-Anne Sanders

Martin Green

Janet Tolley

Julie Mepham

Scott Deacon

Kerrie Scraton

Tom Brailsford

Elaine McShane

Interim Service Director for Early Help and Learning

Deputy Assistant Director

Virtual School Headteacher

Head of Corporate Parenting

Participation Officer, Commissioning and Health

Partnerships

Interim Senior Manager - Safeguarding Assurance

Head of Joint Commissioning

Head of Children's Social Work - Leeds

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Introductions and Apologies

The Chair will welcome everyone to the meeting and announce any apologies received.

2: Minutes of previous meeting

1 - 6

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 September 2017.

3: Interests

7 - 8

The Board Members will be asked to say if there are any items on the Agenda in which they have disclosable pecuniary interests, which would prevent them from participating in any discussion of the items or participating in any vote upon the items, or any other interest.

4: Admission of the Public

Most debates take place in public. This only changes when there is a need to consider certain issues, for instance, commercially sensitive information or details concerning an individual. You will be told at this point whether there are any items on the Agenda which are to be discussed in private.

5: Deputations/Petitions

The Board will receive any petitions and hear any deputations from members of the public. A deputation is where up to five people can attend the meeting and make a presentation on some particular issue of concern. A member of the public can also hand in a petition at the meeting but that petition should relate to something on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10 (2), Members of the Public should provide at least 24 hours' notice of presenting a deputation.

6: Public Question Time

The Board will hear any questions from the general public.

7: Drop-in Centre Tour

The Board will take a tour of the new drop-in Centre.

Contact: Julie Mepham, Head of Corporate Parenting

8: Ofsted update

The Board will receive an update following the most recent visit of Ofsted.

Contact: Elaine McShane, Head of Children's Social Work

9: Council Tax Exemption for Care Leavers

9 - 18

The Board will consider a report that consideration be given to a Council Tax exemption for all care leavers up to the age of 25 – extending and clarifying the current position.

Contact: Belinda Cashman, Interim Service Manager Leaving Care Service

10: Peer Mentoring Delivery

19 - 22

The Board will consider a report relating to the peer mentoring scheme for care leavers.

Contact: Belinda Cashman, Interim Service Manager Leaving Care Service

11: Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan

The Panel will receive an updated agenda plan at the meeting.

Contact: Alaina McGlade, Governance & Democratic Engagement Officer

12: Dates of Future Meetings

To note future meeting dates of the Board:

- Monday 22 January 2018, 10am
 - Monday 12 March 2018, 10am
 - Monday 30 April 2018, 10am
-

13: Exclusion of the Public

To resolve that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

14: Performance Report

23 - 88

The Board will consider a report that outlines performance statistics for the Corporate Parenting Service.

Contact: Sue Grigg, Directorate Performance Lead, Children's Services, and Public Health

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Contact Officer: Alaina McGlade

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Monday 18th September 2017

Present: Councillor Karen Allison (Chair)
Councillor Fazila Fadia
Councillor Gemma Wilson
Elaine McShane, Head of Children's Social Work
Janet Tolley, Virtual School Headteacher
Kerrie Scraton, Interim Senior Manager – Safeguarding Assurance
Scott Deacon, Participation Officer

Apologies: Councillor Erin Hill (Chair)
Councillor Andrew Marchington
Jo-Anne Sanders, Interim Service Director for Early Help and Learning
Julie Mepham, Head of Corporate Parenting

In Attendance: Cllr Masood Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Alaina McGlade, Governance & Democratic Engagement Officer

1 Appointment of Chair

In the absence of Councillor Erin Hill, the Board appointed Councillor Karen Allison as Chair for this meeting only.

2 Introductions and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Erin Hill and Andrew Marchington, Jo-Anne Sanders, Interim Service Director for Early Help and Learning and Julie Mepham, Head of Corporate Parenting.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 17 July 2017 be approved as a correct record.

4 Interests

There were no interests declared.

5 Admission of the Public

The Panel considered the question of the admission of the public and determined that all items would be considered in public.

6 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

7 Public Question Time

No questions were received.

8 Annual Report

The Board considered a draft version of the 2016-17 Corporate Parenting Annual Report which provided an overview of the the service had achieved over the year and outlined the priorities for the 2017-18 year.

They were advised that the priorities for the forthcoming year were:

- Education
- Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers - Sufficiency
- Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum
- Drop in Centre – No.11

The Board was advised that sufficiency was a key focus for the service and that it was important that children were placed through choice rather than availability. It was explained that there would also be review of external placements to consider the suitability of the placement and whether the outcomes relevant to the particular child are being met. It was further explained that the stability index would be a key focus when looking at improving sufficiency and that the impact upon educational outcomes would also be considered when considering future improvements.

The Board recognised the importance of sufficiency and the impact reduced stability can have on the outcomes for children. The Board highlighted that this is a key consideration for the Board and requested that a specific meeting of the Board be arranged to solely focus on the way in which the stability index is to be applied within of Corporate Parenting service.

The Board recognised the importance of the new drop in centre and the role this would play in broadening relationships with Looked After Children and Care Leavers. The Board requested that specific quotes from young people should be included within the report to incorporate the voice of the child.

RESOLVED - That the Board approved the format of the Annual Report subject to the inclusion of the following:

1. a clear explanation of the outcomes required to be achieved by the service over the next 12 months and how these will be measured;

2. inclusion of the Young People's voice within the report by way of specific narrative being included under relevant headings.

9 Missing Statistics Progress Report

The Board was presented with a report that updated the Panel on progress made in relation to the pilot on "Missing" figures in Kirklees.

It was explained that Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing were both features of the defined plan that was in place to meet the recommendations identified in the Improvement Plan. It was advised that work was continuing to take place to identify the future vision for the team.

Cllr Ahmed explained that this issue had previously been considered by the CSE and Safeguarding Member Panel. It was explained that Missing episodes increased the vulnerability of young people and that it was important to keep an oversight of any patterns that may emerge. The Board acknowledged that LAC were tracked well through their involvement with Social Services but questioned whether the same interaction was available to children outside of the care system.

The Board also noted the potential for duplication of information sharing across the governance structures within Children's Services and requested that options be brought back to the Board to improve cohesion and communication between the structures.

RESOLVED - That:

1. the Board recommends the CSE and Safeguarding Member Panel to request detailed statistics on Missing figures for both children in care and children not currently known to the care system so that the Panel can be assured that the correct recording procedures are in place to ensure the appropriate support packages are provided;
2. the Board requests officers to consider the governance structure across children's services and identify options to effectively coordinate information and knowledge between the boards.

10 Performance Report

The Board considered a report providing an overview of all the agreed indicators that monitor performance relevant to the Corporate Parenting Board.

The current issues were highlighted as being:

- a slight rise in residential placements;
- children entering care by placement outside of the Local Authority boundary;
- placement type and provider: placed for Adoption;
- children subject to a care order and placed at home;
- duration of stay at home under a care order;
- children who cease to be looked after;
- child participation in reviews;

Corporate Parenting Board - 18 September 2017

- Looked After Children visits within statutory timescale – visited in last six weeks;
- Missing Looked After Children – having more than one Missing episode per month;
- attainment of Looked After Children Key Stage 2 - Reading;
- attendance and persistent absence;
- pupils not in full time educational provision with reasons;
- number of young people who have been looked after continually for 12 months or more, aged between 10 and 17, who have offended and received a substantive outcome;
- Care Leavers in employment, education and training;
- number of Care Leavers with a pathway plan;
- number of children placed in their adoptive placements;
- initial contacts – foster carers;
- fostering approvals;
- foster placements split – family and friends placements and independent fostering agency placements;
- caseload.

The improvements were highlighted as being:

- children entering care - placement 20 miles or more from home;
- children in care – numbers in care per 10,000 of age 0-17;
- children who cease to be looked after by reason – positive outcome and other outcome;
- placement stability within year – Looked After Children with three or more placement moves;
- placement stability within 2 years;
- placement movement reasons;
- number of social worker changes;
- Looked After Children reviews within statutory timescale;
- Looked After Children visits within statutory timescale – visited in line with Practice Standards;
- Number of Independent Reviewing Officer visits held in the month;
- Independent Reviewing Officer visits held within timescale;
- Missing Looked After Children – having at least one Missing episode per month;
- Independent return interviews for Looked After Children offered within 72 hours of the child being located;
- attainment of Looked After Children Key Stage 2 – Writing and Maths;
- Personal Education Plans up to date;
- initial Personal Education Plans completed within 20 working days of a child coming into care;
- health assessments within the last 12 months;
- number of Looked After Children offered and refused substance misuse intervention within the last 12 months;
- initial health assessments completed on time;
- Care Leavers;
- children in care aged between 17 and 18 with an allocated personal advisor;
- Local Authority in touch with Care Leavers;

Corporate Parenting Board - 18 September 2017

- Care Leavers in suitable accommodation;
- number of children waiting to be placed in adoptive placements;
- number of adopters approved by Kirklees Council during a 12 month rolling period;
- adopter initial enquiries;
- completion rate of adopter process from initial enquiry to approval on a rolling 12 month basis;
- foster placements split – in-house placements;
- agency staff – service level.

The Board highlighted their concerns regarding the significant amount of information provided in the report and requested that the report be split into themes to enable smaller, more concise reports to be considered by the Board. The Board felt that this would ensure that all of the information provided to the Board would be considered fully.

RESOLVED - That:

1. the content of the report be noted;
2. the performance data within the report be specific to the theme covered at each meeting to enable a concise report to be provided and considered by the Board.

11 Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan

RESOLVED – That:

1. the content of the report be noted;
2. the agenda plan format be re-formatted to include an outcome delivery column;
3. themes be identified within the agenda plan for each meeting.

12 Dates of Future Meetings

The Board considered the schedule of future meeting dates.

RESOLVED - That the date of future meetings be noted.

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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC

DECLARATION

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Name of Councillor

Item in which you have an interest	Type of interest (eg a disclosable pecuniary interest or an "Other Interest")	Does the nature of the interest require you to withdraw from the meeting while the item in which you have an interest is under consideration? [Y/N]	Brief description of your interest

Signed:

Dated:

NOTES

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your disclosable pecuniary interests under the new national rules. Any reference to spouse or civil partner includes any person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or as if they were your civil partner.

Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses.

Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -

- under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
- which has not been fully discharged.

Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.

Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.

Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) - the landlord is your council or authority; and the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.

Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -

(a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and

(b) either -

the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or

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 you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 13th November 2017
Title of report: Council Tax Exemptions for Care Leavers

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Director of Resources? Is it also signed off by the Assistant Director (Legal Governance and Monitoring)?	Elaine McShane 03.11.2017
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Erin Hill

Electoral wards affected: ALL
Ward councillors consulted: NIL
Public or private: PUBLIC

1. Purpose of report

To advise Corporate Parenting Board and Liberal Democrat Councillors of Kirklees Council's current policy in regards to the exemption of care leavers paying council tax.

2. Summary

In reviewing Kirklees Council's current policy, I can confirm that a briefing note was produced in 2014 advising of an initiative to allow discretion for care leavers to be exempt from council tax. This was formulated with staff across the Leaving Care Service, Customer and Exchequer Service and Sue Grigg, Directorate Lead Children and Public Health. The Discretionary Council Tax and Reduction Policy, dated 13 June 2014 states that the Council Tax liability of a care leaver is "capable to being reduced to nil, if they engaging with the authority to find a solution to their financial situation". The policy further states that "The decision maker must be satisfied that the customer or family member will suffer if a DTTR is not made. It is not enough that a risk of suffering exists." The policy does not define an age or end date for this assistance.

From viewing the records, the policy was finalised on the 29 July 2014 and subsequently adopted by Cabinet. In practice, when a care leaver moves into a tenancy in Kirklees, their personal advisor contacts customer and exchequer services and the young person applies for an exempt. At this stage the young person can remain exempt generally until the age of 21 years, when the service ceases. If a young person remains in education or training they will continue to be exempt until the service

ceases, which could be at age 25. This council tax exemption is discretionary and is not open to all care leavers. When Kirklees young people are placed in other local authority areas, there are no arrangements that make them exempt from council tax.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 discusses extending the role of the personal advisor and the access to the leaving care service up to the age of 25. The Department of Education is currently consulting on this piece of legislation and whether this will mean that the service just continues for young people or whether this may be discretionary or focus on task centred issues.

A great deal of research exists citing poor outcomes for young people leaving care such as the National Audit Office (2015), Stein (2005) and more recently The Children’s Society (2016) report calling for Local Authorities to make care leavers exempt from council tax up to the age of 25.

3. Information required to take a decision

Reading the original briefing note from 2014, it was estimated that the potential cost implications of the council tax exemption would be approximately £13,500 to support approximately 45 young people.

When the figures of council tax exemption are reviewed since the implementation of the policy, the financial implication is not as high.

Years	Cost Implication	No of Young People Supported
2014/ 2015	£1,370.90	13
2015/ 2016	£3077.19	37
2016/2017	£2,132.08	31
2017/2018	£2901.40	28 (not year end)

As of the 31 October 2017, the Leaving Care Service is working with 209 young people aged between 18 -25. By the nature of the policy being discretionary, not all young people are necessarily eligible and not all young people involved with the service reside in the Kirklees area. There are no reciprocal arrangements.

4. Implications for the Council

Corporate Parenting Board may consider as part of the pledge and the local authority offer to extend or move a motion that care leavers from Kirklees will all be exempt from council tax (rather than via discretionary arrangements) and clearly publish this in an accessible way for young people.

5. Consultees and their opinions

6. Next steps

- Information to be considered by the Board

7. Officer recommendations and reasons

- That the board take note of the information contained within the report.
- Consideration be given to considering a Council Tax exemption for all care leavers up to the age of 25 – extending and clarifying the current position.
- Consideration of discussing at full Cabinet.

8. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

9. Contact officer

Belinda Cashman, Interim Service Manager Leaving Care Service – 01484221000 email:
Belinda.Cashman@kirklees.gov.uk

10. Background Papers and History of Decisions

- Existing policy attached for consideration.

11. Assistant Director responsible

Elaine McShane, Head of Social Work

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Customer and Exchequer Service

Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy

Created: 13 June 2014
Author: Julian Hobson
Updated: 29th July 2014
Author: Julian Hobson

Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy

1. Introduction

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides for reductions in council tax by billing authorities.

The provisions in s13A of the act allow for two types of reduction.

The first type of reduction, is a reduction required under s13A(1)(a) by virtue of the billing authority's "Council Tax Reduction Scheme", this policy does not apply to that scheme.

The second type of reduction (a reduction to which this policy applies) is a reduction that may be awarded under s13A(1)(c). A reduction under this policy may be awarded in addition to any reduction under the "Council Tax Reduction Scheme" or in the absence of a reduction under that scheme.

S13A(6) allows for a council tax charge to be reduced to nil.

S13A(7) allows the billing authority to exercise its power under 13A(1)(c) in relation to individual cases (the basis for such decisions are set out in this policy).

S13A(7) also allows authorities to define classes of case and the extent to which council tax might be reduced for those classes. The authority has not defined any classes of case for which a reduction would be appropriate.

Any payment under this scheme will be accounted for in the Collection Fund

2. Wednesbury Reasonableness

When a local authority uses its discretion, it must have made its decision in a rational way. Therefore any decision we make with regard to a reduction must follow the principles of "Wednesbury Reasonableness" taking account of relevant considerations and disregarding irrelevant details.

3. Claims for a Discretionary Council Tax Reduction

3.1 Claims must be made in accordance with Paragraph 9 Schedule 7 Part 3 of the "Council Tax Reduction scheme"

3.2 An application may be made:

1. In writing
2. Electronically (by email)
3. By Telephone

Any application, however made, may be subject to evidence requirements that include the provision of original documents.

3.4 A reduction may be awarded in respect of a past period (backdating) see section 5

4. Qualifying Criteria

This assessment is designed to identify and help customers in severe hardship and or who would encounter hardship without additional financial support.

In determining hardship account should be taken of the customer's current situation and the likelihood of their financial position improving.

Part of the assessment will take the form of a means test to establish the degree to which support is required.

In the interests of Wednesbury Reasonableness the following is a list of issues which should be seen as a guide by the decision maker to the type of issues they should consider when reaching their decision.

Overview

- a) DCTR is targeted assistance to households with multiple and serious financial difficulties
- b) Any decision will be considered alongside the authority's Local Welfare Provision policy, and payment in kind for food etc can be considered in order to free up disposable income to meet the council tax liability.
- c) Any person that is excluded from the authority's main CTR scheme by virtue of their status or available capital, will also be excluded from any reduction under this policy.

Initial considerations

- d) Is there any evidence that the customer has made any payments or engaged with officers seeking payment? What evidence is there?
- e) Is the customer entitled to any other discount, exemption or reduction?
- f) Is there any evidence that the debt was accrued during a period when the customer was in a better financial position?
- g) Is any of the debt attributable to recovery costs? See also h) and (q) below,
- h) In many cases a liability order will have been granted and this should remain live even if costs are removed.

Take into account

- i) Is any of the disregarded income to meet specific needs? Are those needs identified in the expenditure side of the equation and should they too be disregarded?
- j) DLA for mobility should not be taken into account as income in the assessment, if there is such a disregard, any expenses attributable to additional mobility needs should also be disregarded.
- k) Are there any non-dependants or other residents that are jointly and severally liable in the household who could provide (extra) help with the Council Tax?
- l) Does the customer or partner have any capital (including disregarded capital), if so, how much?
- m) Does the customer or partner have any disregarded income? If so, how much?

Other

- n) Is the shortfall in income caused by under occupation and is re-location the solution.
- o) Has the customer engaged with the CAB and other advice partners for financial and debt advice?
- p) What is the current level of indebtedness?
- q) Is recovery action already at an advanced level? (Contact recovery section)
- r) Is the CT debt rising year on year?
- s) What offer of payment or current re-payment arrangements exists?
 - o Deduction from DWP benefits after liability order?
 - o A voluntary deduction from DWP benefits should be considered.
 - o Ongoing Payment arrangement?
 - o Financial and debt advice?
 - o Basic banking advice and set up?
 - o Skills based job advice and training?

The above is not an exhaustive list but is meant as a guide for decision makers

4.1 Third Party Payments

No Council Tax liability (except that of a care leaver) will be reduced under this scheme so as to make the total amount payable daily, less than that which might be recovered through the Department for work And Pensions - Third Party Payments scheme regulated by Social Security (Claims & Payment) Regulations 1987, Regulation 35(1) and Schedule 9 and The Council Tax (Deductions from Income Support) Regulations 1993.

The Third Party Payments scheme weekly maximum is calculated as 5 percent of the personal allowance of a single claimant, rounded up to the nearest 5 pence.

At the time of writing this policy the allowance is £72.40 meaning that the maximum equates to £3.65 weekly.

That daily maximum means that no liability will be reduced under this scheme so as to make any liability less than £189.80 annually.

This section applies irrespective of whether a third party payment would be appropriate in any case. This means that this restriction is not contingent upon there being a liability order, or a benefit in payment and neither is it constrained by any overall limit or the priority of debts in the DWP TPP scheme.

4.2 Care Leavers

The liability of a care leaver is capable of being reduced to nil, if they are engaging with the authority to find a solution to their financial difficulties.

For the purposes of this policy a Care Leaver is defined as anyone aged 18 to 21 and who was in the care of the Local Authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday.

There may be additional factors that need to be considered in individual cases. If so, the decision maker should obtain full details from the customer. They will then have to decide whether or not to make a discretionary payment. The decision maker must be satisfied that the customer or family member will suffer if a DCTR is not made. It is not enough to decide that a risk of suffering exists.

5. Limits on Payments

- 5.1 As DCTRs relate to a distinct Council Tax Liability and are based upon the circumstances pertaining at the time of the application and before, no award will be made beyond the end of the financial year in which the award is made unless the application is made after 1st February in any given year.
- 5.2 Any award, regardless of when it is made will be for a period of no more than 12 months. In most cases the award will be for a period of 6 months or less and will be reviewed at the end of the award period.
- 5.3 If a customer makes a claim for a past period (backdating) and has continuous good cause for their failure to make a claim earlier, their claim in respect of that period shall be treated as made on -
- (a) the first day from which they had continuous good cause; or
the day 6 months before the date of the claim for backdating if the customer is of working age, 3 months for customers of pension age, whichever fell later
- 5.4 A DCTR will only ever be made so as to reduce a Council Tax Liability. There are no circumstances in which any sum of money would become payable to the Liable Party. Any refund of Council tax will be NET of any DCTR council tax award.

6. Appeals

- 6.1 Appeals against any decision in relation to this Policy are to be made and decided in accordance with s16 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. (as amended)

7. Overpayment

- 7.1 If the authority were to establish that an award of DCTR was erroneous because the liable party had knowingly provided false or inaccurate information, the reduction will be removed and the original liability will be reinstated, and a penalty may be applied in accordance with The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013.

8. Notification

- 8.1 We will write to the customer to tell them whether their DCTR claim was successful. The letter must include:
- the date the award runs from and to
 - the amount of the award
 - reasons why the claim was successful or unsuccessful

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 13th November 2017
Title of report: Peer Mentoring Scheme

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Director of Resources? Is it also signed off by the Assistant Director (Legal Governance and Monitoring)?	Elaine McShane 03.11.2017
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Erin Hill

Electoral wards affected: ALL
Ward councillors consulted: NIL
Public or private: PUBLIC

1. Purpose of report

To update Corporate Parenting Board in regards to the peer mentoring scheme for care leavers.

2. Summary

Part of the transformation challenge award funding allocated to Kirklees Council was to develop a mentoring scheme to young people making the transition from care.

From September 2016, the Leaving Care Service had been working with a group of older care leavers to look at what mentoring could like for care leavers in the local area. Eight young people attended our initial focus groups and identified that care should not be a label, that it was important for young people to get the right help at the right time, that all young people should have someone to talk to, someone who doesn't judge and understands confidentiality.

Since that time, we have held a number of focus groups and discussions with young people around mentoring and understand that this means providing support to "someone like me", not necessarily offering advice, but assisting that person through listening, being available and role modelling.

Discussions also took place in regards to where mentoring could take place. The young people initially involved with the focus groups identified the need for a space specifically for the scheme, after considering the success of spaces such as Young Dewsbury the group where keen to look at a

space in Huddersfield which was available to looked after children and care leavers where they could access support in a comfortable environment. No 11 had been identified and approximately 30 young people were involved in the consultation and design of the space and provided advice on what facilities should be available and subsequently working in partnership with the service to open the space.

Of the initial 8 young people who identified an interest in becoming a peer mentor, training commenced over the summer with 6 young people identified. We have 4 young people who have nearly completed the training which is being delivered by partners from the Base. It is envisaged that a further training program will take place early in the new year as other young people are now interested in participating and training as mentors.

As a result of discussions, the trainee peer mentors will be based at No 11 and have already started supporting other young people using the service. We have already seen some success with the scheme, particularly in regards to raising confidence and self-esteem and improving engagement of young people with the service. We envisage that young people may request peer mentoring support by dropping in, additionally, we expect that social workers, residential staff will be able to identify looked after young people who may benefit from support. The scheme will initially be based at No 11 whilst peer mentors are training and there is access to support and guidance as required from other staff members.

It is envisaged that in addition to offering a designated peer mentoring space at No 11 and in line with what young people are telling us, we have developed an apprenticeship and internship which would allow peer mentors to be available more flexibility and for young people to be the first point of contact at No 11 rather than a professional. (Personal Advisors and a Social Worker are in always in the space with other partners). We are looking at recruiting two apprentices across the service which will be funded through the transformation challenge award. These posts have been shared with the leaving care service and the level of interest is high.

3. Information required to take a decision

Information to be considered.

4. Implications for the Council

It is hoped that the peer mentoring scheme will :

- Increase young people's self-esteem and confidence;
- young people feel better supported & manage their accommodation and tenancy;
- Ensure that young people are linked to the local community and resources and a network of support;
- Compliment the life skills program being delivered in residential units, foster placement and supported accommodation young people making the transition from care.

Funding from the apprenticeships will come from the Transformation Challenge Award budget.

5. Consultees and their opinions

6. Next steps

Information to be considered.

7. Officer recommendations and reasons

Information to be considered.

Peer mentoring scheme to be endorsed by Corporate Parenting Board and Corporate Parents.

8. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

9. Contact officer

Belinda Cashman, Interim Service Manager Leaving Care Service – 01484221000 email:
Belinda.Cashman@kirklees.gov.uk

10. Background Papers and History of Decisions

11. Assistant Director responsible

Elaine McShane, Head of Social Work

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