

* Name of proposal/policy	Changes to the Leaving Care Policy	* Budget number	16-002-07
* Service area responsible	Safeguarding Children's Services-CFE	* Cabinet meeting date	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2017
* Name of completing officer	Phil Bradley	* Approved by Director / Assistant Director	Lesley Hagger
* Version	1.0	* Date	6 <sup>th</sup> February 2017

**PART A**

* Section 1a: Description of proposal under consideration/development	* Section 1b: Is this new or existing? Does it link to current provision?
To change the process for Looked After young people in Supported Accommodation aged 18+ and defined as 'former relevant' of how their accommodation is funded so that they receive support to claim Housing benefit which would then be paid directly to the accommodation provider.	There is limited impact on the service user (Looked After young person) There is no change of address. They receive increased support by their allocated Personal Advisor to help them into more independent, resilient and sustainable living; this just means that their accommodation is funded in a different way.

* Section 2: How does this align with the Council Plan/ corporate priorities/ partnership strategies and plans/ Next Generation Council?	
<b>Delivers increased wellbeing and/or safeguarding by ensuring that...</b>	✓
People of all ages are safe, protected from harm and able to live happy, healthy and independent lives in our communities	✓
People have the information and support they need to make healthy choices and achieve wellbeing	✓
People achieve economic prosperity, in a healthy, low carbon economy which gives access to jobs, training and skills development	✓

Communities thrive in a pleasant and resilient environment, with robust transport and communications infrastructure	
Resources are utilised effectively and efficiently, in coordination with partners and providers	✓
<b>Does it align with any NCC/ partnership strategies and plans? (if so, please list below)</b>	
N/A	
<b>Does it support the transformation into a Next Generation Council? (if so, please explain below)</b>	
N/A	

**\* Section 3: If this relates to a statutory duty, please give details of the relevant legislation below:**

The Local Authority is the “corporate parent” for children in care and therefore has a responsibility for their wellbeing. The precise level of care required by each care leaver will depend on their assessed needs and on their leaving care “status”, as defined by statute. The 2010 (and 2011, 2014) regulations set out under Volume 3 of the Children Act 1989 have strengthened the emphasis on leaving care as being a transition period and not something that occurs at a particular point in time. Care leavers are expected to receive support from their responsible authority if they so wish and are eligible. The aim of this continuing support is to ensure that care leavers are provided with comprehensive personal support (inclusive of suitable accommodation) so that they achieve their potential as they make the transition to adulthood. These responsibilities have been further strengthened by the recent Government strategy, ‘Keep on Caring’ (July 2016) ([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf)).

This report sets out a vision for services to Care Leavers which includes promoting stability for looked after children and those leaving care. The Government is committed to targeting support to those Leaving Care and the paper’s third vision is that:  
“...care leavers should experience stability in their lives and feel safe and secure...”

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that all eligible and relevant (but not 'qualifying') care leavers are placed in suitable accommodation when leaving care.

Schedule 2 to the [M1Children Act 1989](#) which contains provision as to children being looked after by local authorities and as part of the Children Act 2000 known as the Leaving Care Act <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/35/contents>

The related duties are fully set out in the legislation linked above, see the specific extracts below which relate to this proposal;

Personal advisers

19CA local authority shall arrange for each child whom they are looking after who is an eligible child (for the purposes of paragraph 19B) to have a personal adviser.”.

Section 23B (8)

The responsible local authority shall safeguard and promote the child’s welfare and, unless they are satisfied that his welfare does not require it, support him by—

- (a) maintaining him;
- (b) providing him with or maintaining him in **suitable accommodation**; and
- (c) providing support of such other descriptions as may be prescribed.

**Section 4: Have other alternatives been considered?**

N/A

**\* Section 5: Financial / resource implications**

**a) Costs (e.g. invest to save)**

None required

**b) Staffing implications**

There are no staffing implications that require a change in the Leaving Care resource

**c) Savings**

Predicted cost savings of £90 per week x 116 young people = £10,440. Over the course of 12 months (2017-18) this would provide an indicative saving of £542,880 if a full year’s saving could be delivered.

169 young people will become 18 in the next 12 months and may be eligible. This indicates that in 2018-19 up to an additional £790,920 could be saved.

**Section 6: Has a similar initiative/proposal been implemented elsewhere? What were the benefits or risks? Are there lessons that can be learned?**

N/A

**THIS SECTION HAS REPLACED THE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM AND MUST BE COMPLETED TO DEMONSTRATE COMPLIANCE WITH THE EQUALITY DUTY**

**\* Section 7: Who will be affected by this proposal? (this may be service user data, or be based on a particular geographical area or more general population data depending on the proposal) Include demographic information where this is available e.g. breakdown by gender, age, ethnicity, disability etc. BIPI can support with the provision of data. You may include staff, partner organisations and any other stakeholders who might be affected by the proposal.**

<b>Data Source (include link where published) and summary of what it tells us for example “X number of people use this service, X are male, Y are female etc”</b>	<b>Why is this relevant to the proposal?</b>
Care Leavers data	<p>116 Care Leavers are currently in Independent Accommodation, 29 females and 87 males.</p> <p>This cohort of young people will be contacted by their Personal Advisor to make arrangements to support young people to apply for Housing Benefit.</p>
Data for children approaching care leaving age	<p>169 young people are Looked After currently who will become 18 in the next 12 months and may qualify for Independent Accommodation 52 Females and 117 Males (62 are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children).</p> <p>This cohort of young people will be supported by their allocated Personal Advisor as they become eligible to make arrangements to support them to apply for Housing Benefit.</p>

<b>* Section 8: Based on the above information, will this proposal have an impact on the following? ✓ the relevant box for each line and then expand on the reasons why in Section 9</b>				
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Unsure</b>
<a href="#">Age</a>			✓	
<a href="#">Disability</a>			✓	
<a href="#">Gender reassignment</a>			✓	
<a href="#">Marriage and civil partnership</a>			✓	
<a href="#">Pregnancy and Maternity</a>			✓	
<a href="#">Race</a>			✓	
<a href="#">Religion or Belief (or No Belief)</a>			✓	
<a href="#">Sex</a>			✓	
<a href="#">Sexual orientation</a>			✓	

<b>* Section 9: Initial impact</b>	
<b>* Section 9a: From your analysis in section 8 above, please explain the positive implications</b>	
N/A	
<b>* Section 9b: From your analysis in section 8 above, please explain why you have categorised any of the implications as neutral</b>	
The impact on care leavers is expected to be neutral, as this change means that their accommodation costs are paid directly by their benefits, rather than NCC.	
A large population of UASC are in this cohort, this means that there are a majority of young males. This should not have an impact in terms of the change of policy but will mean more male young people will be supported proportionally.	
<b>* Section 9c: From your analysis above, please explain the negative implications</b>	<b>* Section 9d: What actions have you identified to mitigate any negative implications?</b>
N/A	N/A

* Section 9e: From your analysis above, please explain the areas where you are unsure of the impact	* Section 9f: What actions have you identified to fill gaps in information?
N/A	N/A

* Section 10: Internal considerations: are there any implications for the following?		
	✓ or X	If there are any implications, please explain them here and identify any actions you may need to take as a result
<a href="#">Staff</a>	X	
<a href="#">Financial (NCC)</a>	✓	Overall saving expected to the Leaving Care budget directly equivalent to the Housing claim payments for all eligible young people in the Leaving Care cohort.
<a href="#">Legal</a>	X	
<a href="#">NCC Policy</a>	✓	Update the Council's Policy and revise the practice of Personal Advisors to routinely support young people to make timely housing benefit applications. Inform placement providers and develop a clear process to ensure that accommodation providers deduct the housing benefit element from the total payment for the accommodation.
<a href="#">Performance</a>	X	
<a href="#">Data quality / information security</a>	X	
<a href="#">IT</a>	X	
<a href="#">Strategic assets</a>	X	
<a href="#">LGSS / federated bodies</a>	X	
<a href="#">Procurement</a>	X	
<a href="#">Project support</a>	X	
<a href="#">Other (if appropriate)</a>	X	

**\* Section 11: External considerations: are there any implications for the following?**

	✓ or X	If there are any implications, please explain them here and identify any actions you may need to take as a result
<a href="#">Community impact</a>	X	
<a href="#">Impact on the consumer (e.g. communication needs, access, rurality, complaints)</a>	✓	Looked After Care Leavers potential for complaints can be mitigated by a written agreement for all 18+ young people to submit a claim for Housing Benefit alongside any other benefit entitlement (e.g. JSA, Income Support, Universal Credit) within 10 days of turning 18 years or after moving to new accommodation post 18.
<a href="#">Reputation</a>	✓	Change in policy with Housing providers impacting a shift in responsibility. Strategy and Commissioning are conducting a review of all existing contractual arrangements regarding claiming housing benefit. Outcome to be shared with task group and if variation is required, they will be negotiated accordingly. Provider briefings will follow.
<a href="#">Political</a>	X	
<a href="#">Partners</a>	✓	There is a risk of Borough and District Councils Housing teams having to increase staffing and financial resource to deal with initial impact of claims. Inform placement providers and develop a clear process to ensure that accommodation providers deduct the housing benefit element from the total payment for the accommodation.
<a href="#">Human Rights</a>	X	
<a href="#">Health impact – individual</a>	X	
<a href="#">Health impact – wider community</a>	X	
<a href="#">Economic impact - individual</a>	X	
<a href="#">Economic impact – wider community</a>	X	
<a href="#">Community Safety impact</a>	X	
<a href="#">Environmental impact</a>	X	
<a href="#">Consultation</a>	X	

<a href="#">Other (if appropriate)</a>	X
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Based on the impacts and considerations above, please identify the RAG status

RAG Status	Overall RAG	Time	Proposal Delivery	Cash Saving	Risk	Issue	Dependency
	G	G	G	G	A	A	G

* Section 12a: What are the risks associated with NOT implementing the proposal? (tick if applicable)		* Section 12b: What actions have you identified to mitigate the risks? Will anything in the current arrangements need to be changed to acknowledge this risk? Is implementing the proposal the only way to mitigate the risks?
Non-compliance with legislation or NCC policy	✓	N/A
Financial	✓	Costs will be inappropriately spent from the Placement budget that could be better used to support other needs of Looked After young people.
Change in performance/ data quality/ information security		N/A
Reputational/ Political		N/A
Increase in complaints and/ or legal challenge		N/A
Other		N/A

\* Section 13: Budget Delivery Programme Highlight Report information – total amount allocated to savings proposal 2017-18 through to 2020-2021; profiled budget; 2017-18 action plan extended savings narrative; cost code information

<b>Total amount allocated to savings proposal 2017-18</b>	
<b>2017-18 (£000)</b>	543

Impact of saving within the budget profile			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
100	147	148	148

  

	Milestone	Owner	By when
1	Revised Leaving Care Policy agreed and approved by Cabinet	Phil Bradley	February 2017 meeting
2	Key partners (B&D councils ) notified	Phil Bradley	February 2017
3	Leaving Care PAs trained in new processes and work instigated	Phil Bradley	February 2017

**\* Section 14: Do you need to undertake further work (e.g. consultation, further proposal development, further equality analysis) based on the impact and actions identified above? If yes, set this out below and then carry out the work and complete Part B:**

This proposal will form part of the overall budget consultation process. Any feedback received (as well as any further intelligence gathered in the course of developing the project) will inform a final analysis of the impact of the proposal which will be considered by Cabinet and Council in February when taking a final decision on the budget. The EqIA will be updated accordingly.

**PART B**

Section 15: Consultation, follow up data and information gathered from actions identified above	
	What does this information tell us?
This proposal formed part of the overall budget consultation process.	We received no specific comments about this proposal.
	Strategy and Commissioning are conducting a review of all existing contractual arrangements regarding claiming housing benefit. Outcome to be shared with task group and if variation is required, they will be negotiated accordingly. Provider briefings will follow.

**Section 16: Final impact analysis (taking the findings from Part B into account) – including review date if required**

The final impact has been assessed as neutral, because care leavers will still receive the money they are entitled to, but from a different source.