# North Somerset Council

**Report to the Council**

**Date of Meeting: 14/05/24**

**Subject of Report:** Briefing - Graduating From Care, Core Offer for Care Leavers in the Southwest and the Regional App.

**Town or Parish:**

**Officer/Member Presenting:** Cllr Catherine Gibbons

**Key Decision: No**

**Reason:** N/A – briefing only - no decision required

**Recommendations**

## 1.     Summary of Report

This briefing provides an overview of the regional developments in relation to 'levelling up' our local and regional offer to care experienced young people through the Graduating from Care Southwest project.

## 2.     Policy

Corporate Parenting Strategy

## 3.     Details

'Corporate parenting' describes our collective responsibility as a Council, local authority and partner agencies to act as effective parents for children and young people who are in our care or who are care leavers. It involves a commitment to ensuring that they receive the support, guidance, and opportunities they need to thrive and achieve their full potential.

There are clear Statutory responsibilities placed on local authorities to ensure that care experienced young people have the help and support they need when they become Care Leavers, and this is set out in our local offer. In practice, Local Authorities have taken differing approaches and offered different levels of support, leading to a lack of consistency for care experienced young people.

In order to overcome this, and to deliver an ambitious and consistent offer across the region, North Somerset have joined with nine local authorities in the South West in developing and signing up to, the 'Graduating from Care Southwest' project.

The Graduating Care Southwest Project is a Local Authority collaboration and commitment to 'level up' to a Regional Core Offer to care leavers across the Southwest that goes beyond statutory requirements. This will be achieved through changes to individual local authority offers as well as developmental work with regional partners and businesses.

Further plans to enable the remaining local authorities in the region to join the project are in progress.

An important part of the project is development of a regional app for care leavers which will publish the Core Regional Offer across the nine local authorities along with more details about each individual Local Authorities local offer.

## What does the Core Regional Offer comprise of?

The Regional Core Offer comprises of 5 key areas; Advice and Support; Education, Employment & Training; Financial Offer; Health & Wellbeing; Housing.

The development of each aspect has sought to provide the regional standard for new local authorities wishing to join and is an important first step in creating parity in the local offers across the region.

## What is the App?

The App has been co-produced with young people across the region.

The App will provide access to the Core Regional offer as well as the full local offer from each local authority involved.

The App will enable young people to access information quickly and easily about their rights, entitlements as well as how to access advice and support in relation to a wide a range of issues for example, their health and wellbeing, education employment and training, budgeting and financial support, support to becoming a parent and much more.

The App will also provide an important platform to communicate with our Care Leavers, for example posting events and offering opportunities for young people to share their views, experiences and shape services.

## Launching the App

The App goes live on Monday 29th April and will be in the public domain from this date.

The Care Leavers Team and Participation Team will be focused on supporting sign-up for all care experienced young people during May through.

The content of our App pages will be maintained and updated regularly t ensure that these are constantly developing, including exciting fresh content for young people and have the most up to date information.

## How can members actively support?

As Corporate Parents, there are many opportunities to support children in care and care experienced young people in all aspects of their lives and future aspirations.  This could include:

- Keeping the importance of our care experienced children and young people high on the agenda, regularly scrutinising our work in this area and monitoring improvement programmes
- Offering practical support.
- Support others including businesses and communities to come forward with opportunities for mentoring, training, work experience or enhanced offers and discounts.
- Providing moral support and building esteem by regularly celebrating success
- Using their voices to promote learning and engagement opportunities within the community.
- Continuing to listen regularly and directly to our children and young people.
- View the Graduating from Care South West App when it goes live and promote its use and visibility of our 'Local Offer'.

If you would like more information about how you can play an even more active role as a corporate parent, you can contact the Head of Corporate Parenting, Liz Brierley (liz.brierley@n-somerset.gov.uk)

## 4.    Consultation
N/A – briefing only - no decision required

## 5.    Financial Implications

This briefing does not include additional financial implications.

**Costs**
N/A – briefing only - no decision required.

**Funding**
N/A – briefing only - no decision required.

## 6.    Legal Powers and Implications
N/A – briefing only - no decision required.

## 7.    Climate Change and Environmental Implications
N/A – briefing only - no decision required.

## 8.    Risk Management
N/A – briefing only - no decision required.

## 9.    Equality Implications
N/A – briefing only - no decision required.

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## 10.    Corporate Implications
N/A – briefing only - no decision required.

## 11. Options Considered

N/A – briefing only - no decision required.

**Author:**

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**Appendices:**

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**Background Papers:**

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