

FOI number: **HBC_FOI_20200126**
Date FOI Received: **04/02/2020**
Department: **Community Services**
Title: **Care Leaver Local Offer**
Description: **Questionnaire response on the support offer known as the Local Offer for Care leavers.**

Request: (As Redacted sent by requestor)

Dear Hertsmere Borough Council

I have a FOI request below, but I wanted to let you know that this request is not to catch you out. I am a care leaver and lived in over 100 places. My mission is to help create a system change and we have to do this together. As a Local Authority you are not alone and I will do all I can to help you. At this specific time, I need you to respond to this request ASAP because I need the information.

I've sent this to every Local Authority in England and I will prepare a report, I won't single anyone out, but I will share the findings and importantly offer free advice and guidance to everyone. So please complete the request ASAP. IDEALLY BY 12/02/2020

To make it easier to generate the results I've created a webpage for you to provide the response. Obviously, this is totally at your discretion. But please think of the 10,000 children nationally that need us to come together to help them live better lives.

My request also asks for your lead persons contact details because I want to send the final report and a best practice to help them help our children leaving care.

As a bit of background just in case you are in a 2nd tier Local Authority Area - District and Borough Councils in the Shires. And not sure what the Local Offer for Care Leavers is. You won't be alone. There are 200 lower tier authorities in England that may not have a Local Offer for Care Leavers.

Social Services and Children's services is run by the upper tier, the County Council. And they will know all about this piece of legislation. They will have created a Local Offer, however unless it was created in partnership with the districts and boroughs in the shires it will not include Housing, Leisure and Council Tax to name a few of the services that they are not responsible for. The Act defines what must be considered and this includes public services run by the lower tier authorities. District Councils are specifically named, which means they have to by law create and publish a local offer.

Here is the legislation that tells you what you must do
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/section/2/enacted>

In Nottinghamshire we created the first truly joined up local offer in the country, because all the County Council and the Chief Executives of the Lower Tier Authorities understood their responsibilities but recognised the need and had the foresight to understand that the process of creating the offer would help reach deeper into other parts of the community they serve and to embed into its culture a deep understanding of the plight of the care leaver.. The result has been outstanding. Here is the TV - The Local Offer for Care Leavers on the BBC

In Nottinghamshire we now have a network of 8 Councils all working together for care leavers. We decided to test the network to see how it would respond. It is that network of community that our care leavers need. We made a call for volunteers to take 728 children in care, care leavers and foster parents to Alton Towers for the day. This included EVERY Council in the East Midlands. None of it would have been possible if our councils were not working together.

We campaigned hard to raise awareness accross all the councils and here are the councils showing support
Everyone holding #thebigconvoy banner

And here is the BBC News coverage of the event.
#thebigconvoy 2019

We will be sharing all this best practice with you, if you are a lower tier, we can even send you template local offers and processes for getting it embeded in your councils. We can even link you up with businesses to give your children in care and care leavers work experience, apprentices, jobs and mentoring. Here is the page for businesses to; pledge offer for care leavers

If you are a practitioner and want any information, advice or guidance then please get in touch.

But PLEASE HELP ME. I need you to respond to this REQUEST straight away... Ideally by 12/02/2020

Here is this link to upload your answers <REDACTED>

Kind regards

OFFICIAL VERSION

If you can't do it by then, please provide the information in accordance with the FOI.

FOI REQUEST

If you want to respond to the request in the normal way here is the official version;

I am writing in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and request that you provide me with the following information

The questions are as follows;

Q1. Have you published the Local Offer for Care Leavers in accordance with Section 2 of the Social Work Act 2017?

Yes / No / Don't Know

2. Have you exempted Care Leavers from Council Tax?

Yes / No / Thinking about it

3. Do care Leavers get free access to Leisure facilities as part of the Local Offer?

Yes / No / Thinking about it

4. If Care Leavers get free access to Leisure Facilities can they take a friend free?

Yes / No / Thinking about it

5. Have you ringfenced any apprentices for Care Leavers?

Yes / No / Thinking about it

6. If you have ringfenced apprentices for Care Leavers, how many per year?

Insert number

7. How many apprentices does you local authority provide each year?

8. How many employees does your Local Authority employ? (this can be rounded up to save time)

9. Please send us an electronic version of the published version of your local offer in accordance with Section 2 of the Social Work Act 2017

Attach / Upload

10. Please provide a website/url link to you published version of your Local Offer for Care Leavers in accordance with Section 2 of the Social Care Act 2017

11. Please provide your political leader contact details who is closest relevant in the corporate parenting capacity?

11a Please provide the EMAIL ADDRESS of your political leader contact details who is closest relevant in the corporate parenting capacity?

12. Please provide the officer lead responsible for Leaving Care/Care Leaver Offer?

12a Please provide the EMAIL ADDRESS of the officer lead responsible for Leaving Care/Care Leaver Offer?

Response: (Response as Redacted sent by service)

Your request related to the Local Care offer. As a 2 tier authority area I am aware that there is a Care Leavers Offer but that is co-ordinated by Hertfordshire County Council. I assume that they will have responded to your request directly. I did try to fill in the e-form but as I couldn't provide relevant email addresses it would not enable me to.

The questions are as follows:

Q1. Have you published the Local Offer for Care Leavers in accordance with Section 2 of the Social Work Act 2017?

Answer - No - this falls to the County Council - Hertfordshire

2. Have you exempted Care Leavers from Council Tax?

Answer - No

3. Do care Leavers get free access to Leisure facilities as part of the Local Offer?

Answer - No

4. If Care Leavers get free access to Leisure Facilities can they take a friend free?

Answer - No

5. Have you ringfenced any apprentices for Care Leavers?

Answer - No

6. If you have ringfenced apprentices for Care Leavers, how many per year?

Answer - 0

7. How many apprentices does your local authority provide each year?

Answer circa 3-5

8. How many employees does your Local Authority employ?

Answer - circa 340

9. Please send us an electronic version of the published version of your local offer in accordance with Section 2 of the Social Work Act 2017

Answer - not attached as this will sit with County Council.

10. Please provide a website/url link to you published version of your Local Offer for Care Leavers in accordance with Section 2 of the Social Care Act 2017

Answer – we do not hold this information.

11. Please provide your political leader contact details who is closest relevant in the corporate parenting capacity?

Answer - this will be a county councillor – we do not hold this information.

11a Please provide the EMAIL ADDRESS of your political leader contact details who is closest relevant in the corporate parenting capacity?

Answer – we do not hold this information.

12. Please provide the officer lead responsible for Leaving Care/Care Leaver Offer?

Answer this will be a county council officer lead – we do not hold this information.

12a Please provide the EMAIL ADDRESS of the officer lead responsible for Leaving Care/Care Leaver Offer?

Answer – we do not hold this information.

If you have any queries about the processing of your request then please do not hesitate to contact me. Further information explaining the Council's process for responding to information requests together with a complaints/appeals procedure is available in our reception or via our website at:

<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Your-Council/Official-Publications--Guides--Policies/Access-to-Information.aspx>

The Information Commissioner oversees the application of the Freedom of Information Act. You may contact the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioners Office

Wycliffe House, Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545700

Website: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Please include the above reference number on all correspondence related to this request.

Thank you for your request.

Kind regards

Information Services

Hertsmere Borough Council | Civic Offices | Elstree Way | Borehamwood | Herts | WD6 1WA