



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

Trafford Children's Social Care CYP Scrutiny Committee Transition from Cared 4 to Care Experienced

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Overview

This presentation will consider:

- Corporate Parenting Strategy in relation to Preparation for Adulthood
- What our Young People tell us about their experience of the transition from Cared 4 to Care Leaver
- National & Regional Picture
- Legal Framework and Categories
- Who our Care 4 & Care Experienced Young People are
- How we measure our Performance
- Accommodation Options
- Work undertaken to date
- Next Steps Plans for the Future



Legal Framework

- The context for supporting our care experienced young people is set out in legislation
- - Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.
- This states what we have to do to help young people who have been looked after by a Local Authority to support them move from care into living independently .
- It defines the type of support that we should provide “in as stable as way as possible”- with the right support at the right time and to continue further into adulthood.
- It places a duty on a Local Authority to assess and meet the needs of their Care Experienced Young People and Adults.
- In effect this legislation defines our Corporate parenting responsibilities up to the age 25

In Trafford this means – doing what we would do for our children – parenting doesn’t simply end !



Legal Framework – Duties and Responsibilities

Key features of the Children (Leaving Care) Act include:


- Clear definitions as to who are care leavers - eligible, relevant, former relevant and qualifying young people, and as such who is entitled to services
- A duty to keep in touch with care leavers (*extended to age 25 in 2018*)
- Requirement for all care leavers to have “Pathway Plans” – this is the plan that identifies that areas that our Care Experienced young people and adults require support in to enable them to be the best that they can
- Requirement for all young people leaving to have a Personal Advisor
- Requirement to provide assistance with employment, education and training.

How ever we know nationally and locally that providing the right support at the right time to our care experienced young people can be challenging



Legal Framework - Care Leaver Categories

Category	Definition
Eligible	Young people who are 16-17 still in care
Qualifying	Young people/adults age 16-21 (25 if in education) who were in care for 13 weeks or more on or after 16 th Birthday
Relevant	Young people aged 16-17 who left care on or after their 16 th Birthday
Former Relevant	Adults aged 18 up to age 25 and you were in care on or after your 16th birthday.





National & Regional Picture

- “**Ready or not**” OFSTED Research published in January 2022 highlighted the need to improve the support for care leavers. They conducted surveys and group consultation sessions to seek the experience of care leavers *“For many young people in care, approaching adulthood and leaving the care system is a time of moving on, ambitions planning and hopes for the future but it can also bring with it **extra challenges, anxiety and fear.**”*
- *More than a third of care leavers felt that they left care too early. This was often because the move out of care happened abruptly and they were **not ready for all the sudden changes.***
- *Of those who did feel that they left care at the right time, not all felt they had the required skills to live more independently.”*

Key themes identified from this research :

Feeling that they left care too early with a sense of isolation and fear

Not involved in pathway planning or having choice of accommodation

Feeling unprepared to manage their money and have a limited understanding of their rights and entitlements

Good relationship with a personal advisor introduced early makes a difference, many meet them too late and nearer to 18

- Greater Manchester Care Leaver Pledge



Voice of our Care Leavers

- Our care leavers have told us similar things and this is shaping the work we are progressing and influencing our plans
- They tell us that sometimes it feels like ‘ Care leaves us rather than we leave care’ and can feel like a ‘cliff edge’
- They would like clarity on what they are entitled to
- They would like more options for housing/accommodation
- They would like continued support to access support from health partners post 18
- They speak positively about their Personal Advisors
- They have asked for clarity about what the Protected Characteristic means
- Critically we are needing to take action and respond to this through our Corporate parenting strategy which now has a clear priority in respect of care leavers and preparing for adulthood





Corporate Parenting Strategy

The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out our commitment and intention for our cared for children and care leavers. A key principle of the Strategy is 'Would this be Good Enough for My Child?'

It has 5 Strategic Priorities:

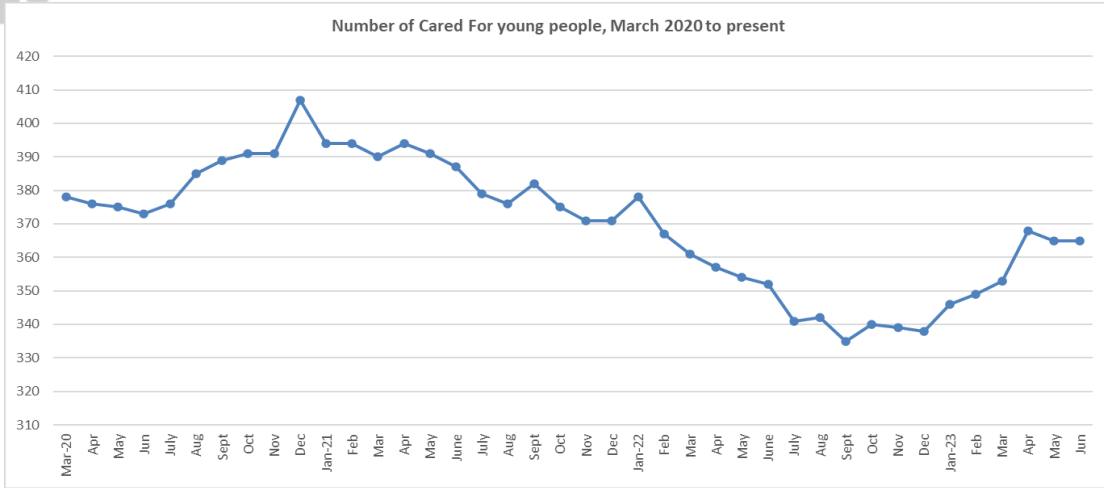
Participation and Engagement, Health, Education, Providing a Stable Home, Preparing for Adulthood

Under the Preparing for adulthood priority we have committed to:

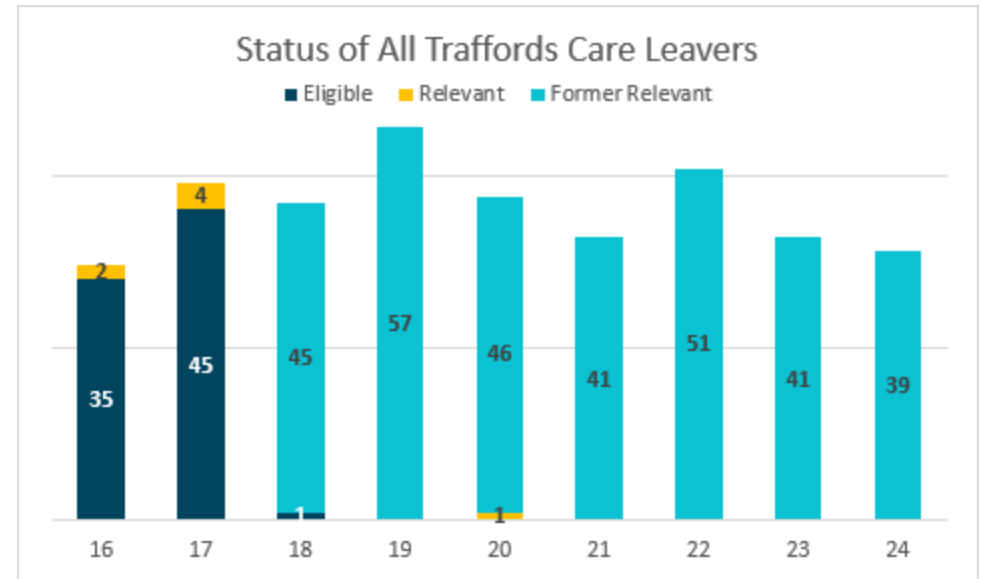
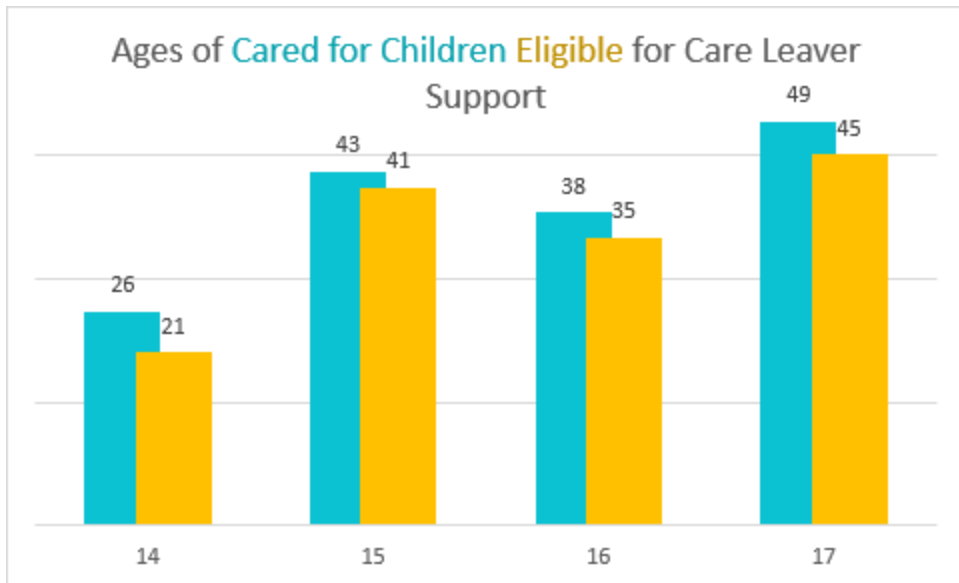
- Engage with GM care leavers workstream to shape service delivery for care leavers -
- Update the care leaver offer – so that our care leavers are clear about the support that we will offer and how this provided is clear about
- Improve the quality of pathway plans for all young people
- To develop a clear pathway into adult services for those young people with vulnerabilities,
- Ensure all providers work with the independent living skills handbook,
- Early identification of suitable young people who would benefit from the House project
- To implement an “accommodation panel” for young people between 16 and 25 years to focus on transitions planning and readiness for independent living
- Explore the health offer for Care Experienced young people and adults



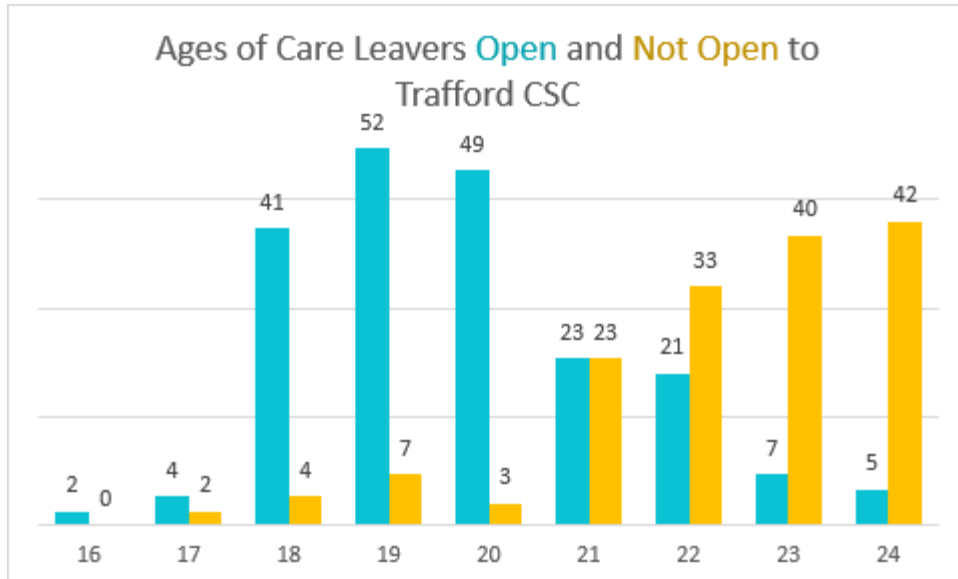
Who our Cared 4 & Care Experienced Young People Are



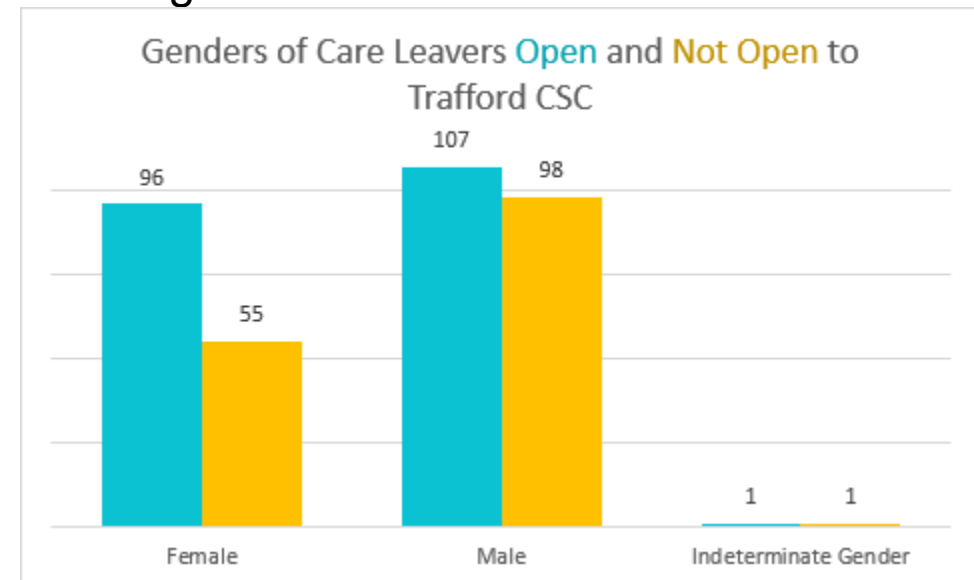
- Cared 4 numbers from 409 (January 2021) to 365 (June 2023) but we know our previously high number of cared for children means we have a growing cohort of young people that will become Care Experienced and require support
- 86 in the 16-17 age bracket
- 163 are in the 10-15 age bracket



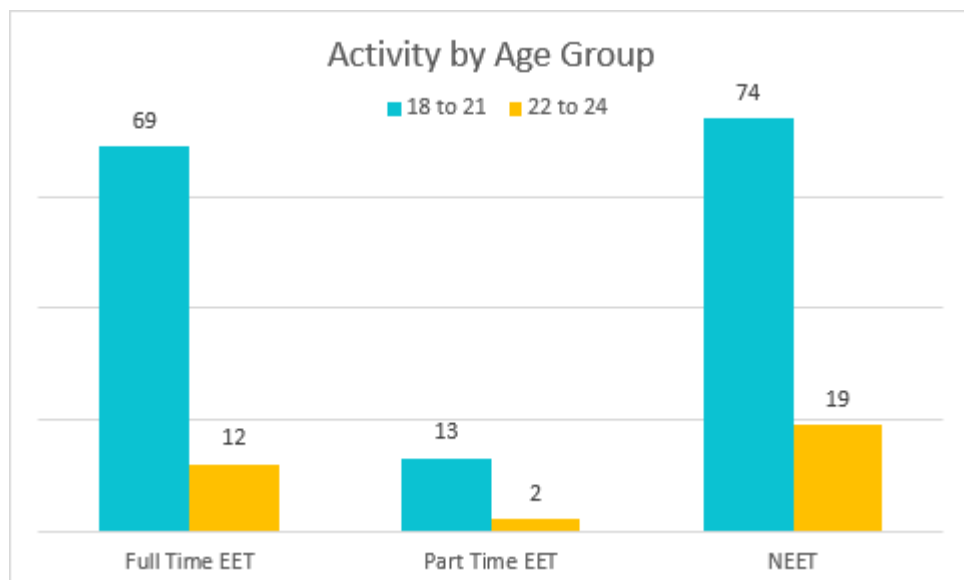
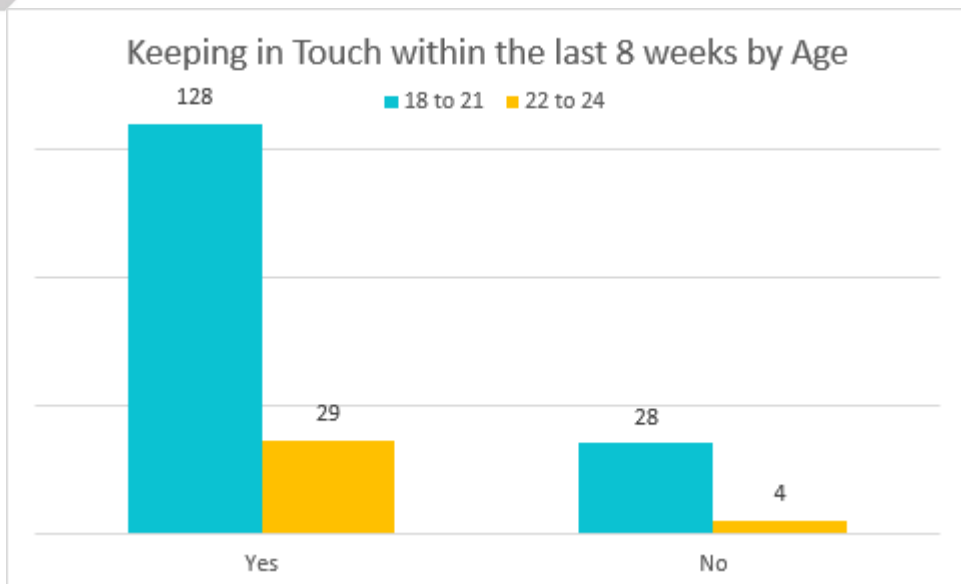
Who are Cared 4 and Care Experienced Young People Are



- The provision of advice and support to those Care Experienced adults 21-25 has previously been reliant on their requests to us
- As part of our approach we have moved to an 'opt out' rather than an 'opt-in' model with a more proactive reach out offer which is underway
- This means we will be actively supporting more of young people for longer

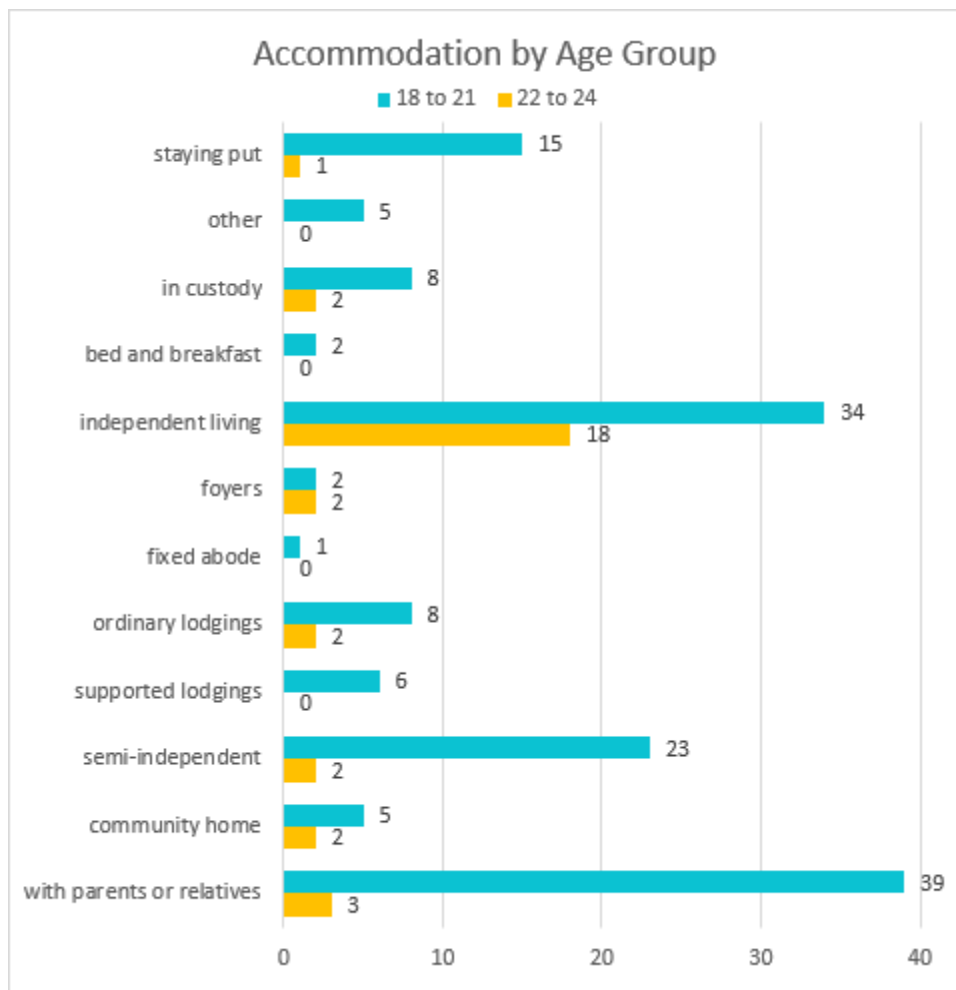


How we measure our Performance



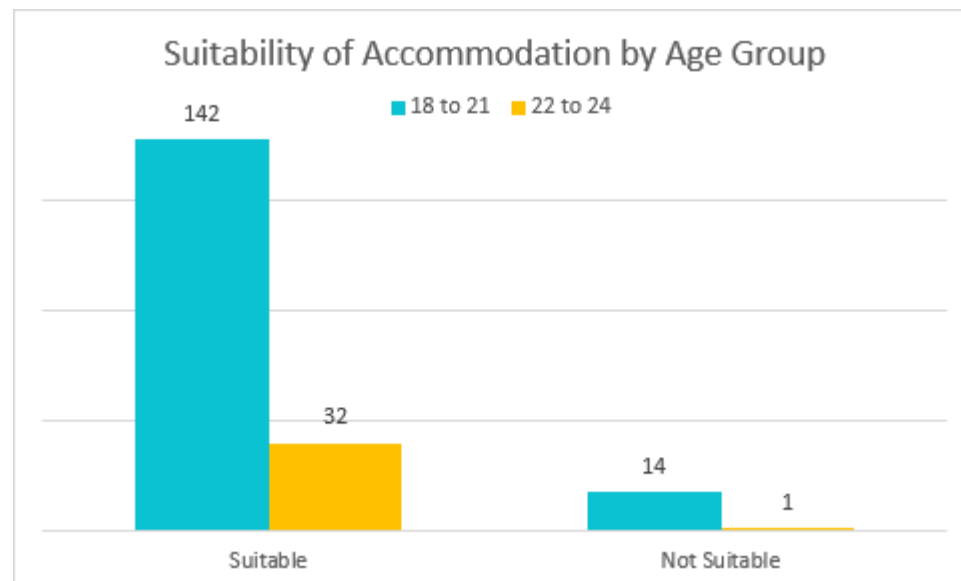
- The service have improved performance on the number of young people who are open to us having meaningful conversations which is known as 'keeping in touch.' We have more to do to increase the number of those aged 21-25 who we are providing a service too
- A significant number of Trafford Care Experienced young people & adults are positively engaged in further and higher education and apprenticeships. Several young people have gone on to university and are or have completed degrees and masters. However there more of our Care Experienced 18-21 year olds who are not in Education, Employment or Training. This decreased significantly during Covid and although we have seen some improvements there is more to do to improve in this area

How we measure our Performance



The suitability of accommodation is an important indicator as it is from a solid foundation of having a home that young people. The vast majority of our young people are positively classified as residing in suitable accommodation.

We do not count custody, no fixed above and bed and breakfast as suitable accommodation and have mechanisms in place to oversee decision making about any of our Care Experienced young people and adults in bed and breakfast at Director level.





Accommodation and Support Options

Having stable, secure base is fundamental to helping our young people achieve. Providing a range of choices and different types of accommodation for care leavers has been a priority. We have a range of options including :

- **Staying Put** - where the young person can choose to stay with their former foster carer
- **Supported Lodgings** – provide a young person with a room of their own in a private home where they are a member of the household – currently we have 5 households with availability for 6 – projected to increase to 9 by March 2024
- **2 supported accommodation options** specifically for Trafford young :
 - **Mary House** – a group living provision for 4 young people with support on site 24/7. A satellite flat for 2 young people is also supported by the staff team
 - **Forest Court** – 5 individual flats in one building with support staff and/or a concierge team on site.



House Project

The **House Project** is a way of young people securing a home at 18, having a support network, (including therapeutic intervention) around them of staff and other young people and achieving a sense of community and belonging well into their adulthood. There is a programme of support to prepare young people ahead of them moving in. Cohort 1 has been successful with 7 young people having been through the programme - 3 are currently in their homes, further 2 identified and awaiting to move in to new build properties

[Manchester and Trafford's first move-in of cohort 3: Mya receives the keys to her very own property through Jigsaw Homes | The House Project | Manchester and Trafford](#)

We have identified a further **7 young people** for co-hort 2 of the project with 7 young This is a joint commission with Manchester City Council, we work with them and our young people across both Authorities







Service Development

Delivered to Date:

- Service Improvement Plan in place
- Care Leaver Assurance Meetings – Corporate Director chairs
- Established link & involvement with Greater Manchester Care Leaver Group
- Partnered with Salford for Sector Led Improvement, delivered bespoke 2 day training session to date to Cared 4 & Care Experienced Service
- Focussing on key vulnerable groups – Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, those who are parents and those leaving custody
- Reviewed the Care Leaver Offer with young people
- Protected Characteristic endorsed by Council
- Targeted recruitment of Personal Advisors and Practice Manager with Care Experience expertise



Service Development

We have more to do to improve the service provided to our Care Experienced Young People so that they receive a consistent and quality service.

Next Steps:

- Deliver the Corporate Parenting Strategy actions linked to the Preparing for Adulthood priority
- Induction programme for our newly appointed Personal Advisors
- Ensure that Personal Advisors have consistent support supervision and management oversight from managers with expertise in Care Experience
- Training on legislation, guidance, Care Leaver Offer for all aftercare workers, residential workers, foster carers and social workers across Children's Social Care
- Establish clear offer of support in relation to the Protected Characteristic for Care Experienced young people and adults
- Event with key employers in Trafford to be planned led by the Leader of the Council
- Strengthen the quality and consistency of pathway plans



Any Questions

