

Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 14 May 2020
Time: 1.45 pm
Venue: Online

Membership

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Chair)
Councillor Peter Butlin
Councillor Les Caborn
Councillor Colin Hayfield
Councillor Kam Kaur
Councillor Jeff Morgan
Councillor Jeff Clarke
Councillor Andy Crump
Councillor Heather Timms

Items on the agenda: -

1. General

(1) Apologies

(2) Members' disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5 - 10

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2020.

(4) Public Speaking

To note any requests to speak on any items that are on the agenda in accordance with the Council's Public Speaking Scheme (see footnote to this agenda).

2. Complaints Policy

11 - 32

This report seeks Cabinet approval of the complaints policy for the County Council.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Kam Kaur

3. Amalgamation of Ridgeway and Round Oak Schools 33 - 38

This report concerns the amalgamation of two special schools in Warwick.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Colin Hayfield

4. Review of Care Leaver Offer 39 - 90

This report sets out changes to the Care Leaver Offer following a review by the County Council.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jeff Morgan

5. Parent Carer Support Pathway 91 - 154

Warwickshire County Council has a statutory obligation to undertake and provide an 'assessment' of a Parent Carer who has a child aged 0-18 with a disability. The mechanism of how an assessment is undertaken and the outcomes it achieves has been reviewed.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jeff Morgan

6. Any Other Business

7. Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

To consider passing the following resolution:

'That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972'.

8. Exempt Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Held on 20 February 2020 155 - 156

To consider the exempt minutes for signing by the Chair of Cabinet

9. Warwickshire Property Company 157 - 162

An exempt report that proposes investigation of the establishment of a Warwickshire Property Company.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Peter Butlin

Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive
Warwickshire County Council

To download papers for this meeting scan here with your camera



Disclaimers

Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members are required to register their disclosable pecuniary interests within 28 days of their election of appointment to the Council. A member attending a meeting where a matter arises in which s/he has a disclosable pecuniary interest must (unless s/he has a dispensation):

- Declare the interest if s/he has not already registered it
- Not participate in any discussion or vote
- Must leave the meeting room until the matter has been dealt with
- Give written notice of any unregistered interest to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting

Non-pecuniary interests must still be declared in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

These should be declared at the commencement of the meeting

The public reports referred to are available on the Warwickshire Web

<https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

Public Speaking

Any member of the public who is resident or working in Warwickshire, or who is in receipt of services from the Council, may speak at the meeting for up to three minutes on any matter within the remit of the Committee. This can be in the form of a statement or a question. If you wish to speak please notify Democratic Services in writing at least two working days before the meeting. You should give your name and address and the subject upon which you wish to speak. Full details of the public speaking scheme are set out in the Council's Standing Orders.

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Cabinet

Thursday, 20 February 2020

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Chair)
Councillor Peter Butlin
Councillor Les Caborn
Councillor Colin Hayfield
Councillor Kam Kaur
Councillor Jeff Morgan
Councillor Jeff Clarke
Councillor Andy Crump
Councillor Heather Timms

1. General

(1) Apologies

There were no apologies for this meeting.

(2) Members' disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

No declarations were made for this meeting.

(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting Held on 30 January 2020

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet meeting held on 30 January 2020 were agreed as an accurate record for signing by the Chair.

(4) Public Speaking

There were no public speakers at this meeting.

2. Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy

Councillor Peter Butlin (Deputy Leader – Finance and Property) introduced the report explaining that the Treasury Management Strategy is an annual report that explains how and where the County Council manages its resources. Officers were commended for the report which was considered to be clear and understandable.

Cabinet's attention was drawn in particular to page 30 of the document pack and the proposal for the early payment of pension fund contributions. This, it is expected, will lead to a gross saving of £4.7m in total cash contributions and provide a net one-off saving of £3.3m.

Regarding ethical investment (Section 8, Page 33) the meeting was informed that whilst this is a strong aspiration, the treasury management function is controlled by statute and the first priorities of the treasury must remain security, liquidity and yield.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet) reminded members that the matter before them is to be considered by Council in March 2020.

In response to the report, Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) questioned what the money saved by early payment of pension fund contributions would be used for. In addition, he asked what percentage of the pension fund is invested in companies in Warwickshire.

Councillor Richard Chattaway (Leader of the Labour Group) sought clarification over the risks around early payment of pension fund contributions. He observed that pension funds in London are shifting to an ethical basis and counselled that Warwickshire should not get left behind in this.

Councillor Seccombe reminded the meeting that the Warwickshire Pension Fund is now part of a larger pool of funds and as such its influence on investment decisions has changed in nature.

Councillor Butlin noted the role of the Local Pension Board in informing decisions on ethical investment. He added for Councillor Roodhouse that page 2 of appendix 2 includes a list of local companies that the County Council invests in. Any savings will be used for the running of services.

In response to a question from Councillor Chattaway, Richard Ennis (Interim AD Finance) explained that decisions regarding early payment have yet to be confirmed. A final piece of advice is awaited. This concerns the optimum time to enter the market. If the timing is wrong, then the Council could lose out financially. Due to this uncertainty it would not have been appropriate to include it in the 2020/21 budget. It was emphasised to Cabinet the money being discussed is not a bonus.

In closing, Councillor Butlin observed that the £3.2m discussed had not featured in any group's budget.

Resolved:

That:

1. Cabinet recommends to the County Council that the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 be approved and that its provisions have effect from 1st April 2020.
2. Cabinet recommends to the County Council that the Investment Strategy for 2020/21 is approved.
3. Cabinet recommends that the County Council requires the Strategic Director of Resources to ensure that gross borrowing does not exceed the prudential level as specified in

Appendix 1 Annex B, taking into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in the budget report.

4. Cabinet recommends that the County Council delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Resources to undertake all the activities listed in Appendix 1 Annex H of the published report.
5. Cabinet recommends that the County Council requires the Strategic Director of Resources to implement the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy as specified in Appendix 1 Annex I.
6. Cabinet recommends that the County Council requires the Strategic Director of Resources to enact an early payment of pension fund contributions subject to the conditions set out at Section 7.24 of the Treasury Management Strategy being met.

3. Determination of Admission Arrangements and Co-ordinated Scheme for the 2021/2022 Academic Year

In introducing this report Councillor Colin Hayfield (Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning) drew Cabinet's attention to paragraph 1.4 (Page 59) which states that no changes have been proposed for any school where the local authority is the admission authority.

Councillor Richard Chattaway wondered if it might have been useful for the Overview and Scrutiny committee to have reviewed the report. He added that he would be happy for it to be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Heather Timms (Portfolio Holder for Environment and Heritage & Culture) observed that the report made little reference to environmental implications adding that there would be environmental advantages in aligning home to school transport and admissions.

Regarding the complexity of the arrangements it was agreed that for next year officers be asked to produce a version that could be easily understood by parents and carers.

In closing Councillor Hayfield suggested that if the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was minded to review any aspect of the report it should focus on one element such as the relationship between admissions and home to school transport.

Resolved:

That Cabinet

- 1) approves the Admission Arrangements and Co-ordinated Scheme for school admissions during the 2021/2022 Academic year as outlined in the appendices to the published report.
- 2) authorises the Strategic Director for Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning to approve Admission Arrangements and the Co-ordinated Scheme in future years, unless those arrangements or schemes are subject to consultation as outlined in Section 1 of the published report.

4. Economic Growth Strategy 2020 - 2025

Councillor Izzi Seccombe reminded members that one of the County Council's key priorities is the growth of the economy. In addition, she emphasised the future role of 5G in promoting growth.

Councillor Richard Chattaway emphasised the need to provide an enhanced skills agenda. Councillor Heather Timms noted the growth in the "green economy" and emphasised the need to develop the correct skills in the workforce.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse suggested that there should be less reliance on Gross Value Added. The next strategy should have a greater emphasis on the evaluation of growth through the use of Warwickshire-specific indicators. In addition, Councillor Roodhouse proposed that attention be given to the circular economy. A public interest debate on the matter was proposed. Finally, Councillor Roodhouse observed that the health economy is strong in Warwickshire with health providers and research and development having a high profile.

Councillor Jeff Clarke highlighted the needs in terms of investment and training of Nuneaton and Bedworth.

Councillor Peter Butlin emphasised the future importance of 5G and added that the extent of construction work in the area highlights the need for civil engineers.

In answer to a question from Councillor Richard Chattaway the meeting was informed that the County Council works with all schools to encourage them to develop the right skills. In Nuneaton a new Education Strategy is being developed. This has received input from all the secondary schools in that part of the county.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approve the Economic Growth Strategy 2020-2025
2. That the views and suggestions of all members expressed at the meeting be taken account of in the delivery of the strategy.

5. Exclusion of Members of the Public

Resolved:

That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

6. Exempt Minutes from 30 January 2020

The exempt minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 30 January 2020 were agreed as an accurate record for signing by the Chair.

7. Regional Procurement of Fostering Placement Services from Independent Fostering Agencies through a Regional Framework.

Cabinet agreed as per the resolution in the exempt minutes.

The meeting ended at 14.35

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Chair

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Cabinet

Complaints Policy

14 May 2020

Recommendation

That Cabinet approves the Complaints Policy attached as an Appendix to the report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Policy aims to consolidate the Council's approach to complaints and to provide clear structure for customers and staff alike. It will also ensure that opportunities for learning and improving are maximised.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 As an Organisation, the Council's core purpose is to "Make Warwickshire the best it can be." The Complaints Policy is framed by our commitment to 'making information and advice freely available.'

- 2.2 In addition, the Policy is linked to the Customer Experience Strategy 2020-2025 (approved by Cabinet 16 December 2019), the Promise within the Strategy and with other core strategies, including

- The Council Plan 2025
- Digital and Technology Strategy 2018-2021
- The People Strategy
- The Commercial Strategy

3.0 Context

- 3.1 Over the years, Warwickshire County Council (WCC) has invested significant resources into developing its customer feedback model in order to ensure it continues to meet its statutory obligations and achieve County Council strategic objectives. As demand for services increases and resources continue to be constrained, the Council's approach becomes ever more important and the need for a clear and coherent Policy for working with, and for, customers is now paramount.
- 3.2 As the Council moves forward with its operating model, it is pertinent to review and refine the service offer so that it helps the Council to achieve its vision of making Warwickshire the best it can be.

- 3.3 The Policy will replace numerous pieces of guidance, advice notes and procedures as a single, coherent framework, underpinning the approach. It will be launched alongside a simplified suite of guidance, training options and website content.
- 3.4 The Policy is a key part of the customer feedback review and will be supported by a new case management system in order to refresh the Council's approach to learning from complaints. It will help the Council to proactively manage demand that has been caused by a failure to do something right for the customer, and support and empower staff to deliver a consistent experience to our customers that is as good as the best.

4.0 Policy Development

- 4.1 The draft Policy has been informed by colleagues within the Council, including colleagues from Legal Services.
- 4.2 Benchmarking was also undertaken to include the review of current complaints' policies from other local authorities, approaches by those within the locality network group and best practice Government guidelines.

5.0 Customer Feedback Ambition

- 5.1 Currently, the Council's approach to learning from complaints is more reactive than proactive. The Policy, alongside the new case management system, will allow the Council to more quickly identify themes and track trends. It will also provide structure for training and development of staff, which will build resilience and consistency and in turn, reduce failure demand.
- 5.2 Customer feedback will inform the commissioning of services and will also provide information to help improve service delivery across the Council as it should be learning from customer feedback, including complaints.
- 5.3 The Policy and its adoption will also introduce more clarity for customers and allow them to develop self-service techniques with the issues they may have.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 In summary, the Council's future service delivery must be presented clearly for both staff and members of the public. The draft Complaints Policy will provide part of the framework for that clarity of delivery and will enable a greater focus on learning from customer feedback.

7.0 Financial Implications

None.

8.0 Environmental Implications

None.

9.0. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

9.1 Policy to be implemented as soon as possible in Q1 2020-21.

9.2 New complaints case management system aims to be implemented in Q2 2020-21

Appendix

Customer Complaints Policy

Background Papers

None

| | Name | Contact Information |
|--------------------|-------------------|--|
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| Lead Director | Rob Powell | robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk 01926 412045 |
| Lead Member | Cllr Kam Kaur | kamkaur@warwickshire.gov.uk |

The report was not circulated to members prior to publication.

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Customer Complaints Policy

Version: 1.0
Date Issue: March 2020
Review date: March 2022
Reference: WCCC-
Team: Customer Relations
Protective Marking: Internal

Contents

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Introduction | Page 3 |
| The Policy | Page 4 |
| Roles and Responsibilities | Page 8 |
| Monitoring and Review | Page 9 |
| Further Information | Page 10 |
| Glossary | Page 11 |
| Appendix 1 – Exclusions | Page 12 |
| Appendix 2 – High-level processes | Page 14 |
| Appendix 3 – Timescales | Page 16 |
| Appendix 4 – Who does what? | Page 17 |
| Appendix 5 – Unreasonable behaviour | Page 18 |

Introduction

As a public authority, Warwickshire County Council wants to make sure its customers are satisfied with our services. People may wish to tell us when they are satisfied with the services they have received, make suggestions on how we could improve or tell us when things have gone wrong. We believe dealing effectively with all such feedback is essential to providing good services, learning and improving.

This Policy sets out how complaints will be dealt with, ensuring concerns raised are considered and any resulting changes or improvements made, where required.

The Policy seeks to address the need for clarity around handling complaints, specifically by those whose roles may involve receiving customer feedback. It is needed to ensure a consistent, clear, customer-focused approach is taken by all the authority's staff and should be used in line with more specific training and guidance relating to the Council's individual services.

The benefits of adopting the Policy are that:

- The authority fully understands its customers and therefore provides services that are appropriate and incorporates best practice
- The Council complies with its statutory obligations
- The Council is able to use its resources effectively to minimise failure demand
- The Council's commissioners are able to gain insight from customer's complaints and feedback to inform service delivery
- Opportunities to learn and improve are taken and used effectively
- The Council is able to use its customers' feedback to inform planning, continuous improvement and performance
- Staff will feel empowered to deal with complaints in the most effective, appropriate and efficient way
- Our customers will receive a service that is as good as the best

The opportunities presented in the adoption of the Policy are:

- More opportunities for learning and improvement across the authority
- Staff development and empowerment
- Quality assurance of services provided

The Policy has been developed in line with best practice recommendations and legislation that covers complaints about local authorities' services. It links with Warwickshire County Council's Council Plan and vision to make Warwickshire the best it can be. More specifically, it also links to its Customer Experience Strategy and the Customer Promise.

The Policy is an opportunity to consolidate best practice and provide clarity for all involved. Periodic reviews of its output and accessibility in terms of customer feedback and the authority's commitment to serving its customers well has led to the Policy's development.

The Policy

Warwickshire County Council's Complaints Policy ensures that:

- a) Users of the service can expect clarity and consistency**
- b) Customer feedback will be managed in accordance with legislation, obligations and best practice**
- c) Staff will feel empowered to take responsibility and handle customer complaints effectively**
- d) Customer feedback will be captured and used as insight to drive commissioning and service improvement**

What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with a service that the Council (or one of its partners or contractors) has provided, and that requires a response.

Who can complain?

A customer who has received a service provided by, or on behalf of the Council, can raise a complaint. A complaint can also be raised by someone who has been directly affected by such a service, or who is representing a customer.

1. Our guiding principles

All complaints are taken seriously, dealt with appropriately and where necessary acted upon.

We will:

- Put the customer at the heart of the process, showing understanding and responding clearly and appropriately to the circumstances
- Provide an outcome as soon as possible
- Keep the customer informed about the complaint's progress; do what we say we will, when we say we will do it
- Apologise if we have made a mistake, or when something has gone wrong, we will put it right as soon as possible
- Make sure our response addresses all elements of the complaint and provides explanations for any decisions made or actions taken
- Use complaint information in a positive way to prevent similar occurrences in the future

We encourage all staff to resolve customers' issues without the need to use the formal complaints process, as in many cases we can deal with concerns quickly by putting the problem right straight away. However, all issues and outcomes will be recorded to ensure that we can learn from our customers' feedback.

2. What this policy covers

a. Complaints covered under this policy:

A complaint could be in relation to any of the following:

- There has been a significant delay in providing a service
- We have made a mistake in the way we provided a service
- We have failed to deliver a service: this could relate to the quality, standard or service level
 - We have not listened properly
 - Our processes or policies have not been followed
 - Our legal or regulatory obligations have not been met
 - We have not delivered against a commitment or promise
 - Our staff have been rude, inappropriate or unprofessional

Every complaint will be considered on its individual merits and, after initial conversations, a decision will be made on whether the complaints procedure should be implemented. Such decisions will be made by the Customer Relations Team in consultation with a manager from the relevant service and if required, Legal Services.

b. Complaints not covered by this policy:

There may be occasions where a customer has expressed their dissatisfaction with a service the Council has provided but it isn't appropriate to follow the Complaints Policy. The customer will be advised of this at the earliest possible opportunity and given information about any alternative procedure.

Details of the exclusions to the Complaints Policy are contained in Appendix 1.

3. Complaint handling

Staff should always try to resolve a customer complaint quickly and efficiently when it is presented to them. If this is not possible, then they should follow the procedure designated. There are essentially three different procedures, for complaints about :

- Adult Social Care Services,
- Children's Services and
- All other services (sometimes referred to as 'general' or 'corporate' complaints).

The procedures for Adult Social Care and Children's Services are imposed by legislation ('statute'), as the customers using these services are potentially more vulnerable and the issues may be more complex. Adult Social Care complaints involve just one stage, whereas Children's Services' complaints can be taken through three stages if required.

Complaints about all other services have a two-stage (non-statutory) process but there is no automatic right to take a complaint to stage two. The customer must provide an explanation of why and how the initial response failed to fully address their concerns, and evidence what element(s) of the complaint have not been answered.

After consideration, if it is decided that there is no reason to escalate the complaint to a stage two review, this will be explained within ten working days.

If customers have exhausted the Council's process(es) for their complaint but remain unhappy, they can take their issue to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) for consideration.

4. Complaint resolution involvement

Generally, those involved in trying to resolve customers' complaints will be staff employed by the Council. However, there are times when independent people will be commissioned to be involved. Mostly, this will be due to the statutory requirements for Children's Services' complaints, as there is a need to involve independent people after stage one in order that the child's interests are fully protected.

However, occasionally there will also be a need to commission an external, independent investigator to carry out a complaint investigation or review.. This will be when the issues raised are particularly complex or there is a need for an extra level of independence. This decision will be taken by a Service Manager for the relevant service.

5. Timeliness

There are timescales applicable to customers raising complaints at each stage and to staff who are handling them. These can be found in the relevant procedural guidance and in Appendix 3 of this Policy.

Regardless of anything else, customers should always be responded to as soon as possible and kept up to date throughout with the timescale for the next contact agreed beforehand.

6. Suspending complaints

Complaint investigations may be suspended if there are concurrent investigations under one of the following procedures:

- Child protection
- Safeguarding of vulnerable adults
- Court proceedings
- Grievance
- Disciplinary
- Criminal proceedings

Once these have concluded, any outstanding issues in relation to the complaint can be considered if it is deemed appropriate to do so. A Service Manager will make the decisions to suspend and/or to continue.

7. Discontinuing complaints

The Council can decide to stop the investigation or review of a complaint if the customer fails to respond to requests for information. This will only happen if contact has been attempted at least three different times by different methods (where we have alternative contact methods, such as email addresses, telephone numbers or postal addresses) and no response has been received. The decision to discontinue a complaint will be made by a Service Manager and sent in writing.

8. Withdrawing complaints

A complaint may be withdrawn verbally or in writing at any time by the customer (or their representative). Where this occurs, the appropriate manager or a member of the

Customer Relations Team will write to the customer confirming the withdrawal and advising them that if their intention has been misunderstood, to let us know as soon as possible.

9. Re-opening complaints

A customer can request that their complaint is re-opened if:

- We have misunderstood their intention to withdraw their complaint
- Their complaint was discontinued due to their non-response, but the customer can explain why this was and is now able to engage with staff

A manager in the relevant team will consider and, if appropriate, authorise the reopening of the complaint.

10. Unreasonable behaviour or vexatious complaints

The inclusion of this section within the policy is to ensure those customers who pursue complaints in an unreasonable manner or where we deem the complaint to be persistent or vexatious, are dealt with appropriately, whilst ensuring that other customers or Council staff are not adversely affected. Examples of unreasonable behaviour are detailed in Appendix 5.

It is not possible to devise a single strategy to deal with complaints that are pursued unreasonably, or which are persistent or vexatious, as each case must be looked at on its own merits. If the Council considers that a customer's behaviour is unreasonable, the following procedure will be followed:

- We will inform the customer, in writing, on the telephone or at a face to face meeting, why we feel their behaviours or actions are unacceptable
- We will give them the opportunity to change their behaviours within a reasonable timescale before taking any further action
- Should the behaviours persist, evidence of these will be gathered by the Council and presented to the relevant Service Manager
- The Service Manager will review the evidence, referring to other departments within the Council as appropriate, and then decide on any restrictions to be applied to the customer and how long these should last

The Council can apply restrictions in the ways the customer can access its services, which may include one or more of the following:

- The Council will take no further action on their complaint
- Their use of the Council's complaints system will be limited to a single point of contact
- Contact will be restricted to one form of contact only
- The Council will not respond to any further contact unless legally obliged to do so
- Their right to enter Council premises will be restricted or removed
- Legal action may be taken, including injunctions or court orders

The customer will be notified of any restrictions applied to them in writing within five working days of the decision.

There is no right of appeal to Warwickshire County Council regarding the implementation of this section of the Policy. We would however direct the customer to

the LGSCO should they not agree with the application of any such restrictions. Information concerning the restrictions will be shared with relevant staff. This information will also be registered on the customer's record whilst restrictions are in place.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for delivering the Complaints Policy, especially where their roles involve customer contact. Those undertaking investigations or reviews are responsible for meeting standards relating to timeliness and quality.

The **Complaints Manager** for Warwickshire County Council is responsible for ensuring that complaints across the authority are collated, monitored and reported and that we learn from them when we have done something wrong.

Strategic Directors and **Assistant Directors** are responsible for the performance of their own service areas in relation to customer feedback and complaint handling.

The **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)** is an independent body who considers complaints once the local authority's processes have been exhausted. They may ask us to deliver a remedy they deem appropriate once they have investigated.

The **Link Officer** role is the person designated in the authority to provide close liaison with the LGSCO. The role is usually allocated to a member of the Legal Services Team.

A **Service Manager** in the relevant service area is responsible for reviewing and applying any communication restrictions on customers who are deemed to be exhibiting unreasonable behavior. They are also responsible for suspending and resuming a complaint investigation and authorising the re-opening of a complaint. Ultimately, they are also responsible for ensuring that complaints in their service areas are responded to in accordance with the policy.

Customer Relations Officers are part of the Customer Relations Team and are responsible for reviews at stage two of the complaints process(es) as appropriate. They will also offer guidance and support to their colleagues in relation to complaint handling where required.

Legal Services are the team who will provide advice and guidance in relation to complaint handling where there may be a technical or legal point at issue, e.g. consent to bring a complaint or whether the complaints process is the appropriate route to follow.

Independent Investigators are complaint handling specialists that are not employed by the Council. They are responsible for carrying out a fair and timely investigation of a customer's complaint to the same standards as those that staff are held accountable to.

Independent People are complaint handling specialists that are not employed by the Council. They are responsible for overseeing Children's Services stage two

investigations by staff who are independent of the service complained about. They are also responsible for bringing the same level of oversight to stage three Children's Services panel hearings and ensuring that the needs of the child are fully protected.

Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Complaints Manager and in accordance with current Council procedures and legislation.

The Policy will also be monitored in line with feedback received from staff, stakeholders, customers and their representatives and alongside the complaints procedure and guidance provided.

Indicators of success will include:

- Positive feedback from users of the Policy
- A continuing trend of learning and improvement within the authority
- Empowered and efficient staff

Further Information

Training and guidance documents in relation to complaint handling can be located on the Council's intranet site.

The Customer Relations Team can provide support and guidance in relation to complaint handling, including timescales, the specific procedures and the complaints case management system. They can be contacted by telephone on: 01926 414102 or by email at: customerrelations@warwickshire.gov.uk.

Information in other formats

If this information is difficult to understand, we can provide it in another format, for example, large print, audio tape, easy read, or in another language.

Please contact the Interpreting and Translation Unit
on 01926 410410

Glossary

Commission – buying in a service that will meet the required needs of a specific situation

Customer – a person (or their representative) who is the recipient of a service provided by, or on behalf of, the Council

Feedback – complaints, comments or questions that relate to a service provided by the Council and which may require a response

Resolution / Resolve – a conclusion, or coming to a conclusion in relation to the complaint that has been raised. This conclusion and any associated remedy aims to get the agreement of the customer who has complained but isn't dependent on that agreement

Remedy – the thing done, recommended or offered, in order to put right a service failure that has been identified

Statutory – underpinned by legislation, i.e. a legal requirement

Stage two review – for general complaints (i.e. non-statutory), this is a review of the stage one investigation, rather than a re-investigation. The review seeks to understand whether the stage one investigation was carried out in a fair and proper way and whether the conclusion was reasonable in the circumstances

Appendices

1. Exclusions from the Complaints Policy

i) **Requests for service or information** - these requests alert us to work to be done and only become a complaint if we do not deal with them appropriately and within the agreed timescale

ii) **Appeals processes against a decision made** - for some services there are alternative statutory appeals, tribunal processes or other policies in place which must be used rather than this complaints policy. These include (but are not limited to):

- Issues of parking notices such as parking tickets and the recovery process
- Decisions on planning applications
- Decisions to exclude pupils from school
- Special education provision for a child
- Appeals against the outcome of an assessment under the Department for Transport 'Eligible subject to further assessment' criteria regarding the issue of a Blue Badge
- Decisions about the school a child should attend
- Complaints about Academies

iii) **Not agreeing with a judgment or decision made** – Very often we will be called on to make decisions or form judgments about whether, or how, to deliver services to customers. Very often we will reach those judgments without any fault on our part and the customer may still be dissatisfied. The complaints process is not there to provide an opportunity for customers to express dissatisfaction with a decision or judgment in the absence of fault or to have that judgment or decision re-opened or taken again. Dissatisfaction must be accompanied by a Council failure of a kind described in **2a** above to be treated as a complaint under this policy.

iv) **Complaints about Councillors** – All members (elected Councillors and co-opted members) are expected to work to the highest standards of integrity. They agree to work to a Code of Conduct setting out how they should behave towards members of the public, people working for the council and themselves. Complaints about Councillors breaching the Code of Conduct are dealt with by the Monitoring Officer.

v) **Complaints made more than one year after the customer became aware of the issue** (unless there are exceptional circumstances) - this is because such complaints can be difficult to investigate fully or fairly due to the passage of time

vi) **Staff personnel issues** (such as disciplinary or grievance) or recruitment and selection process – this should be progressed with guidance from specific HR policies and procedures.

vii) **Allegations of fraud, theft or corruption by a member of staff** – any serious concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the Council's Internal Audit team at: tellusaboutfraud@warwickshire.gov.uk.

viii) **Complaints about data protection** – complaints about how the Council has processed personal data or about information sharing, disclosure, retention or information security should initially be raised with the service responsible for the data to enable any issues to be resolved. Should there remain concerns on how the Council handles data, the customer should contact the Data Protection Officer by email at: inforights@warwickshire.gov.uk.

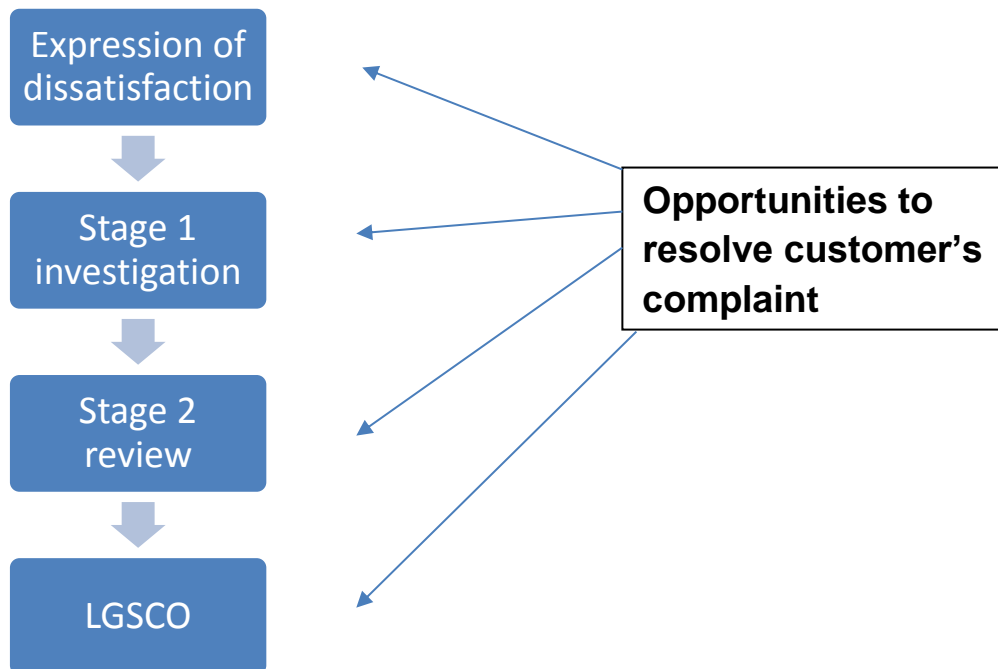
ix) **Complaints that have already exhausted our process** – if the same complaint has received a final written decision or the complaint has already been referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) or the Information Commissioner (ICO).

x) **Complaints that are already part of legal or Court proceedings, or claims for compensation** – if the issues of the complaint are already part of a legal case then this will take precedence over the complaint procedure (also, see section 6). Compensation claims that are not part of a complaint will be dealt with under a separate internal process.

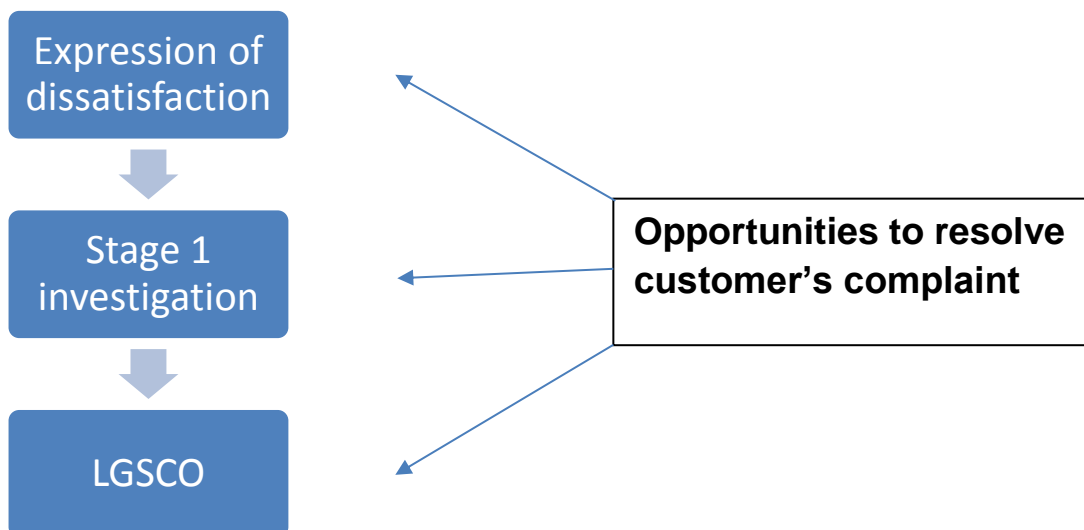
xi) **Complaints about one of the Council's policies** – if someone complains about the way the Council has decided to deliver its services or how they have complied with legislation, government or other guidance, this will be dealt with separately by a senior manager.

2. Complaints Processes: high-level view

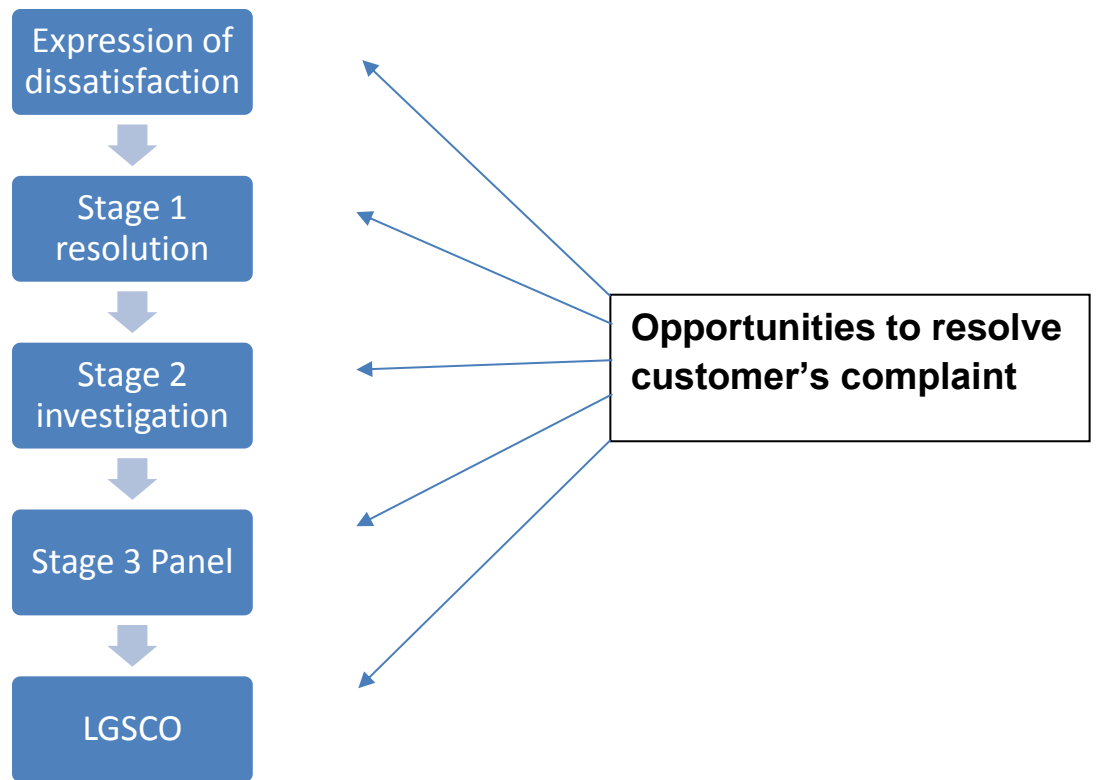
a. General Complaints Process



b. Adult Social Care Complaints Process



c. Children's Services Complaints Process



3. Complaints Processes: Timescales

The timescales for handling complaints are detailed below.

The timescale ranges for General and Adult Social Care complaints take account of those issues that might be more complex. The lower timescale should always be aimed for and customers should always be updated accordingly.

Children's Services' complaint timescales are set by statute and therefore cannot be altered. The range for stage 3 (Panels) reflects: the time taken to arrange and set the panel date (30 days), the time after which a report should be written and presented to the Assistant Director of Children's Services (5 days), and the time within which they should then write to the customer responding to the report's recommendations.

| Complaint Service | Stage 1 timescale (working days) | Stage 2 timescale (working days) | Stage 3 timescale (working days) |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| General | 10-30 | 30 | n/a |
| Adult Social Care | 10-30 | n/a | n/a |
| Children's Services | 10-20 | 25-65 | 30+5+15 |

Alongside this, there are timescales we ask the customer to comply with. They are:

- To bring their complaint to us within 12 months of being aware of the issue
- To request an escalation to stage two (where appropriate) within 20 days of receiving the stage one response
- To request an escalation to stage three (Panel) within 20 days of receiving the stage two response

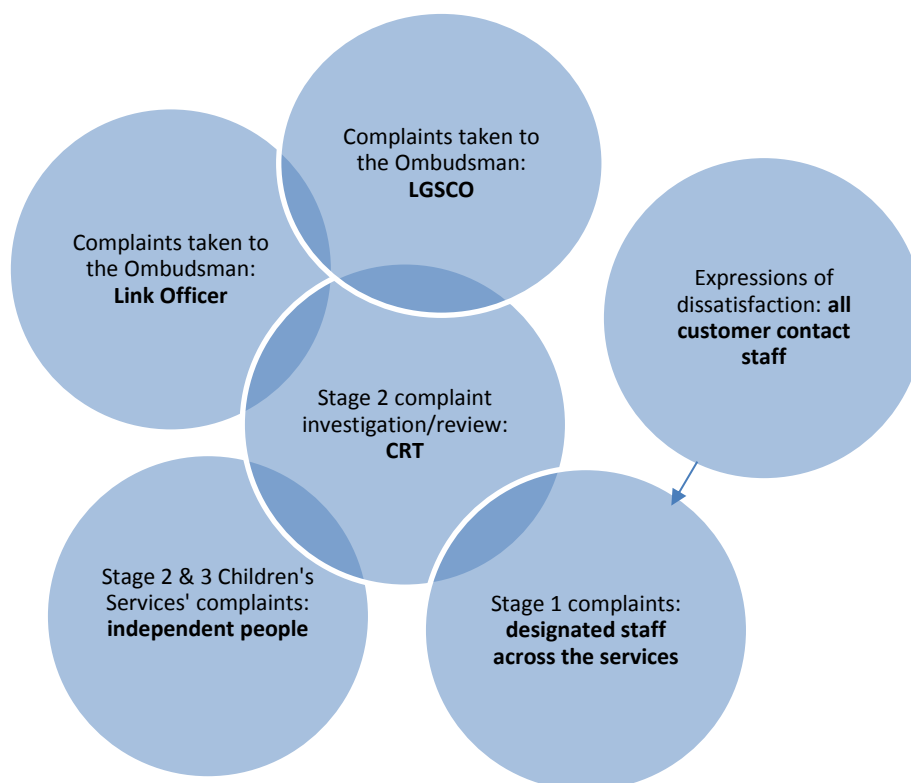
A response will be deemed to be received by the customer on the date the response is sent if sent by email to the customer or the day after posting if sent by first class post or the third business day after posting if sent by second class post.

4. Complaints Processes: who does what?

The individual services designate appropriate staff to handle complaints at stage one.

The Customer Relations Team (CRT) has an overview of complaints across the authority. They will handle all stage two complaints, as well as arranging for independent people to satisfy the statutory requirements of the Children's Services' complaints process at stages two and three. They also provide support and guidance to the rest of the authority where required, including sharing information and feedback.

However, this does not detract from the key role that all customer contact staff across the Council have in delivering good service and resolving customers' issues as soon as they are presented.



5. Examples of Unreasonable Behaviour

A complaint could be considered to be pursued unreasonably or to be a persistent or vexatious complaint where the customer:

- Refuses to specify or agree the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- Insists on referring to one, specific member of staff despite being advised that this is not needed
- Persists in pursuing a complaint where the Complaints Policy has been fully and properly implemented and exhausted
- Refuses to accept a decision made on a complaint, repeatedly arguing points with no new evidence or insufficient evidence
- Refuses to co-operate with the complaint investigation process
- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint procedure
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be considered and commented on
- Sends repeated, persistent or abusive communications in connection with the same complaint (or with minor additions or variations) or makes / publishes derogatory statements about staff or Members
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint has been addressed or is groundless)
- Makes, or has made, excessive demands on the time and resources of staff
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds and/or making unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the complaint
- Has harassed, used threats to intimidate, or been personally abusive, offensive or aggressive on repeated occasions despite documented evidence of this being described to the complainant as unacceptable
- Knowingly provides falsified information
- Publishes unacceptable, derogatory information or statements about the Council, its staff or the services it provides, including those through partner organisations on social media or other public forums
- Is known to have recorded meetings or face to face/telephone conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of other parties involved
- Has made a number of contacts in person, by telephone, letter, e-mail or fax and/or use of a 'scatter gun' approach by pursuing complaints with several members of the organisation and/or external organisations, despite being informed that this is not necessary

Cabinet

Amalgamation of Ridgeway and Round Oak Schools

14 May 2020

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That Cabinet approves the amalgamation of Round Oak and Ridgeway Schools
- 1.2 That Cabinet authorises the Strategic Director for Communities to take such steps as he considers necessary to enable the amalgamated school to open from September 2020

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Annual Education Sufficiency Update published in June 2019 shows that in the Warwick/Leamington (Central) area of Warwickshire, an additional 78 special school places will be required by academic year 2022/23. Some of these places will be provided by expanding the number of Specialist Resourced Provision places (in mainstream schools) but the vast majority will need to come via an expansion of the two existing special schools in the area.
- 2.2 Ridgeway Special School is for primary aged pupils. The site of the school is small and there is no scope for further building. Round Oak School is for secondary aged pupils. It has a much larger site and there are significant opportunities for development. Extra places could therefore be provided through an expansion of Round Oak School. However, this would allocate new classrooms to secondary aged pupils only, when there is also a demand for primary places. By merging the two schools but continuing to operate over the two sites, the additional demand can be balanced across the two phases.
- 2.3 Amalgamation of the two schools also has other benefits. A single all-through school will lead to economies of scale, enabling school leaders to make more efficient use of resources, ensure that children progress well and achieve good outcomes. All other areas of the county have all-through special schools.
- 2.4 The SEND and Inclusion Strategy pledges that children and young people with SEND will make good progress and transition smoothly into the next stage of their education. By combining the two schools, the transition from primary to secondary will be far smoother because pupils will be moving within the same school.

- 2.5 When amalgamating two schools, the only legally acceptable process is for one school to close and the other expand. In this case, Ridgeway School is popular and over-subscribed. Round Oak has many unfilled pupil places and some Warwick parents are transporting their children to Welcombe Hills School in Stratford which is now over-subscribed. In August 2019, the Governing Body of Round Oak was replaced by an Interim Executive Board.
- 2.6 The proposal is therefore that the schools should amalgamate by Round Oak closing and Ridgeway expanding.
- 2.7 In accordance with statutory guidelines, an initial consultation was carried out between 3rd February and 1st March 2020 to consider how key stakeholders felt about the principle of amalgamating the two schools. This included meetings at both schools for staff and parents and a letter describing proposals was sent to stakeholders. The consultation was sent to local council members and Members of Parliament.
- 2.8 Written feedback is summarised in Appendix 1.
- 2.9 When written and verbal feedback from all stakeholders was considered, Education Services SLT felt that the opinion of stakeholders was broadly in support of the merger but that two issues which had been raised needed to be considered. The first was that the proposed name of the merged school would be Ridgeway School. This was of particular concern to pupils and parents of Round Oak School since most had known Ridgeway as the primary school and pupils had left that school to go to secondary school.
- 2.10 The use of the Ridgeway name was also perceived by some parents and staff at Round Oak to indicate more of a takeover than an amalgamation. This perception would be unhelpful since the intention is to create a culture in the new school where all staff, pupils and parents feel equally valued.
- 2.11 The second concern was that current leaders in the two schools may not have the capacity to lead and manage the merged school. These matters were considered by leaders and governors of both schools together with WCC officers supporting the process. It was agreed that pupils and parents should be consulted on a name for the merged school and that governors from both schools should work together to agree an appropriate staffing structure for the merged school. This would include a new senior leadership team to support the current headteacher of Ridgeway in leading and managing the provision across the two sites.
- 2.12 It was further agreed that the current substantive headteacher of Ridgeway School would be the best person to lead the new school.
- 2.13 Pupils in Year 6 at Ridgeway and their parents would be most affected by the proposal to merge the schools. Parents of these pupils welcomed the plans, and several have subsequently changed their minds about sending their children to schools in a different area.

- 2.14 The statutory public consultation took place between 9th March and 3rd April. Details were published in the press and on the Warwickshire CC website. Proposals were sent to the parents and staff of both schools and all democratic representatives in the area. Feedback was collated and evaluated by Education Services SLT. A summary of written evidence is attached in Appendix 2. Only 10 people responded in writing to this phase of the consultation, but overall feedback was supportive of proposals with 8 in support and only 2 against.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 When the schools are merged then they would operate as one school over two sites. Almost all staff would work at one or other of the two sites and there would be little additional expense in paying for transport between them. The only other cost to merging the schools would be in making changes to signage and stationery with the new school name. These costs would be more than offset by savings. Although per pupil funding would be unchanged, the amalgamation would allow pupils easier access to facilities on both sites and economies of scale would mean a lower proportion of funding is spent on overheads. For example, only one headteacher and business manager would be needed whereas currently there are two. Therefore, more resources can be allocated to addressing the needs of pupils and helping them to make academic progress.
- 3.2 Ridgeway school cannot expand on its existing site to respond to the increase in demand. The proposed merger with Round Oak offers the opportunity to build more capacity on one site and the flexibility to move pupils e.g. pupils in Years 5 & 6, to the new buildings. This is the most cost-effective response. The alternative would be that primary schools in other areas would need to expand. This would mean higher transport costs and inconvenience to pupils and parents.
- 3.3 In the current academic year, Round Oak School has been receiving support from WCC officers through a sustainability action group (SAG), which has had oversight of recovery of its budget position, working with the Interim Executive Board (IEB). It is projected that the school will have a reduced residual deficit at closure. The merger will allow the creation of a staffing structure across the two sites which will be financially viable for the foreseeable future. The Local Authority would have statutory responsibility for any residual deficit at point of closure.

4. Environmental Implications

- 4.1 The amalgamation allows the demand for additional special school places to be met in the most efficient way. Alternative solutions are likely to lead to pupils travelling further to school and hence increased cost and environmental damage.

- 4.2 Developing provision on the Round Oak site ensures that the process of creating new classrooms can be done in the most efficient way, reducing the impact on the environment.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 Should the amalgamation not take place, the need for additional special school places in the primary phase will need to be met in some other way. Alternative solutions are likely to involve additional cost. For example, a primary special school in another area could be expanded but that would mean that some pupils would have to travel further and there would be additional transport costs.
- 5.2 Amalgamation of the two schools also has other benefits. A single all-through will lead to economies of scale, enabling school leaders to make more efficient use of resources to ensure that children progress well. All other areas of the county have all-through schools.
- 5.3 The SEND and Inclusion strategy pledges that children and young people with SEND will make good progress and transition smoothly into the next stage of their education. By combining the two schools, the transition from primary to secondary will be far smoother because pupils will be moving within the same school.

6. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 6.1 Decision to be released on 21/05/2020
- 6.2 The amalgamated school will open, if agreed, on 1/09/2020

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Comments made during initial consultation 3rd February – 1st March 2020

Appendix 2 – Consultation responses 9th March to 3rd April 2020

Background Papers

None

Supporting Papers

1. [WCC SEND & Inclusion Strategy](#)
2. [Annual Sufficiency update](#)

| | Name | Contact Information |
|--------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Report Author | Steve Pendleton | stevependleton@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Assistant Director | Ian Budd | ianbudd@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Lead Director | Strategic Director for Communities | markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Lead Member | Portfolio Holder for Education & Learning | colinhayfield@warwickshire.gov.uk |

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Councillor Pam Williams, Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi

Appendix 1

Comments made during initial consultation 3rd February – 1st March 2020

| Concern | Number of responses |
|--|----------------------------|
| Don't agree with new name | 20 |
| Concerns about how the school will be led & managed | 17 |
| All through provision is better | 5 |
| Needs two heads | 5 |
| Change of uniform difficult for pupils | 4 |
| Concern about recruitment process | 2 |
| Concerns regarding specific staffing matters | 2 |
| Round Oak closure will be bad for staff and pupil morale | 2 |
| All through provision is not desirable | 1 |
| Concern about traffic and building work | 1 |
| Negative effect on Ridgeway | 1 |
| New school will be too big | 1 |
| Off-site services | 1 |

Summary of support or opposition to merger during initial consultation 3rd February – 1st March 2020

| In support? | Local resident | Parent - other school | Parent-Ridgeway | Parent-Round Oak | Staff-Ridgeway | Staff-Round Oak | DNS | Grand Total |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|
| Neutral | | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| No | 1 | | 1 | 8 | | 1 | 6 | 17 |
| Yes | | | 7 | 1 | 1 | 2 | | 11 |
| | 1 | 1 | 10 | 10 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 37 |

Appendix 2

Consultation responses 9th March to 3rd April 2020

| Agree with merger | Number of responses |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Yes | 8 |
| No | 2 |
| DNS | 0 |

Cabinet

Review of Care Leaver Offer

14 May 2020

Recommendations

That Cabinet approves the revised care leaver offer to include:

1. a change in age for payment of council tax for all care leavers from the ages of 18-21 years to the ages 18-25 years old.
2. an increase to the age that a care leaver can claim a university bursary of £1000 up to the age of 25.
3. a winter fuel payment of £100 payable in November each year.
4. a counselling service to young people who wish to access their files should they wish to access this service (for any care leaver aged 18-25).
5. the purchase of a baby box for any eligible care leaver open to the Leaving Care Service who is a new parent including essential items such as nappies etc up to the cost of £50 for any care leaver aged 16-25.
6. the funding of a £200 flat rate payment to purchase essential items such as a cot, buggy, car seat for any eligible care leaver open to the service, aged 16-25, who is becoming a new parent.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Warwickshire's first local offer was presented at Corporate Parenting Panel on the 5th April 2018 and agreed at Cabinet on the 10th May 2018.
- 1.2 The Department for Education guidance (February 2018) states that local authorities can choose how regularly they review their local offer but expect local authorities to review and update it at least every 2-3 years following consultation with care leavers.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the progress of the Warwickshire Local Offer to care leavers during the period from 1 June 2018 – 31 January 2020 and seek approval regarding Warwickshire's reviewed Local Offer for care leavers for 2020 – 2021.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 The table below summarises the financial impact of changes to the care leaver offer. The total value of the offer is estimated to be £137,777 This includes an additional spend from 2020-2021 with changes to our offer of £39,410. The full cost of the offer will be funded by the existing budget within the Children & Families Service.

| Recommended changes to Local Offer | Existing Estimate Offer Cost | Recommended changes to local offer | Additional Annual Cost | Revised Total Offer Estimated Cost |
|--|------------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Elements of the existing offer not subject to change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Driving Lessons - Grand mentor Scheme - Gym Memberships - Independence Training | £53,367 | None | £0 | £53,367 |
| Council Tax - The current agreed offer is to pay three years of Council Tax for all eligible care leavers between 18 – 21 years of age. | £20,000 | If we were to extend this offer up to 25-year olds this would be a cost increase of £5000 based on the number of current 21-25 year old eligible care leavers open to the service. | £5,000 | £25,000 |
| To increase the age that an eligible care leaver can claim a university bursary of £1000 from 21 years up to the age of 25 years | £25,000 | We are seeing a slight increase in young people attending university. At present we have 26 young people at university and we have paid 24 bursaries at £1000.00 each. At the moment there are four young people who started their course over the | £8,000 | £33,000 |

| | | | | |
|---|----------------|--|----------------|-----------------|
| | | age of 21. We envisage an additional cost of £8,000.00 in total per year. | | |
| Provide a winter fuel payment of £100 payable in November of each year to eligible care leavers 18 – 25 who are living independently. | £0 | Based on the number of eligible care leavers who are qualified to receive this funding the costing would be £17,900 | £17,900 | £17,900 |
| To provide an optional counselling service to young people who wish to access their files for any eligible care leaver aged 18 – 25. | £0 | We would be looking to recruit a worker on a zero-hour contract to undertake this work costing £5000.00 and would need to be continually reviewed. | £5,000 | £5,000 |
| Provide a baby box to any eligible care leaver open to the Leaving Care Service who is a new parent including essential items such as nappies etc up to the cost of £70 for any care leaver aged 16 – 25. | £0 | We currently have 52 young people who are young parents. Thirteen of these parents had their baby in 2019 therefore it would have been a cost of £910.00 | £910 | £910 |
| A flat rate payment of £200 to purchase a large item such as cot, buggy, car seat for any eligible care leaver open to the service who is becoming a new parent aged 16 – 25. | £0 | The total cost based on data from last year will be of £2,600 | £2,600 | £2,600 |
| Total | £98,367 | | £39,410 | £137,777 |

3. Environmental Implications

None

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 On 31 December 2019, Warwickshire had 607 young people who are care leavers and aged 16-25 years old. This is an increase of 74 young people since February 2018.
- 4.2 The National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum Audit Tool was used to review Warwickshire's local offer alongside our own consultation with young people. This Audit Tool was created by the NLCBMF and combines local offers from across the country. It provides examples from multiple local authorities and includes best practice which could be promoted in our own local offer. It is not expected of any one local authority's local offer to include all examples provided in the audit tool but is a good benchmark for Warwickshire to consider.
- 4.3 Warwickshire's local offer is based on the services we already have in place and looks to build and strengthen these further ensuring better outcomes for care leavers.
- 4.4 Please see Appendix A for additional information on the positive impact of the previously agreed local offer.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 Once agreement has been made, these changes can be made immediately, and the information shared with workers and young people.

Appendices

1. Support currently provided to Care Leavers under the Local Offer
2. National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum Audit Tool

Background Papers

None

| | Name | Contact Information |
|--------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Report Author | Sharon Shaw | sharonshaw@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Assistant Director | John Coleman | johncoleman@warwickshire.gov.uk |
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| Lead Member | Portfolio Holder for Children's Services | cllrmorgan@warwickshire.gov.uk |

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): None

Other members: None

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Appendix 1 - Support currently provided to Care Leavers under the Local Offer

Support to be extended to age 25 years

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced a new duty to local authorities, to provide Personal Advisor (PA) support to all care leavers up to the age of 25 if they want this support.

As of 3rd February 2020, 51 young people over the age of 21 years of age have been supported by the leaving care service. Support was offered for a variety of reasons including general support (88%), support with education, employment and training (50%), support with health and wellbeing (57%), support with accommodation (50%) and help with independence skills (26%). An additional PA was recruited through money from the Department for Education New Burdens Grant. It is likely that there will be an increase in the number of young people who wish to remain open beyond the age of 21 years and the one additional worker will not be able to meet the demands.

Current funding from the Department for Education New Burdens Grant is £66, 412.00 and is likely to rise in the new financial year, this money has been used to recruit additional staff to work with the increase in young people.

Council Tax

In a twelve-month period from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019 we have made council tax payments for 44 young people at a total cost of £13, 488.61. The estimated costs had been £25,000.00 so the spend has been half of the estimated cost.

The payment of council tax has assisted in reducing the number of young people who are evicted from properties due to occurring debt through none payment of council tax.

Apprenticeships

Our local offer introduced 5 apprenticeship opportunities which were ringfenced for care leavers. Since April 2018 Warwickshire County Council have employed 5 care leavers as apprentices through these ringfenced opportunities, 1 care experienced apprentice was already in post prior to the Local Offer. All of these apprenticeships are within Children's Services and the young people have been heavily supported throughout. To date only one care leaver out of these 6 apprentices has dropped out prior to completing. Two young people have recently completed the full programme and are awaiting their results and following successful interviews they have been offered positions within the Participation Team supporting other care experienced young people on a full-time contract. One young person has also been offered a post as a family support worker. These are the first care experienced apprentices employed by Warwickshire who have successfully completed the apprenticeship.

The payment of the national minimum wage and an additional bursary of £1000 have made undertaking an apprenticeship a feasible option financially for our young people with the potential offer of employment on completion.

A recent meeting held with the apprenticeship hub saw over 20 care experienced young people attend to express an interest in completing an apprenticeship with

Warwickshire. Alongside the additional financial incentives it has been apparent that our apprentices require perhaps more emotional support than their peers given that they often live independently and do not have the immediate support of family. The two new posts within the participation will act as peer support to future apprentices.

In addition to the ringfenced apprenticeships we have had three care leavers who have secured apprenticeships within Warwickshire County Council in Children's Services, Finance and Engineering. One of these young people has dropped out of his apprenticeship due to personal circumstances.

Driving Lessons

The offer supports 10 driving lessons and this can be used in conjunction with the Rees Foundation Offer of £700 of driving lessons in addition to the ones funded by the Local Authority. To date 46 young people have been provided with driving lessons at a cost of £11,598.50.

Young people have reported that being able to have driving lessons has built their self-confidence, given them a sense of pride and has enabled them to "feel the same as their peers" who are learning to drive. Passing their driving test will open up employment opportunities that they may otherwise not have been able to consider.

Gym memberships

Following discussion with representatives of all local district/borough councils and in consultation with third party contractors between July – October 2018, concessionary membership rates were agreed (per district/borough) for Warwickshire Care Leavers up to the age of 21 who reside in Warwickshire as follows:

Stratford District Everyone Active offer a full years' membership covering use of the Fitness Suite, Swimming Pools, health suites and group exercise for £220 per year (£18.33 per month). This is required to be paid in full on application. If a care leaver leaves the district then money will be refunded on a pro rata basis.

Warwick District offers a full years' membership covering use of the Fitness Suite, Swimming Pools, health suites and group exercise for £149.50. This is required to be paid in full on application. If a care leaver leaves the district then money will be refunded on a pro rata basis.

Nuneaton & Bedworth Everyone Active offer a swim pass only at £20 per month, or swim & gym £25.25 (duplicating the student rate).

Rugby GLL offer a "Better for Everyone" package at £26.80 per month (full access to gym, swim, & sauna).

North Warks Borough Council at Atherstone offer a gym, swim & classes, free of charge to Warwickshire County Council.

If a care leaver wished to access a private gym or exercise classes payment can be made which is capped at £25 a month. Between January – December 2019 we made payments for a gym membership for 91 care leavers at a cost of £8,500.41.

To date the following number of young people have taken advantage of the offer at a cost of £13,779.92.

| Gym | No. of Young People who have a membership | Cost per year |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
| Stratford | TBC | TBC |
| Warwick | 11 | £1,644.50 |
| Nuneaton & Bedworth | 2 | £480 |
| Rugby | 0 | £0 |
| North Warwickshire | 0 | £0 |
| Private/Alternative | This includes payment for dance classes and boxing, judo etc instead of gym. | £11,655.42 |
| Total Costings | | £13,779.92. |

Being a member of a gym has contributed to physical and emotional health and well being, some young people report attending the gym together they have advised that this has helped with their emotional wellbeing by offering them the opportunity to socialise.

Accredited Independence Training

Warwickshire have commissioned Doorways to facilitate independence training for young people. From April 2019- December 2019 26 young people attended 56 sessions and gained 75 AQA qualifications. There have been some issues in engaging young people and the feedback from young people is that they prefer one to one sessions rather than group sessions, this clearly has an impact on resources. To date the cost of the independence training with Doorway has been £2988.65.

In addition to this, 16 foster carers have attended Preparation for Independence Training and a further 5 foster carers have completed the online training. Although they are unable to provide young people with accredited independence training this is a supportive, realistic way of teaching care leavers within the home environment.

We are confident that our young people are now being better prepared to live independently and in addition to the above are now moving forward in developing an app an independence booklet that can be used by PA's and Social workers.

Mentor scheme

The original local offer recognised the importance of mentoring for young people. The Asylum and Leaving Care Service have set up a two-year pilot scheme to work in collaboration with Volunteering Matters to provide a Grandmentoring service. Since April 2019, we have worked closely with Volunteer Matters who have trained 40 Grandmentors and made 11 successful matches with care leavers with a further 6 care leavers who have been matched with their Grandmentor and are waiting to start. This pilot scheme is costing £25,000 per year and Volunteering Matters are matching this funding to cover the total cost of £50,000 a year. The scheme has enabled young

people to develop adult support networks beyond social care and offers emotional and practical support, feedback from young people has been extremely positive.

We have also recently started our own Peer Mentoring within the Leaving Care Team and 10 young people attended the first training session in January 2020. The aim is to match Children in care with a peer mentor if they desire this and this could be across all ages as the scheme develops.

In addition to the Leaving Care Peer Mentors, the Asylum Team are training some of their young people to be peer mentors for other Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Young People. The first peer mentoring training for UASC young people begins in March 2020.

These schemes will provide young people with positive role models, encourage them to participate in activities and services available to them and uses the skills and experiences of our young people. It is envisaged that this will be particularly relevant when young people newly arrive in Warwickshire.

Drop in's

There are now 2 Drops Ins; one in the South of the county and one in the North. Regular group events take place at the drops in's including a weekly 'Chill n' Grill' group with up to 30 young people attending regularly and a focused NEET group which has transformed into a social and peer support group. Other activities have been held at the Drop Ins including cinema nights, music groups, beauty days, baking and cooking sessions.

We have also launched a Pop-Up shop in the south which offers free clothes, toiletries and setting up home items for young people. This is used regularly by our care leavers and has had positive feedback and support from across the county.

We have seen the use of the Drop Ins evolve from a group setting to now include social events outside of the Drop Ins which have included both Care Leavers and Asylum Seekers engaging and socialising together. These have included trips to London, Ten Pin Bowling, Go-Karting, Cinema trips, Christmas parties and weekly group get togethers.

We have launched a bike group where young people are taught how to strip down and repair bikes that have been donated to us from Warwick University. Once they have fully repaired the bike and it is judged to be road worthy, they can take ownership of the bike.

In addition to the smaller events we have held four celebration events throughout 2019 which included a formal event at Old Shire Hall to celebrate Refugee Week with over 120 people, a Fun Day at the Myton Drop In for National Care Leavers Week including a mobile climbing wall with around 100 people attending, a Christmas Party for over 100 care leavers and a Celebration Lunch on Boxing Day run by volunteers and funded by donations for 50 Care Leavers who were alone over Christmas. All of these events have received excellent feedback including comments such as "this just feels like hanging out with family at home".

The drop ins are safe places for our young people, they have made them their own and enjoy having somewhere to attend. The drop-in centres have helped young people to develop relationships and a sense of belongings. One of the many benefits from this is we are participating and engaging young people in a way we never have before and reaching some of the young people who are deemed to be the most at risk resulting in a reduction in missing episodes and lower risks of exploitation for a number of young people.

There is also a washing machine and laptops for young people to use should they wish.

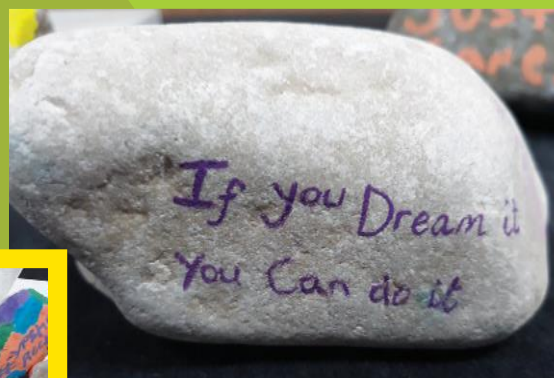
We have a football team that now trains on a Sunday and plays casually every Sunday morning and in a 6-a-side league every Monday evening in Coventry. This football team has been essential in promoting positive physical and mental wellbeing as well as developing the young people's communication and team player skills. The Sunday morning football has over 30 young people who regularly attend and is a great place for new arrivals to make friends and a support network. The boys have also played in a football tournament which was arranged by Coventry Children's Services for local Children in Care and have played an 11-a-side friendly match against Warwickshire Police. These matches with the police and other teams are beneficial to our young people as they are increasing exposure and integration within the UK.

Having recently joined a Coventry league and gain promotion there is a noticeable difference in the young people's demeanour, confidence and self-esteem. It has really helped to bond young people and provide them with a support network not just on the days they play football but throughout the week

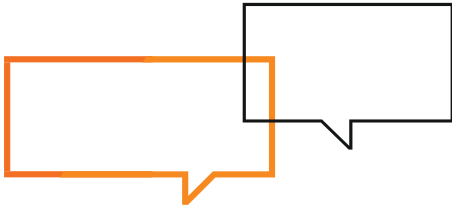
Over the summer of 2019 we ran a 5-day activity residential trip to Marle Hall. The week included activities such as gorge-walking, climbing, canoeing, abseiling and day trip to the sea. The young people who attended this have shared that they had never experienced these activities and had a great time, again they reported the positive impact this has had on their emotional well being and sense of worth.

Relationships and Sexual Education Training has been running regularly for UASC young people and to date 45 young people have attended with further training taking place in February half term. This training teaches young people about healthy relationships and cultural differences they may encounter in the UK. We are also starting a Respect and Recognition workshop for UASC girls to consider areas such as Female Genital Mutilation, exploitation and healthy relationships.

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care leaver local offer:
Audit tool



If you are an NLCBF member, you can access the full care leaver local offer Toolkit here: www.leavingcare.org or contact nlcbf@catch-22.org.uk

Local Authorities (LAs) are now required to publish a local offer for care leavers that includes information about statutory entitlements, but also additional support that LAs choose to provide for care leavers. Government Guidance states the local offer should cover six main areas: **health and well-being; relationships; education and training; employment; accommodation** and **participation in society**¹. The National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum (NLCBF) has produced a toolkit to help members learn from each other and support them with ideas on how to continue to improve their own local offer. The project focuses on the additional support recorded in local offers; it looks at the six main areas and includes support for finances and different groups of care leavers.

The printed toolkit comprises of:

- **Guide and Key Messages** – describes the background of the project, summarises key findings and recommendations
- **Survey Findings Summary** – details members' views and experiences of developing their local offer
- **Audit tool** – based on systematic mapping of a sample of 20 members' local offers. This tool helps local authorities (with young people) review and improve their local offer

care leaver local offer: **Audit tool**

this document is the Audit tool

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-offer-guidance>

each local authority will prioritise different types of non-statutory support, so every local offer will be unique. Members are keen to learn from each other and understand more about the additional support they are giving their care leavers. However, there is no easy way to benchmark the content of the different care leaver local offers.

By mapping local offers we can start to understand what components are commonly included as well as highlighting less common areas of extra support - this will inspire and support members with ideas on how to continue to improve their own local offer.

This tool is based on a systematic review of a selection (n=20) of NLCBF members published local offers. The review was carried out between June and August 2019. Ideas from a focus group with seven Champions from the Young People's Benchmarking Forum (YPBMF) have also been incorporated.



Health and Well-Being

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

| | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Date completed | January 2020 | Name of local authority | Warwickshire | Details of who completed audit tool | Shinderpaul Bhangal Caitlin Burrows |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|

| | Your Care Leaver Local offer now | Your Care leaver Local offer in the future |
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| Examples of extra support NLCBF members have included in their care leaver local offers | Record here what you currently offer in relation to each of the extra support areas listed Looking at the examples – are there things you are <u>already</u> doing that you have <u>not</u> yet written in your local offer? | Looking at the extra support examples can we offer this? If you are going to make changes to your local offer - what needs to happen, who needs to do it and by when? |
| Support with Health appointments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transport costs to doctor or hospital appointments covered - Leaving care worker can attend appointments with care leaver - Financial support (e.g. up to £300 towards health costs, such as glasses, dentistry or accessing medical appointments) | <p>We currently offer support with registering for the GP, dentist and optician from your Personal Advisor (PA) - we don't explicitly say that your worker can attend appointments however this is an unwritten expectation of workers when requested.</p> <p>There have been many times when we have provided financial support for attending appointments however this is on a case by case basis.</p> <p>We don't currently offer any additional financial support for glasses, dentistry etc however anyone under the age of 18 is entitled to these services at no cost. We will support with the application of a Health Cost Certificate (for those on a low income) or a Medical Exemption Certificate (for those with long term medical illness). In exceptional circumstances we have made a financial contribution for dentistry work however this would be considered on a case by case basis.</p> | <p>We propose that we are clearer within our local offer and state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can ask your PA to attend appointments with you • That financial support for additional medical appointments and transport to these appointments can be considered on a case by case basis. |
| Health passport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Available to every care leaver - Care leaver offered opportunity to understand information / ask questions about content of health passport | <p>We currently offer a health passport at the last annual health check with the Looked After Nurse. This includes data collated from young people's annual health assessments. There have been a number of young people who say that they have not received this.</p> <p>We offer an annual health checkup up to the age of 18</p> | <p>We propose that we are clearer within our local offer and state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you haven't received your Health Passport by 18 then you can request this information from your PA • You will be offered a final meeting at 18 with the LAC nurse to review your Health Passport. |

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| | <p>and currently offer an incentive for young people to attend these.</p> <p>We are not clear about offering the opportunity to help young people understand the information - whilst it's assumed that young people can ask their worker.</p> | |
| <p>access to leisure services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free leisure membership of LA facilities (sometimes there is an age cut off e.g. end at age 21; from age 22+ receive discount membership not free) - Free leisure membership with a 'plus one' (e.g. take a friend; for carer / mentor) - Discounted leisure membership of LA facilities NB: sometimes offer is time limited (e.g. free for 3 months) - Offer equivalent to care leavers out of area | <p>We currently offer a leisure or gym pass up to the age of 21 and offer to make a financial contribution of up to £25 per month for gym memberships for young people who are out of area.</p> <p>We do not currently offer a discount membership to over 21s or offer a plus one.</p> | <p>The local authorities where they have given a plus one the leisure centre is owned by the local authority and they are giving young people a free membership. The majority of leisure centres in Warwickshire are independently run by Everyone Active and we pay a reduced monthly fee for every care leaver who requests a leisure pass. Therefore, to fund a plus one for each care leaver would be to a high financial commitment.</p> <p>We propose that we create and promote a Buddy Up Scheme for care leavers to go to the gym together.</p> |

Health and Well-Being

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

| | Your Care leaver local offer now | Your Care leaver local offer in the future |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Examples of extra support NLCBF members have included in their care leaver local offers</p> | <p>Record here what you currently offer in relation to each of the extra support areas listed</p> <p>Looking at the examples – are there things you are <u>already</u> doing that you have <u>not</u> yet written in your local offer?</p> | <p>Looking at the extra support examples can we offer this? If you are going to make changes to your local offer - what needs to happen, who needs to do it and by when?</p> |
| <p>Specialist health project or worker (for care leavers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specialist health project or worker (for care leavers) - Care leavers can see the specialist looked after nurses (sometimes there is an age cut off e.g. till 21, till 24) - Health drop in at care leaver venue - Clinical psychologist available in leaving care team - Speech and language therapists available in leaving care team <p>Mental health coordinator and / or practitioner in leaving care team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy lifestyle adviser available - One to one session or group program (e.g. 12 weeks) for care leavers to promote healthy and active lifestyle - C cards available at leaving care venue - Young person's support service (e.g. substance misuse) eligibility age criteria extended for care leavers (up to age 25) - Mindfulness, Stress Reduction and Communication skills training available for care leavers - Workshops at leaving care base e.g. help to manage emotions and learn relaxation techniques - Care leaver fast track access to counselling support up to age 25 - Cooking and healthy eating workshops offered at leaving care base - Cookbook (including healthy recipes) produced by care leavers | <p>We currently do not have specialist workers within the Leaving Care Team who are health workers, clinical psychologist, speech and language therapist or mental health co-ordinator. However, we have worked closely with the LAC nurse to provide a drop in session at our Drop In bases.</p> <p>We currently have COMPASS available to young people up to the age of 25 years which is a support service for alcohol and drug misuse.</p> <p>We did offer a relaxation and yoga workshop however the uptake was very low. This is something we will revisit.</p> <p>We have had two care leavers complete a beauty course who then undertook an afternoon of beauty treatments for care leavers.</p> <p>We offer cooking workshops regularly which encourage young people to cook meals on a budget as well as baking treats.</p> <p>We have had 7 young people complete the accredited Food Hygiene Course from which one young person has gained employment within the catering industry and supported the kitchen staff at Old Shire Hall, Warwick for our Refugee Week Celebration in June 2019.</p> <p>We have two care leaver apprentices working on a cookbook with the support of other care leavers. This is ongoing.</p> | <p>We recognise that this area is a weakness in our local offer. We propose that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We arrange for C cards to be made available at the drop ins for young people to be able to access free contraception across Coventry and Warwickshire. • We liaise with the LAC nurse to continue the Drop In sessions • We explore possible healthy lifestyle workshops • We consider a couch to 5K running group • We are aiming to take a group of young people to climb Snowdon and run an obstacle 10K – Wolf Run - to promote healthy lifestyle • We arrange positive mental wellbeing workshops which include mindfulness, relaxation, managing stress and other emotions and ways to positive wellbeing. |
| <p>other ideas for extra support for health and wellbeing</p> | <p>We work closely with Family Nurse Partnership who offer pregnancy support for young people who are pregnant before their 18th birthday and they continue to support the young parent until the child is 2 years old.</p> | |

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| <p>How do your care leavers and partners know about this? What evidence is there that it is known and understood by care leavers, and what more can be done to keep it as accessible for ALL care leavers and partners?</p> | <p>Mini survey was completed at a recent event and it was apparent that randomly 35 out of 40 young people did know about the offer. The Care Leavers Offer is embedded in the Pathway Plan documents and is available online and in print for all Care Leavers. More could still be done to promote this. Could put on a big re-launch of this document - as one of our events and a morning event for workers - mandatory Team Meeting.</p> |
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Idea From YPBMF: Financial Support for Prescriptions up to 25

Relationships

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

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|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Date completed | January 2020 | Name of local authority | Warwickshire | Details of who completed audit tool | Shinderpaul Bhangal Caitlin Burrows |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|

| | Your Care leaver local offer now | Your Care leaver local offer in the future |
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| <p>Mentoring scheme for care leavers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentors (general) available - Peer (care leaver) mentors available - Grand mentors ('older adults') available NB: mentor support available 'out of hours' | <p>We started offering Grand Mentors in April 2019 and currently have 11 care leavers successfully matched with a Grand Mentor and have had excellent media coverage across BBC radio and TV. Our volunteer co-ordinator continues to train Grand Mentors and liaise with the Leaving Care Team with matching care leavers with a Grand Mentor.</p> <p>We currently offer peer mentor training and will be promoting peer mentors within the Leaving Care Team in 2020.</p> <p>Mentoring schemes are available through Young People First as an outside agency.</p> | <p>We propose that we are clearer within our local offer and state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grand Mentors are available and explain what a Grand Mentor is • Peer Mentors are available • Peer Mentor training is available |

Understanding life story

- Offer opportunity to talk prior to requesting records
- Support to young person when access records (e.g. work with you to help you understand what it all means)
- Fee of £10 to request access to records (may be waived)
- Virtual memory box to store photo, film, documents (up to age25)

We held a workshop in joint partnership with the Rees Foundation in November 2019 to support young people to understand what accessing your records would be like and discuss any concerns around this.

We currently state that your PA will be available to discuss this and support with accessing records.

Warwickshire are currently recruiting 5 Family Support Workers to work with Children in Care and Leaving Care to understand their life story. We also have a PA within the Children in Care Team (aged 14-18 years) who is being trained in Complex Life Story Work who will support our young people to understand their life story.

We do not charge a fee to access records.

There has previously been a lot of discussion around virtual and real memory box.

We propose that we are clearer within our local offer and state that:

- We continue to offer workshops to learn about accessing records, with support from the REE's foundation.
- We will offer the young person the opportunity to read their files with a worker present for emotional support.
- We will offer counselling support before and after your read your files with at least a one to one session with a worker before you read your files and a follow up call after you have received your files.

Relationships

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

| | Your Care leaver local offer now | Your Care leaver local offer in the future |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Examples of extra support NLCBF members have included in their care leaver local offers</p> | <p>Record here what you currently offer in relation to each of the extra support areas listed Looking at the examples – are there things you are <u>already</u> doing that you have <u>not</u> yet written in your local offer?</p> | <p>Looking at the extra support examples can we offer this? If you are going to make changes to your local offer - what needs to happen, who needs to do it and by when?</p> |
| <p>Support to maintain and strengthen important relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transport costs to 'family contact' (NB: 'in some circumstances') - Help to stay in contact with family / friends / past carers (not specified type of support) - (if applicable) Support to relationship with independent visitor <p>Team of family group conference (FGC) workers who can help young people reconnect with people they want to support them in the future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lifelong champion scheme (leaving care service invite young person to join 'keep in touch register' –send annual newsletter) - Leaving care worker profile given to young person before work together (sometimes range of profiles so young person can choose their worker) | <p>We are clear within our local offer that we cover transport costs to see family for arranged Family Time.</p> <p>We currently state that your PA will support and encourage you to establish and maintain healthy relationships.</p> <p>We do offer independent visitors for children in care however it is unclear how well this is known/understood by young people.</p> <p>We have a team of Family Group Conference Co-Ordinators that will be expanding however their main role is within Early Help at this time. This may be something to review in the future.</p> <p>We do not currently have a Lifelong champion scheme or 'Keeping in Touch' service.</p> <p>We do not currently have a worker profile; this is being discussed within the Children in Care Team and the Leaving Care Team as something to progress.</p> | <p>We propose that we are clearer within our local offer and state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your PA will support and encourage you to establish and maintain healthy relationships such as family, friends and past carers • We begin to create a 'Keeping in Touch' scheme – which would include a newsletter written by Care Leavers twice annually and include a summer BBQ keeping in touch day • Worker profiles to be considered within the teams and a Worker Profile Welcome Board to be created at both Drop Ins. • We develop our drop in groups further to establish a worker/young people group which promotes positive discussions at regular meetings for problem solving and relationship building. |
| <p>other ideas for extra support for relationships</p> | | |

How do your care leavers and partners know about this?
What evidence is there that it is known and understood by care leavers, and what more can be done to keep it as accessible for ALL care leavers and partners?

See Above



Ideas from YPBMF: Regular chances for YP and professionals to meet, discuss and solve problems
Have a domestic violence and relationship counsellor in Leaving Care

Education and Training

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

| | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Date completed | January 2020 | Name of local authority | Warwickshire | Details of who completed audit tool | Shinderpaul Bhangal Caitlin Burrows |
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additional education / training related incentives (inc. extra financial support)

- Monetary incentive linked to education/training (sometimes linked to attendance)
- Additional money towards housing costs if in education/ training
- Laptop and software
- Trips (paid for) linked to education/training
- Support with equipment or clothing needed for education /training
- Books / stationary needed for education / training
- Celebratory voucher / money given on completion of course (amounts may vary dependent on level of qualification gained or celebratory meal)
- Monetary support to re-take Maths / English GCSE
- Private tuition support to re-take Maths /English GCSE
- Opportunity to undertake LA run health & safety course if relevant to education /training
- Support to attend open days for education / training courses
- Pay registration / exam fees

We do not offer a monetary incentive for attending education or training or towards housing costs.

We have the Education, Employment and Training (EET) Fund which young people can apply for financial support towards the cost of transport to education, equipment or clothing needed, books or stationary needed for and also for additional tutoring or re-taking English or Maths GCSEs.

We have organised an annual trip to the Careers Fare at the NEC which a number of young people attend to explore their future options. Young people can be supported financially through the Tiffin Club, Barradell and EET fund to attend specific trips which are linked to their subject area for education or training.

Travel costs are paid for when young people attend University Open Days and when requested PAs will attend to support the young person. Our Careers Advisor has also supported young people to attend University open days.

An Education bursary is offered up to £1200 when young people start attending college up to the age of 18. We currently provide a gift to young people who complete higher education at their graduation of up to £100 (either a watch or a satchel).

We propose that we are clearer within our local offer and state that:

- All Care Leavers receive a bursary from the college for attendance annually from 16. If you start your course before you turn 19 it will continue for the duration of the course.
- We will fund tuition and retakes in Maths and English
- That you can apply to the Education, Employment and Training Fund for anything related to education, employment or training including registration and exam costs and this will be given due consideration.
- That a worker can attend a University Open Day with you for support and advice.

Education and Training

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

| | Your Care leaver local offer now | Your Care leaver local offer in the future |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Examples of extra support NLCBF members have included in their care leaver local offers</p> | <p>Record here what you currently offer in relation to each of the extra support areas listed Looking at the examples – are there things you are <u>already</u> doing that you have <u>not</u> yet written in your local offer?</p> | <p>Looking at the extra support examples can we offer this? If you are going to make changes to your local offer - what needs to happen, who needs to do it and by when?</p> |
| <p>extra Support at University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specified bursary (above statutory level) - Travel costs to / from University at start and end of term - Support with initial costs of moving belongings to Uni - Graduation costs (usually 2 tickets, gown hire, photograph) - Pay costs towards rent if keep home in LA but move away to Uni - Set payment on graduation (e.g. for post graduate study or to help pay student loan/debt) - Liaise with Uni tutor / support services | <p>We currently offer a bursary of £1000 a year if you attend University for a total of 3 years (the accommodation deposit is to come out of this).</p> <p>We currently pay for travel costs to and from University at the start and end of term.</p> <p>We pay graduation costs which covers the cost to rent a graduation gown.</p> <p>We pay a contribution towards accommodation during holiday time while you are attending University.</p> | <p>We propose that we are clearer within our local offer and state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We increase the age that a young person can claim a university bursary of £1000 up to the age of 25 years. • We will offer to help you move to University on your first day • We develop the Careers Advisor posts to include liaising with the Universities where our care leavers attend |
| <p>other ideas for extra support for education and training</p> | | |

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| <p>How do your care leavers and partners know about this? What evidence is there that it is known and understood by care leavers, and what more can be done to keep it as accessible for ALL care leavers and partners?</p> | |
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Idea from YPBMF: Have a specialist member of staff to help young people with higher education

Employment

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

| Your Care leaver local offer now | Your Care leaver local offer in the future |
|---|--|
| <p>Examples of extra support NLCBF members have included in their care leaver local offers</p> <p>additional financial support with employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support costs associated with uniform, interview clothes, tools - Support transport costs to interview and work (e.g. for first month till get paid; e.g. 100 travel journeys; support towards cost of bus / train pass) - Child care costs (exceptional circumstances) - Support gaining industry accreditation or vehicle licenses needed for work (e.g. CITB – Construction Industry Training Board tested) - Financial personal allowance (to make sure is financial benefit to working) | <p>Record here what you currently offer in relation to each of the extra support areas listed</p> <p>Looking at the examples – are there things you are already doing that you have not yet written in your local offer?</p> <p>Applications can be made to the EET fund for costs associated with uniform, interview clothes and tools.</p> <p>We offer financial support for transport to interviews and to work for the first month until the young person gets paid.</p> <p>We offer support in paying for child care costs for young parents in education and employment and this is on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Financial support in gaining industry accreditation can be accessed through the EET fund.</p> <p>We do not offer a financial personal allowance however we support care leavers to ensure they are accessing all the correct benefits and financial support.</p> |
| <p>Date completed</p> | <p>January 2020</p> |
| <p>Name of local authority</p> | <p>Warwickshire</p> |
| <p>Details of who completed audit tool</p> | <p>Shinderpaul Bhangal Caitlin Burrows</p> |

Employment

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

apprenticeships

- Local authority run apprenticeship scheme for care leavers (i.e. ring-fenced opportunities)
- Support to apply for apprenticeships in business community (sometimes care leavers have prior notification of opportunities)
- Guaranteed interview for care leaver applicants
- Apprenticeship champion (linked to leaving care service)
- Financial assistance for apprenticeships (e.g. contribute to living costs)
- Supported program to work towards apprenticeship (e.g.

Prior to the local offer, the local authority already guaranteed care leavers an interview for apprenticeships within Warwickshire County Council. Our local offer brought in 5 apprenticeship opportunities which were ringfenced for care leavers.

Warwickshire County Council pay national minimum wage for our apprenticeships and offer a £1000 bursary from the Apprenticeship Hub and EET fund. We also pay an additional £200 at the beginning of employment to provide financial support for the first month.

We are running a workshop in February for care leavers to learn about what apprenticeship opportunities we have in Warwickshire County Council.

Our Careers Advisor supports care leavers to find apprenticeships in the business community and shares any new opportunities on our Facebook page for Care Leavers. We would like to promote our work with the business community with a Care Leaver Covenant in Warwickshire.

For financial contributions to living costs young people can apply to the Barradell and Tiffin Club Panel for funding. We have approved funding for additional financial support over this time.

We offer pre-apprenticeship support including work experience however there is no specific programme to support work towards apprenticeship.

We have now employed two of our care leaver apprentices on a full time contract within the Participation Team with the aim that they will be able to promote our apprenticeships for other care leavers.

We propose that we are clearer within our local offer with regards to support for care leaver apprenticeships within Warwickshire County Council including:

- A Peer or Grandmentor for every apprentice
- Regular Group supervision for all apprentices
- Regular supervision with line manager

We propose that we run a bi-annual event to showcase apprenticeship opportunities for care leavers within Warwickshire County Council and what an apprenticeship entails.

Employment

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

Page 68

Page 18 of 39

| | Your Care leaver local offer now | Your Care leaver local offer in the future |
|---|---|---|
| Examples of extra support NLCBF members have included in their care leaver local offers | Record here what you currently offer in relation to each of the extra support areas listed Looking at the examples – are there things you are <u>already</u> doing that you have <u>not</u> yet writ'/(ten in your local offer? | Looking at the extra support examples can we offer this? If you are going to make changes to your local offer - what needs to happen, who needs to do it and by when? |
| other employment related support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interview practice, help with CV writing & personal statement, support when applying for jobs - Support to travel to work (until feel confident getting their alone) | <p>Our Careers Advisor offers practical support with interview practice, help with CV writing and job applications during our weekly NEET Drop In sessions.</p> <p>Our Careers Advisor runs three weekly NEET Drop Ins across the county for young people seeking education, employment or training.</p> | We propose that we are clearer within our local offer with regards to support with employment and promote mentors for support with this as well as our Careers Advisor. |
| Specialist employment project or worker (for care leavers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ETE worker /Careers /employment / work-readiness adviser available in leaving care service (may be age limits) - Arrangements to refer care leaver for support from other teams/organisations (e.g. LA employment support team; voluntary org) - 'Opportunity broker' to specific opportunities in line with what care leavers says interests them - Priority access to support from employment support organisation - Designated contact at Job Centre - Drop in session with Job Centre contact at leaving care base - Intensive training programme offered (related to getting into employment) - Groups aimed at supporting young people with 'getting ready for work' | <p>Careers advice options are different depending on young people's age. For young people in school (aged 14-16 years) careers advisors are available in school.</p> <p>The Careers service Prospects supports young people aged 16-18 years old and the Careers Advisor within the Leaving Care Team supports young people aged 18-25 years old.</p> <p>Referrals to any of these services can be made by the worker.</p> <p>The Employment Support services in Warwickshire are for over 18s with a learning disability or autism.</p> <p>We have a designated contact at the Job Centre for the Leaving Care Team.</p> <p>NEET Drop In happens weekly at Portland House, Myton Park and The Foyer (Coventry), the job centre contact has not attended this but the plan is for them to attend in the near future. This Drop In provides an opportunity for our Careers Advisor to support young people 'getting ready for work'.</p> | <p>We propose that we are clearer within our Local Offer with regards to where our NEET groups meet and what is offered during these times.</p> <p>Given the success for the current careers advisor this service is extended with the recruitment of a further careers advisor to support young people 18-25 in accessing education, employment or training.</p> |

Employment

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

other ideas for extra support for employment

How do your care leavers and partners know about this?
What evidence is there that it is known and understood by care leavers, and what more can be done to keep it as accessible for ALL care leavers and partners?

Accommodation

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

| | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Date completed | January 2020 | Name of local authority | Warwickshire | Details of who completed audit tool | Shinderpaul Bhangal Caitlin Burrows |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|

| | Your Care leaver local offer now | Your Care leaver local offer in the future |
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| <p>council tax exemption or discount</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Care leavers are exempt (age restriction e.g. up to age 21; up to age 25) Care leavers are exempt even when live outside of LA - Care leavers exempt conditionality (e.g. if in education; type of accommodation live in) - 'Sliding scale' in place to prepare care leavers for time when have to pay - Discount (not exemption) for care leavers | <p>Due to Warwickshire having a number of district councils we are not able to ensure Care Leavers are exempt from Council Tax however we reimburse young people's council tax for any 3 years between the ages of 18-21 years.</p> <p>As we are reimbursing Care Leavers with their Council Tax we can reimburse it when young people live out of county.</p> <p>We do not currently use a 'sliding scale' or discount as we cover the full cost.</p> | <p>We propose that we extend the Council Tax to cover any 3 years for young people between the ages of 18 and 25 years old. The young person can choose which three years they wish to access this.</p> |

additional financial or practical support with accommodation (on top of setting up home allowance)

- Cost of deposit, retainer or agency admin fee paid
- One month rent paid
- Someone available to help you move / costs associated with moving home
- Make sure have suitcase so don't have to use bin bags
- Starter pack payment (e.g. for utilities, food, cleaning)
- Cost towards first week shopping
- Pay for first TV license
- Practical support with paint & decorating / access to maintenance service to help with DIY
- Health & safety equipment or check from Fire service (e.g. smoke detector; carbon dioxide monitor; door lock; fire blanket; first aid kit)
- Apply to local scheme for finance towards white goods
- Pay one year home contents insurance

We support young people when they turn 18 to bridge the gap before receiving benefits.

Young People are supported by their workers when moving house.

When children and young people come into care the Children's Team purchases a suitcase for those who don't have one. If young people don't have a suitcase when they move house the Leaving Care Team will purchase a suitcase for them.

Our Care Leaver Home Furnishing Grant includes:

- First week shopping
- First TV license
- Health and Safety equipment (fire extinguisher, first aid kit, Carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide alarms)
- Household insurance for the first year
- Starter pack of £15-20 for essentials

The Warwickshire Welfare Scheme provides White Goods for Care Leavers.

We propose that we are clearer within our local offer with regards to support with moving home.

We propose that we continue to liaise with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service to provide a health and safety check and fitting of smoke detectors for Care Leavers.

Accommodation

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

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| <p>Priority Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Priority with housing department (e.g.'high priority'; band B; Gold status) - Priority with housing department if return to live in area after University - Support in housing crisis - second chance if first move to independent housing not work - No care leaver who working with service be found intentionally homeless - LA will act as rent guarantor | <p>We ensure Care Leavers have priority housing with the local housing departments.</p> <p>The Leaving Care Team has a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Initiative Worker who works alongside PA's to ensure Care Leavers have advice, information and support with regards to housing crisis and avoid homelessness.</p> <p>The Local Authority has acted as a rent guarantor in the past however this is managed on a case by case basis.</p> | We propose that we are clearer within our local offer with regards to support with accommodation from our Housing Officer. |
| <p>Specialist Housing project or worker (for care leavers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation for independence course / pre-tenancy course (e.g. designed and delivered by care leavers; accredited) - Preparation for independence / independent living skills group or forum - Preparation for independence work before leave care (e.g. with your foster carers; using Getting ready for adult life resource; passport to independence checklist) - Opportunity to spend time in training flat - Drop in session on housing at leaving care base - Housing worker in leaving care team - Housing worker linked to accommodation (e.g. floating support; including weekend and evening) | <p>Doorway and House Project do an independence training, but this is not led by young people and the House Project training is ring fenced for their cohort of 12 young people.</p> <p>Preparation for independence is required of supported accommodation & foster carers and this is monitored by Social Workers and within the Looked After Reviews.</p> <p>Warwickshire does not have a training flat however the drop in locations can be used to support with cooking and washing training.</p> <p>We have two workers working with homelessness prevention within the Asylum ad Leaving Care Team.</p> <p>A Housing drop in session runs on the first Tuesday of every month in central Nuneaton for young people at risk of homelessness. From the data</p> | We propose that we are clearer within our local offer with regards to support with accommodation and include the Drop Ins. |

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| | <p>collated in the first 3 quarters of 2019-2020 it was apparent that Nuneaton had the highest number of referrals for working with our Homelessness Worker.</p> <p>The NEET Drop In sessions are also proving the opportunity for young people to meet professionals and discuss accommodation issues.</p> <p>St Basil's are a service which provide floating support out of hours for care leavers in supported accommodation within Warwickshire.</p> | |
| <p>other ideas for extra support for accommodation</p> | | <p>We propose that we provide a winter fuel payment of £100 payable in November of each year for Care Leavers.</p> |

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| <p>How do your care leavers and partners know about this? What evidence is there that it is known and understood by care leavers, and what more can be done to keep it as accessible for ALL care leavers and partners?</p> | |
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Idea from YPBMF: Training Care Leavers in Painting & Decorating skills so they can help others when they move

Participation in Society

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

| | Your Care leaver local offer now | Your Care leaver local offer in the future |
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| Examples of extra support NLCBF members have included in their care leaver local offers | Record here what you currently offer in relation to each of the extra support areas listed Looking at the examples – are there things you are <u>already</u> doing that you have <u>not</u> yet written in your local offer? | Looking at the extra support examples can we offer this? If you are going to make changes to your local offer - what needs to happen, who needs to do it and by when? |
| celebration of achievements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awards events (annual; education focused; care leavers help organise) - Individual celebration of milestone such as gaining qualification (e.g. go out for meal) - Support to celebrate religious festivals | <p>We put on multiple events throughout the year to recognize the achievements and celebrate our young people. We had a celebration event for National Care Leavers Week, an event for National Refugee Week with awards for our Asylum Seeking Young People, we have Virtual School Awards for education and we have Star Awards which recognise care experienced apprentices.</p> <p>We arrange parties and celebrations for both Christmas and Eid, we send out gift hampers or vouchers for both. Care leavers also get £50 for your birthday and for Christmas or an alternative festival of your choice.</p> | We propose that we are clearer within our local offer with a calendar of events. |
| fun activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial support (e.g. set amount for hobbies, cultural outing etc.) - Support to find clubs / hobbies - Duke of Edinburgh award offered to care leavers - Organise fun activities (e.g. trips; outdoor activities) | <p>Applications can be made from the Tiffin Club and Barradell Fund for financial support towards hobbies and clubs.</p> <p>We offer support with accessing National Citizenship Service.</p> <p>The activities we put on for our young people are wide and varied. We have weekly groups plus events and activities in the half term.</p> | <p>This calendar year we are currently exploring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warwick Castle Trip • Jump In trampolining trip • Hike up Mount Snowdon • A 10K organized race • Trip to the seaside • Talent contest • Circus skills workshop • Summer BBQ for all previous Warwickshire Care Leavers • 5 day residential trips to Marle Hall |
| Dedicated care leaver space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Space available for advice - Space available to 'chill out' - Space available for activities | We have a drop in at the North and South. There are cooking and laundry facilities in the south and cooking and computer facilities in the North. This area is open for young people during office opening hours and is a | We propose that we continue to develop the use of our Drop Ins and promote this for our Care Leavers. |

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| <p>- Facilities available (e.g. cooking; laundry; computer</p> | <p>space for them to come together.</p> | |
| <p>Support with learning to drive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Driving and CBT motorcycle training included in offer - Match funding scheme (e.g. care leaver pay for 5 lessons & leaving care service pay for 5 lessons; maximum number of lessons; conditional on being linked to education or training) - Costs towards theory test, practical test and provisional driving licence (50% of cost) | <p>We currently pay for 10 lessons and a provisional license.</p> <p>An application can be made to the Rees Foundation for driving lessons up to a budget of £700.00 per young person. The Rees Foundation offer to pay for 3 lessons for every 1 lesson the young person pays for.</p> | <p>We propose that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We continue to work closely with the Rees Foundation particularly around the driving lessons and promote this clearly in our local offer. • We promote The Rees Foundation offer in conjunction with our offer and therefore The Rees Foundation will pay for 3 lessons for every lesson the young person pays for – however the young person could use one of the lessons we pay for as this contribution. • We make it clear that the 10 driving lessons can be used for a car or CBT motorcycle training |
| <p>volunteering opportunities</p> <p>Volunteering opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training offered re: interviewing staff (voucher paid for time) - Young people can be paid for time when consulted - Help access volunteering opportunities | <p>Warwickshire County Council have offered volunteering in the past. Our careers advisor supports young people with identifying volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>We ensure our young people are paid for their time when they are supporting workers to develop services such as consultations and interviews.</p> | |
| <p>out of hours support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At weekend (e.g. Sunday lunch club) - In evening | <p>We offer emergency support out of hours through the Emergency Duty Team. Their number is clearly displayed in the Care Leaver Offer.</p> <p>We also offer groups to support young people out of hours including weekly Sunday morning football and weekday evenings with Chill n' Grill, Bike Project and Children in Care Council.</p> | <p>We propose that we are clearer within our local offer with a calendar of events.</p> |

Participation in Society

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

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| <p>care leaver forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frequency (e.g. every 2 weeks; monthly) - Timing (e.g. in evening) - Purpose (e.g. have voice heard; make positive change & shape service delivery; meet senior managers; have fun; meet other young people; have food together) - Other type of group (e.g. media group; young inspectors; National young people leaving care benchmarking forum) <p>Young people can be paid for time when consulted</p> | <p>We currently hold a monthly evening meetings for Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum from 6.15-8.15pm at Shire Hall, Warwick. These meetings aim to ensure our young people have their voices heard, make positive change and shape the service delivery. They have the opportunity to meet senior managers and other young people, get food and have fun together.</p> <p>Our Care Leaver apprentices in participation attend SLT meetings bi-monthly.</p> <p>We have Young Inspectors for accommodation.</p> <p>We have young people participate in National Young people Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum.</p> <p>We offer incentives for consultation outside of CiCC/Care Leaver Forum.</p> | <p>We propose that we continue to develop our Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum and promote this across the County.</p> |
| <p>Digital support / social media use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital support / social media use - App designed with young people for information - App for young people to communicate with service / worker (e.g. Mind of My Own) - Care leaver website (e.g. resources/info) - Facebook page (e.g. info about activities) - Wi-Fi available at leaving care service | <p>The Leaving Care Team has a website however this is no young person friendly. Website Here</p> <p>The young people do not access the website but prefer to use social media now. The Leaving Care Team have a Facebook account which young people use daily to contact their worker and the duty worker when they need support. We also use this to publicise the events we have and to gather feedback.</p> <p>The Leaving Care Team also have a Twitter Account which is used to spread the news of the good work our young</p> | <p>We propose that we continue to develop our Facebook page to ensure the information is getting to as many young people as possible.</p> |

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| | <p>people do.</p> <p>We have previously consulted young people on an app they would like 3-4 years ago and considered Mind Of My Own however this did not progress within Warwickshire.</p> <p>The Children and Family Service have a feedback app is promoted with young people to offer feedback.</p> <p>WiFi is available for all young people at our Drop Ins in the North and the South.</p> | |
| <p>Identity documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial support with ID documents (e.g. national insurance number; passport; birth certificate; provisional driving licence & photos if needed) - Keep copy of ID documents - Support with British citizenship / naturalisation - Support to open bank account - Help to join electoral register | <p>Every young person who is Looked after should have a copy of their birth certificate, and a passport or ID document. We will pay the cost of provisional driving license or to get a passport should they not already have this.</p> <p>Support is offered within Asylum for seeking British Citizenship.</p> <p>The young person's worker will be available to offer support when opening a bank account.</p> <p>In the run up to the General Election 2019 we publicised across social media and sent reminder emails to workers to support young people understand their rights and to encourage them to register to vote.</p> | <p>We propose that we continue to offer this support and share regular updates on our social media.</p> |
| <p>other ideas for extra support for participation and society</p> | <p>Young people are encouraged to join in a range of social activities and residentials.</p> <p>Young people volunteer to work alongside the universities in the locality.</p> <p>Young people are financially supported with a bus pass to ensure they are able to travel around the county. Young people are also funded their transport to any of our events and activities.</p> | |

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| <p>How do your care leavers and partners know about this? What evidence is there that it is known and understood by care leavers, and what more can be done to keep it as accessible for ALL care leavers and partners?</p> | |
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Idea from YPBMF: Pen Pals to reduce loneliness
Discounted or free travel passes

Finance

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

| | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Date completed | January 2020 | Name of local authority | Warwickshire | Details of who completed audit tool | Shinderpaul Bhangal Caitlin Burrows |
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| Specialist finance project or worker (for care leavers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Money management / budgeting training at leaving care service - Benefit and finance adviser available via leaving care team - Finance handbook/entitlements information for care leavers (updated annually) - Peer to peer financial mentoring - Job Centre care leaver single point of contact - Drop in session at leaving care base (e.g. with DWP representative) - Assistance to make an 'advance claim' prior to 18th birthday | <p>The House Project Other than HP we don't have any specific checklist or programme for money management.</p> <p>We do not currently have a benefit and finance advisor within the Leaving Care Team however workers can provide support to access this specialist advice through the CAB.</p> <p>Entitlements information is available within our Care Leaver Local Offer which is updated annually.</p> <p>We have created our Peer to Peer mentoring programme and have Grandmentors which could involve a level of financial advice and mentoring</p> <p>We have a single point of contact for care leavers at the Job Centre.</p> <p>We do have arrangements for an 'Advance claim' prior to 18th birthday - not clear in CLO</p> | <p>We propose that we continue to develop our Drop Ins and invite professionals from CAB, DWP and the Job Centre to attend and provide budgeting and financial advice.</p> |

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| <p>Savings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help to access Junior ISA - Help to open bank account - Contingency arrangement if young person not have bank account (e.g. LA card that can load money on to) | <p>We do offer support to access Junior ISA and to open a bank account.</p> <p>We have a contingency for when a young person doesn't have a bank account, something that is a regular occurrence for our Asylum young people. We use a PCFS card which we can put money on similar to a cash card.</p> | <p>We propose that we continue to support our young people to work towards financial independence.</p> |
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Finance

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

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| financial crisis support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with Job Centre in advance of benefit sanction - Support during sanction period (e.g. food, heating, transport pass but no money) - Support during benefit delay or waiting period (e.g. help to apply for government loan; cash allowance; food vouchers) - Financial help in emergencies (e.g. in 'exceptional circumstances'; set amount on pre-paid card; money may be treated as a loan & young person need to pay back; money deducted from setting up home allowance) Signpost or refer to voluntary organisation e.g. food bank; community furniture stores | <p>We have a joint protocol in place with DWP to prevent care leavers from being sanctioned with regards to benefits.</p> <p>We do support young people during benefit delay, a waiting period or for any other financial emergency – this is managed on a case by case basis. We provide supermarket gift cards for young people to purchase essentials.</p> <p>We can give out food bank vouchers and support our young people to access this. We also signpost young people to several other voluntary organisations, these are different across the county.</p> | <p>We propose that we continue to develop our Drop Ins and invite professionals from CAB, DWP and the Job Centre to attend and provide budgeting and financial advice.</p> <p>We propose that we form a list of voluntary organisations for young people to access via social media or our website.</p> |
| Personal finance allowance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Birthday money (amount specified by age; age cut off point) - Festival / Christmas money - Christmas hamper - Clothing allowed (amount specified; age cut off point) | <p>Each of our young people gets birthday money and either Christmas or an alternative festival of choice money.</p> <p>We also work closely with a volunteer who sets up Christmas hampers for any young person who would like one.</p> | |
| other ideas for extra support for finance | | |

How do your care leavers and partners know about this?
What evidence is there that it is known and understood by care leavers, and what more can be done to keep it as accessible for ALL care leavers and partners?



Idea from YPBMF: Increasing Setting up home grant

"Groups' of Care Leavers

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

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|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Date completed | January 2020 | Name of local authority | Warwickshire | Details of who completed audit tool | Shinderpaul Bhangal Caitlin Burrows |
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| IGBTQ - LGBTQ (general support & social group not care leaver specific) | There are a number of LGBTQ+ groups within Warwickshire however we do not have a specific Care Leavers group. | We propose that we add details of these groups to our Local Offer. |

care leavers who are parents

- Additional financial support detailed (e.g. maternity allowance; e.g. for expectant fathers)
- Option of parenting classes
- One to one parenting support (focus on practical; emotional demands; help access community support)
- Mum and Dad groups & activities (offer support and social opportunity)
- Mentor scheme for new parents
- Parenting emotional well-being worker & alternative therapies for parents whose children no longer living with them / in care proceedings (available via leaving care team)
- Help with child care costs if in education (criteria to be met)

We link with Family Nurse Partnership which would offer one to one parenting support for young people who are pregnant under the age of 18.

We are developing a young parents and toddler group for care leavers. This will be run by a member of the Leaving Care Service.

There are a number of local parenting classes for young parents across Warwickshire however these are not specific for care leavers.

The Mentor schemes are running and young parents could be involved to support each other. New parents can be offered a mentor.

Birth Family Support offer alternative therapies for parents whose children are no longer living with them and have a care plan of adoption.

We help with child care costs for care leavers who are in education or employment - this is managed on a case by case basis.

We propose that we provide a New Baby Hamper to any care leaver open to the Leaving Care service aged 16-25 who which would include essential baby items such as nappies, wipes, babygrows etc up to the cost of £70.

We propose that we make a £200 payment to purchase a large item such as cot, buggy, car seat for any care leaver open to the Leaving Care Service aged 16-25 who is having a baby.

'Groups' of Care Leavers

Examples of additional support in care leaver local offers

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| <p>Unaccompanied asylum seeking young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emotional support (e.g. from professionals who understand challenges faced in coming to UK) - Immunisation (if needed) | <p>We have a dedicated Asylum team and peer to peer mentoring programme. We also run a Sunday football session and a weekly evening group called 'Chill n' Grill' which is mainly for our Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people. This provides them with a safe space to relax and feel emotionally supported.</p> <p>We also have an unaccompanied asylum seeking young person who now has permanent leave to remain in the UK as a care leaver apprentice. He provides emotional support and advice for any new arrival and our current asylum seeking young people.</p> <p>Each young person who arrives seeking asylum has a health check when they arrive. Health check when they arrive.</p> | We propose that we promote our activities and groups in the Local Offer and through the calendar of events. |
| <p>care leavers in custody</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial allowance for care leavers in custody (e.g. £20 per month) - Leaving care team offer training to prison | We provide a financial allowance for care leavers who are in custody. | |
| <p>Disabled care leavers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easy read version of local offer available | The Local Offer is in an easy to read format and all of our workers are able to share this information with their young person in the most appropriate way. | |
| other ideas for extra support for 'groups' of care leavers | | |

How do your care leavers and partners know about this?
What evidence is there that it is known and understood by care leavers, and what more can be done to keep it as accessible for ALL care leavers and partners?



Idea from YBMF: LGBTQ Workshops and awareness for staff and young people

Notes

The printed toolkit comprises of:

- **Guide and Key Messages** – describes the background of the project, summarises key findings and recommendations
- **Survey Findings Summary** – details members' views and experiences of developing their local offer
- **Audit tool** – based on a systematic mapping of a sample of 20 members' local offers. This tool helps local authorities (with young people) review and improve their local

If you are an Nlcbf member, you can access the full care leaver local offer Toolkit here: www.leavingcare.org or contact nlcbf@catch-22.org.uk

offer **this document is the Audit tool**

NICBF The National Leaving care Benchmarking forum is a national network of over 100 local authorities promoting the development of quality leaving care services with member authorities and partner organisations through a process of benchmarking and shared learning on a national scale. our aim is to achieve the best outcomes for young people making the transition from care to adulthood.

Catch22 is a social business, a not for profit business with a social mission. For over 200 years we have designed and delivered services that build resilience and aspiration in people and communities.

Authors: **dr Claire Baker and Sarah Wilkinson with Lisa Holland**

November 2019

Twitter: **@nlcbf**

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Cabinet

Parent Carer Support Pathway

14 May 2020

1. Recommendation

That Cabinet authorises the Strategic Director for People to implement the new Parent & Carer Assessment Pathway as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Any parent carer of a child with a disability who has parental responsibility has the right to request a parent carer needs assessment ([Children and Families Act 2014](#)). Therefore, Warwickshire County Council has a statutory obligation to undertake and provide an 'assessment' of a Parent Carer who has a child aged 0-18 with a disability. The mechanism of how an assessment is undertaken and the outcomes it achieves are within the Local Authority's remit to decide.
- 2.2. The pathway and processes for an assessment have not been reviewed or updated for a significant period of time. Feedback from parents, the parent carer forum, partners and practitioners indicate that the current offer is not satisfying the needs of our community.
- 2.3. Our new proposal includes the following elements
 - The name is changed from Parent Carer Assessment to Parent Carer Support Pathway.
 - The new Pathway includes a Wellbeing Conversation which replaces the current 'Assessment' paperwork. The Wellbeing Conversation will focus on a person-centred approach that identifies the parent carers needs and the areas for support.
 - The pathway is reduced from 14 steps to a maximum of 5.
 - MASH will no longer be the point of access to a service and that customers can gain access to the Parent Carer Support Pathway through the Customer Service Centre or via online pages.

- Outcomes change from a financial award only, to a tiered outcome of signposting, one-off payments (for an agreed service / item) to a Social Care Assessment. A social care assessment will be conducted under Section 17 and will consider the needs of the child / young person and the Parent Carer.
- The Parent Carer Pathway can be accessed numerous times without limitations (removing the current review requirement)
- There is comprehensive information provided on the Warwickshire County Council Website allowing residents to self-serve.

3. Background

- 3.1 Currently, parents requesting an assessment are assessed through a formal social care assessment which people tell us is not always appropriate. The proposal is to move away from an assessment process to one that is based on a Carer's Wellbeing Conversation that meets need with targeted and focused support. To reflect this, we are proposing that the name changes from Parent Carer Assessment to Parent Carer Support Pathway.
- 3.2 The questionnaire used in the current process is unclear and does not provide a robust framework of assessment. The Wellbeing Conversation will allow the focus to move away from meeting a threshold towards a guided conversation that identifies need and therefore appropriate support for families.
- 3.3 Currently, requests are made through the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) and this can begin a pathway of up to fourteen steps. The proposed approach has a maximum of five steps and, through the Customer Service Centre, there will be direct access to the Children with Disabilities team who will be conducting the Wellbeing Conversation. Alternatively, there will be substantial information on the Warwickshire website to navigate parents through the application process. There will also be the opportunity to make an online application or request a practitioner to make contact (see appendix 1). The practitioners will then contact the customer and undertake the Wellbeing Conversation (provided the parent carer has a child who meets the basic requirement of having a disability). This will ensure that residents receive the right information and right support at the right time.
- 3.4 We have also considered the current processes to support adult carers as this will help to align (where possible) the Parent Carer Support Pathway with the Adult Carers' pathway. This will ensure that when young people transition into adult services the parent carers receive a seamless service.
- 3.5 Outcomes from assessments are currently restricted to a financial award only, omitting any tailored support that may be beneficial to parent carers' needs. The proposed outcomes will follow a tiered approach. There are separate levels of support that can be combined if required, to ensure all parent carer needs are met. Firstly, signposting to a suitable organisation, support group or

specialist service will be explored. Secondly, a financial award will be considered for a specific service, activity or piece of equipment in order to assist a parent carer and resolve an area of difficulty. Thirdly, if the Wellbeing Conversation identifies wider needs, a social care assessment will be offered to support the family. This will be optional for parent carers under Section 17.

- 3.6 Currently ongoing payments are provided continually once awarded and spend for the award is not clear. Review points are not always completed and we are aware that needs change for families over time. To resolve this, providing unlimited access to the Parent Carer Support Pathway and Wellbeing Conversation will ensure that financial awards are provided for a specific agreed purpose and this will be a one-off payment (for up to 12 months should this be for an activity, membership or service). Should the family require further support in this time, they can re-access the service and a new Wellbeing Conversation will be undertaken

4. Consultation Process

- 4.1 A consultation on the proposed changes to the Parent Carer Pathway was undertaken from 6th January 2020 – 9th February 2020. The aim of the consultation was to engage and obtain feedback from a range of residents and stakeholders. Particular focus was on those that would be directly affected by any changes, such as, parent carers currently in receipt of a parent carers' payment, those involved with social care and parents that have children with disabilities across Warwickshire County.
- 4.2 The consultation was framed around the proposed changes to the name of the process, access to the service, a proposed new pathway, the Wellbeing Conversation content and outcomes.
- 4.3 Prior to the consultation, workshops were conducted with participants from SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service), partners and practitioners from within Warwickshire County Council in order to shape the proposed offer for the consultation. A workshop was also undertaken with Warwickshire Parent Carer Forum and proposals were also shared virtually with parents that were unable to attend. Warwickshire Parent Carers Forum also conducted a survey that was undertaken by 134 residents and feedback from this was used to inform the proposed pathway in the consultation also (see appendix 6).
- 4.4 Within the consultation period, key activity included a number of drop-in sessions. Two took place in the south of the county and two in the north. The sessions covered daytime and evening provision in both locations to maximise opportunities for residents to attend. Attendance was poor. Only two parents attended the first session in the South overall. The two parents were members of the Warwickshire Parent Carer Forum and had engaged with us at the workshop prior to the consultation.

- 4.5 To promote the consultation, we wrote to current recipients of the Parent Carer Payments at the beginning of the consultation and again towards the end. The consultation was also promoted widely through a range of marketing and communication channels. We can be confident from circulation figures subscription lists and followers that communication activity reached a minimum of 88,000 people during the period of the consultation (see Appendix 5 for full Comms Log):
- 4.6 The promotion encouraged residents to engage in the consultation and respond through an online survey through the “Ask Warwickshire” platform. Residents were able to call or email to request a printed version of the consultation document which they could return by pre-paid post to Warwickshire County Council. The email address and phone number were also offered for direct enquiries regarding the proposed changes.
- 4.7 Website statistics indicate that there was good awareness of the consultation with 370 users visiting the home page of the consultation which provided information on the proposals. However, survey completion was low (61). This suggests that having read the information people did not choose to comment.

5. Outcomes following Consultation responses

- 5.1 Following the consultation, several responses indicated areas of development that would be required to deliver the proposed changes to the Parent Carer Assessment (see appendix 3 and 4).
- 5.2 Although half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the new process would enable parent carers to make contact easier, around 45% disagreed or were neutral. There was also comment on information provision required to support parent carers and direct them to other services. The proposal presents a pathway that removes the step to access the service via MASH. This will ensure that parents will be able to access the Children with Disabilities Team more efficiently by either calling the Customer Service Centre (and be transferred to a duty worker) or via a new online option. We will be building new web pages that will contain comprehensive information (and links to external support providers) with an option to submit an electronic form to the team to request a call back. Future phases of the form will provide parent carers the opportunity to complete a version of the Wellbeing Conversation form for submission. Once submitted, this will alert the team to contact the parent to discuss further.
- 5.3 Almost 40% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed the Wellbeing Conversation would be more person centred than the current assessment, although almost the same proportion neither agreed nor disagreed. The proposed Wellbeing Conversation is intended to act as a framework to assist skilled practitioners to conduct a guided conversation. This will prompt to

ensure all areas of a parent carer or family's wellbeing are addressed but will be used flexibly to ensure that the conversation is person focused and responsive.

- 5.4 Several responses indicated the need to have skilled practitioners conducting the Wellbeing Conversation to appropriately support parent carers. In response to these concerns, a comprehensive training programme will be developed to ensure that the practitioners within Warwickshire County Council are fully skilled to deliver the support parent carers require. There will be guidance documents for practitioners and parents to assist them in completing the Wellbeing Conversation.
- 5.5 Several comments in the survey and the direct responses received would like to see a more proactive approach to promoting parent carer wellbeing. Marketing and Communications have been consulted and will develop a robust programme of marketing to ensure that the Parent Carer Pathway is heavily promoted across Warwickshire. This will include cascading awareness to all services and provisions engaged with Children's Services. This will assist in ensuring that parents are signposted appropriately.
- 5.6 There were concerns that services used to signpost to are stretched and do not have capacity to support parent carers. To address this, we will need to engage with local groups and through partnership working, ensure that we are referring parent carers correctly to their service. This will inform our practice, upskill our practitioners and allow good communication between our services and provide an appropriate support network for parents.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Following the consultation, the Equality Impact Assessment has been reviewed. Apart from comments regarding the presentation of material within the consultation, no issues indicated any changes required (see appendix 2).

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 This report is primarily concerned with the processes and procedures for the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway. This is from both a customer, client and practitioners' point of view and having regard to their user experience. The expenditure for 2019/20 (before any changes) is £41,000 and the budget for this is included within the overall Children with Disabilities budget. There is a risk that financial payments could increase due to greater awareness of the offer, but it is expected that this potential risk will be offset by the new approach to reviewing payments as well as signposting parents to non-financial alternatives.

8 Environmental Implications

8.1 There are no particular environmental implications arising from this report.

Appendices

1. Process Map of new proposed pathway
2. Equality Impact Assessment
3. Consultation Findings – Summary
4. Report on Consultation Findings
5. Comms Log
6. Carers Assessment Questionnaire summary

| | Name | Contact Information |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Report Author | Matt Greenhalgh | mattgreenhalgh@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Assistant Director | John Coleman & Ian Budd | johncoleman@warwickshire.gov.uk ianbudd@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Lead Director | Nigel Minns | nigelminns@warwickshire.gov.uk |
| Lead Member | Portfolio Holder for Children's Services | jeffmorgan@warwickshire.gov.uk |

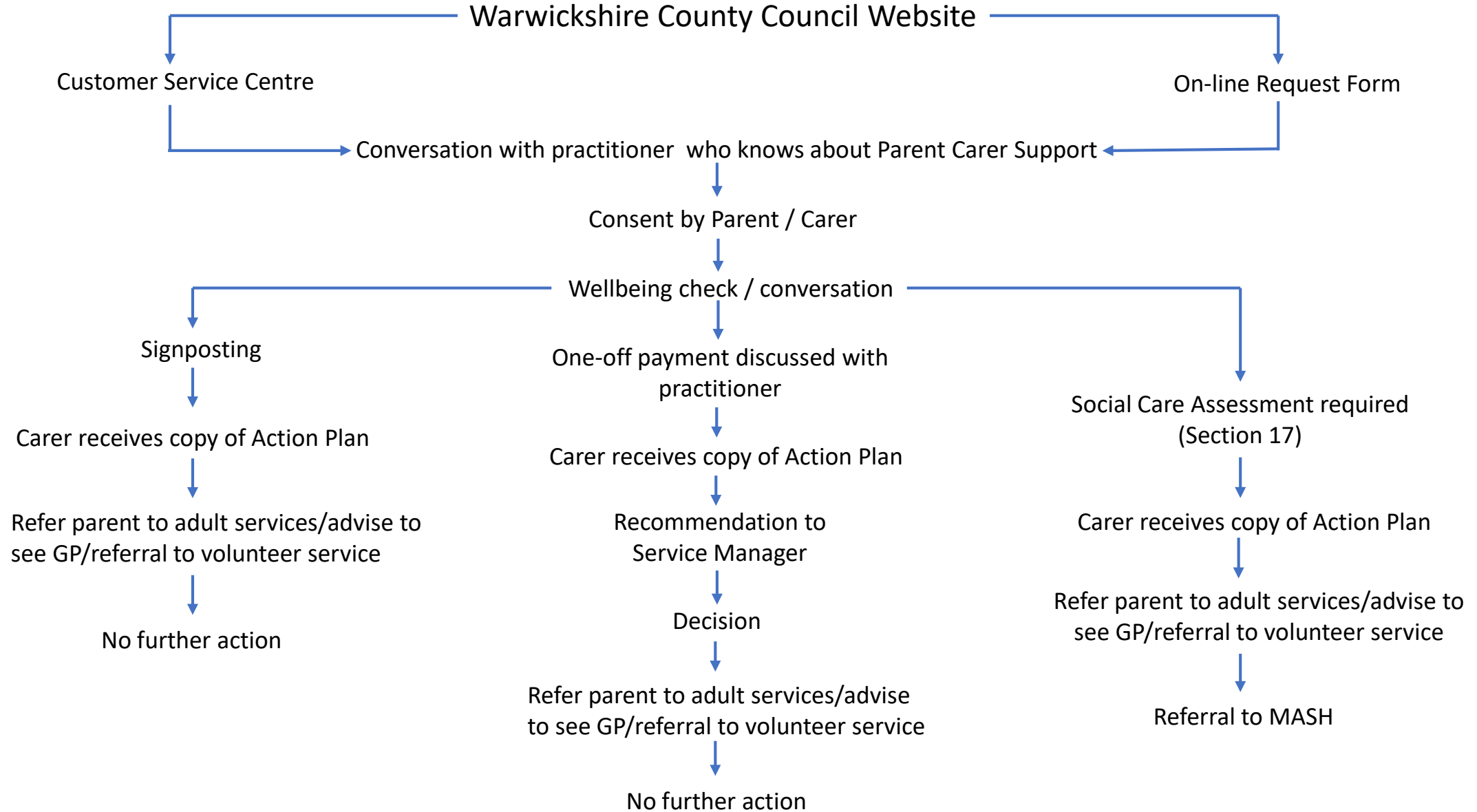
The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member: N/A

Other members: Councillors Jeff Morgan and Colin Hayfield

Proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway

Parent Carers with a disabled child or young person (under 18yrs of age)



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)
Parent Carer Assessment Pathway

| | |
|---|---|
| Service/policy/strategy/practice/plan being assessed | Parent Carer Assessment Pathway |
| Business Unit/Service Area | Communities – Children with Disabilities (Social Care) |
| Is this a new or existing service/policy/strategy/practice/plan? <i>If an existing service/policy/strategy/practice/plan please state date of last assessment</i> | Existing Practice Unknown when last EIA was completed |
| EIA Review team – list of members | Matt Greenhalgh (Service Manger CWD) Jo Boyes (Project Manager) Keira Rounsley (Senior EDI Advisor) |
| Do any other Business Units/Service Areas need to be included? | Adults Social Care |
| Date of assessment | 05.12.2019 |

| | |
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| <p>Are any of the outcomes from this assessment likely to result in complaints from existing services users, members of the public and/or employees?</p> <p><i>If yes please let your Assistant Director and the Customer Relations Team know as soon as possible</i></p> | <p>A complaint is likely as the current Pathway and outcomes (Financial Award) has been in place for a number of years without review. The intention of the new Parent Carer Support Pathway is not to reduce the support available but to make the support the right type of support and not just a financial award which in many cases has never then been used for the intended purpose / outcome. For some service users this change may cause some unhappiness as they have become very used to receiving an ongoing / open ended financial award with no review.</p> |
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Details of service/policy/strategy/practice/plan

| Scoping and Defining | |
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| <p>(1) What are the aims, objectives and outcomes of the service/policy/strategy/practice/plan ?</p> | <p>To redesign the Parent Carer Assessment Pathway.</p> <p>To rename the pathway to Parent Carer Support Pathway.</p> <p>To move the focus from Assessment and a point scoring process to one that is based on a well-being conversation and meeting need with targeted and focused support.</p> <p>To reduce the stages of the Pathway (from 14 to 4 / 5) so that support can be offered in a more timely manner.</p> |

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| | <p>To actively promote the Parent Carer Support Pathway so that more parent carers have the opportunity to access support.</p> <p>To align (where possible) the Parent Carer Support Pathway with the adult carers pathway so that when young people transition into adult services the Parent Carers receive a seamless service.</p> |
| (2) Who are the customers? | <p>Parent Carers, within the Warwickshire Local Authority boundary whose children are:</p> <p>Under the age of 18yrs</p> <p>Disabled</p> <p>And for whom the parent carer has legal parental responsibility for</p> |
| (3) How has equality been considered in the development or review so far? | <p>The Parent Carer Support Pathway relates to parent carers whose child is under the age of 18yrs and are defined as being disabled. The Parent Carers themselves may have a range of needs – physical / emotional health, age, disability etc. Throughout the development of the proposed new Pathway the working group, which has included a survey by parent carers and a workshop with parent carers, equality has been considered throughout to ensure that no one is disadvantaged by the proposed pathway. We believe, supported by the general feedback given by parent carers, that the proposed pathway will enable all parent carers to access the right support at the right time via a simplified Pathway that is based on a well-being conversation and not the need to tick certain boxes / meet a criteria.</p> |

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| <p>(4) What is the reason for the change/development?</p> | <p>The current Pathway has not been reviewed or updated for a significant period of time.</p> <p>It is agreed by Parent Carers and Professionals that the current Pathway is no longer fit for purpose.</p> <p>The Current Pathway is lengthy and unclear for professionals and Parent Carers alike.</p> <p>The Outcomes within the current Pathway are very narrow with a financial award the only outcome.</p> <p>Currently to access a Parent Carer assessment the route is via MASH. This is not a good use of resource and results in some parent carers not requesting an assessment and others being rejected as the duty on the Local Authority is not widely known or understood.</p> <p>To provide Parent Carers with targeted and focused support.</p> <p>For the Pathway to be effective and responsive to need at a given point in time.</p> <p>To ensure an equal playing field in the use of public funds.</p> |
| <p>(5) How does it fit with Warwickshire County Council's wider objectives?</p> | <p>To be Efficient – To reduce the Pathway from 15 steps (current) to 4/5 (proposed).</p> <p>To be Integrated – The proposed Pathway is aligned to the adult carers Pathway (where possible) to ensure that the service user experience is seamless as young people transition from children to adult services.</p> <p>To make best use of Technologies – The proposed Pathway offers Parent Carers the opportunity to request a well-being conversation via an on-line form (this is not</p> |

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| | <p>currently available). The on-line information for sign posting etc. will be improved so that Parent Carers get the information they need in a clear and concise manner (following the three click rule).</p> |
| <p>(6) Why might it be important to consider equality and the protected characteristics?</p> | <p>The Parent Carer Support Pathway is in direct relation to supporting Parent Carers who have a disabled child.</p> <p>Parent Carers will naturally hold several different protected characteristics, therefore it's essential that we consider the impact of this change on all protected characteristics before making a final decision; to not only ensure the support pathway is inclusive and accessible, but also the consultation process to enable everyone the opportunity to take part and have their voice heard.</p> <p>As a Public Sector organisation, under the Public Sector Equality Duty we must also have 'due regard' to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act. • advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. • foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. |
| <p>Information Gathering</p> | |

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| <p>(7) What sources of data have you used?</p> | <p>Initial survey with Parent Carers</p> <p>Workshop with Parent Carers</p> <p>Financial analysis between March and October 2019</p> |
| <p>(8) What does the data you have tell you about your customers and about protected equality groups?</p> | <p>Nothing significant or of concern. Parent Carers across Warwickshire have diverse needs that are assessed as part of the current Pathway. The proposed Pathway strengthens the positive practice of taking a person-centred approach and tailoring support to meet individual need.</p> |
| <p>(9) What do you need to know more about?</p> | <p>Potential and actual impacts on those with different protected characteristics.</p> |
| <p>10) How could you find this out and who could help you?</p> | <p>The public consultation will be mainly hosted on Ask Warwickshire, our on-line platform. We will also provide paper-based questionnaires and the information in an alternative format and / or language on request.</p> |
| <p>Engagement and Consultation</p> | |
| <p>(11) Who have you consulted with from protected equality groups?</p> | <p>Parent Carers from across Warwickshire via a survey facilitated by the Warwickshire Parent Carer Forum.</p> |

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| (12) Who else could you consult with? | Additional Parent Carers through public consultation. As part of the public consultation, the diversity data of respondents will be collected to ensure we've reached and heard from all groups / communities. |
| (13) Who can help you to do this? | Lucy Rumble, Strategic Consultation and Engagement Lead |
| Monitor and Evaluate | |
| (14) How will you monitor and evaluate the service/policy/strategy/practice/plan? | <p>From implementation – June 2020</p> <p>Review after 3 months – Sept 2020: On-line activity / number of Well-Being conversations undertaken / Outcomes achieved (client level data) / Customer feedback</p> <p>Review after 6 months – Dec 2020: As above for 3 months + Focus group with Parent Carers to review the new Pathway</p> <p>Review After 12 Months – June 2021: As above for 6 month Review</p> <p>Post June 2020: Business as normal model</p> |

| (15) Analysis of impact and potential actions: | | | | |
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| Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 | What do you know? Summary of data about/feedback from your service-users and/or staff | What does this mean? | | What can you do? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Eliminate discrimination/mitigate negative impact ● Advance equality of opportunity ● Foster good relations |
| | | Positive impacts identified (actual and potential) | Negative impacts identified (actual and potential) | |
| Age | Parent Carers across Warwickshire cover a broad age range from 20 to 80 years of age | There is a broad spectrum of ages, providing lived experience at different stages of life | It is anticipated that the older generation are less likely to feel confident with using online services and / or have easy access | Maintain a limited phone and paper service specifically for those who are unable to use the on-line service and / or have no internet access. Regarding the consultation itself, paper versions of the questionnaire and all information will be made available in required formats on request. |

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| Disability | Parent Carers across Warwickshire may have a disability that impacts on their caring responsibilities | The lived experience gives a nice knowledge base of how best to meet Parent Carer needs | Resources available to meet the needs of parent carers who have a disability are limited | <p>Ensure that all parent carers, regardless of a disability, have the same opportunities to receive the right support at the right time.</p> <p>Subject the on-line process and information to the access standards required to ensure it is as accessible as possible. Where this may not be accessible for individuals due to the nature of their disability, we will maintain a limited phone and paper service and make reasonable adjustments where required.</p> <p>Regarding the consultation itself, paper versions of the questionnaire and all information will be made available in required formats on request.</p> |
| Sex | Parent Carers across Warwickshire are both male and female. The data shows that females are statistically more likely to be the main carer | None identified | None identified | To be monitored and reviewed as part of the consultation process. |

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| Race | Parent Carers across Warwickshire are a diverse cultural mix with the majority being White British | Reducing the Pathway from 15 steps (current) to 4/5 (proposed) will make the process simpler and easier to understand | Whilst the majority are White British, there may be a percentage of Parent Carers who don't have English as their first language | Communications and instructions to be delivered in simple, plain English to address any potential language barriers. Alternative language provision made available on request. |
| Religion or belief | Parent Carers across Warwickshire are a diverse cultural mix | None identified | None identified | Take into consideration any religious festivals / holidays when planning consultation activities to enable all religious groups to partake. |
| Gender Reassignment | No available data, relevant to this project | None identified | None identified | To be inclusive of all genders we will ensure we use gender neutral language. |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | No available data, relevant to this project | None identified | None identified | To be monitored and reviewed as part of the consultation process. |


| | | | | |
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| Sexual orientation | No available data, relevant to this project | None identified | None identified | To be monitored and reviewed as part of the consultation process. |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership (Note: only in relation to due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination) | No available data, relevant to this project | None identified | None identified | To be monitored and reviewed as part of the consultation process. |

| (16) Outcomes of Equality Impact Assessment | | |
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| Action | Timescale | Responsibility |
| Ensure that the support outcomes for all Parent Carers regardless of any protected characteristics. To gather information / data over the first | Sept 2020 | Project Lead – Service Manager Children with |

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| 3 months of the new Pathway to ensure that all identified needs are being met appropriately. | | Disabilities |
| Maintain a limited phone and paper service specifically for those who are unable to use the on-line service and / or have no internet access. | April 2020 – July 2020 | Project Lead – Service Manager Children with Disabilities Project Manager |
| Ensure paper versions of the questionnaire and all information is made available in required formats on request as part of the consultation process. | June/July 2020 | Project Lead – Service Manager Children with Disabilities Project Manager |
| Subject the on-line process and information to the access standards required to ensure it is as accessible as possible. | April 2020 – July 2020 | Project Lead – Service Manager Children with Disabilities Project Manager |
| Communications and instructions to be delivered in simple, plain English to address any potential language barriers. | Jan 2020 – July 2020 | Project Lead – Service Manager Children with Disabilities Project Manager |
| Alternative language provision made available on request. | June 2020 – July 2020 | Project Lead – Service Manager Children with Disabilities Project Manager |

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| Take into consideration any religious festivals / holidays when planning consultation activities to enable all religious groups to partake. | April 2020 – July 2020 | Project Lead – Service Manager Children with Disabilities Project Manager |
| Ensure we use gender neutral language. | Jan 2020 – July 2020 | Project Lead – Service Manager Children with Disabilities Project Manager |
| Monitor and review the EIA in response to outcomes of the public consultation process. | 7 th Feb 2020 | Project Lead – Service Manager Children with Disabilities Project Manager |
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| Date of Next Review | October 2020 |
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| Name and signature of Officer completing the EIA | Matt Greenhalgh |
| Name and signature of Assistant Director | Ian Budd |
| Name and signature of Directorate Equalities Champion |  |

If you would like any equalities support or advice on this completed document, please contact the Equalities Team on 01926 412370 or equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk

NEXT STEPS ONCE COMPLETED:

- 1. Go to File – Rename, and enter a new document name (e.g. Title of the EIA followed by - EIA)**
- 2. Go to Share (top right hand corner) Add Assistant Director and the Directorate Equalities Champion with ‘can edit’ option to gain their signatures and for recording purposes**
- 3. Once signed off, ensure the completed EIA is saved in a secure place**

1. Consultation Findings - Summary

- 1.1 The majority of respondents to the survey were parent carers and of these the majority were female.
- 1.2 Fewer responses were received from both North Warwickshire Borough and Rugby Borough.
- 1.3 Just over half of respondents had heard about the current Parent Carer Assessment.
- 1.4 Around 40% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the proposed change of name from Parent Carer Assessment to Parent Carer Support Pathway. However, roughly the same number were neutral and a further 20% disagreed with the name change suggesting some ambivalence about the name.
- 1.5 Just over half of respondents indicated they thought the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway was easy to understand. However, one in three respondents disagreed.
- 1.6 Preferences for finding out about support for parent carers were strongest for direct from WCC website and other organisations/charities. Other suggestions made by respondents included other health, education and local authority sources as well as named charities/support groups locally. More proactive measures for offering support to parent carers were also mentioned.
- 1.7 Half of respondents thought it was clear who could request a Wellbeing Conversation from the material provided to them. However, a third did not think it was clear and the remainder were unsure/didn't know indicating some uncertainty from respondents about the clarity. A number of reasons why it was not clear were given by respondents including clarity about who counted as a parent carer, concern about awareness of the process by parent carers and the material provided was difficult to understand.
- 1.8 Over half of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the new process would enable parent carers to make contact easily. However, around 45% either disagreed or were neutral about the ease with which parent carers would make contact.
- 1.9 Around 55% of respondents agreed that the proposed Wellbeing Conversation would enable parent carers to communicate their support needs. As with a number of previous questions there were relatively high levels of uncertainty with a sizable proportion of respondents (25%) selecting the neither agree or disagree option while the remainder disagreed.

- 1.10 Around half of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed Wellbeing Conversation would identify and understand parent carer support needs. Almost a third of respondents were uncertain and opted to neither agree nor disagree.
- 1.11 Just under a third of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that parent carers will be comfortable discussing their wellbeing needs. A further third neither agreed or disagreed and the remainder (35%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement.
- 1.12 Almost 40% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the Wellbeing Conversation would be more person centred than the current assessment process. However, almost the same proportion neither agreed or disagreed while just over 20% either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement
- 1.13 A lower proportion of respondents (28%) either agreed or strongly agreed that parent carers will get access to support more quickly – as with previous questions, there were noticeably high (almost 40%) levels of ‘neither agree or disagree’ – respondents were generally unwilling to commit to the idea that outcomes would clearly be improved through the new process.
- 1.14 Levels of support for the proposed outcomes of the Wellbeing Conversation were generally high at between 78% and 81.7%. Suggestions for other types of support included access to specialist services and wider wellbeing services.
- 1.15 There was generally high levels of support for parts of the Parent Carer Support Pathway relating to the inclusion of a review process and no restrictions on the number of times a parent carer could access a Wellbeing Conversation. However, agreement levels were much lower for those statements which sought agreement from respondents that the process would be more easily accessible and meet their needs in a targeted and focused way.
- 1.16 When asked about the positive impacts of the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway, respondents did indicate they thought the process should be easier to access and possibly offer a wider range of support. There was a hope that the experience of requesting help would be kinder emotionally on parent carers and less stigmatising. However, caution was also expressed that much of this hinged on the process being implemented appropriately including being properly funded and provision made for staff training to deliver the new pathway sensitively.
- 1.17 When asked about potential negative impacts of the new process, respondents highlighted the difficulties of asking for help as a parent carer and the need to understand the context in which parent carers were operating – limited time, money and energy to access support even when it existed. Some respondents questioned the availability of services to which parent carers might find themselves ‘signposted’, highlighting the often-stretched nature of these local support groups. Again, the role of staff or ‘skilled practitioners’ was considered crucial to the success of the new pathway.

- 1.18 There was a clear body of respondents who remained unconvinced by the proposed changes and much of this appeared to be based on unsatisfactory experiences of the current system. Conversely, poor experiences by some respondents of the current system appeared to have left them with the view that almost anything had to be an improvement.
- 1.19 There was support for the proposed changes and introduction of the new Parent Carer Support Pathway. However, relatively high levels of 'neutral' responses to many questions along with the caveats to support when asked to comment, suggest respondents were unwilling to be drawn fully on whether the proposed new pathway would deliver improved outcomes for parent carers.
- 1.20 Three direct responses (via email) were received during the consultation period outside of the survey. Comments were similar to the survey responses, in that:
- There was an acknowledgement that change to current process was required
 - Parents felt under scrutiny and judged in the context of social care assessments.
 - Skilled staff were required to support parent carers through the proposed pathway.
 - The Wellbeing Conversation may raise emotional issues not previously discussed and support needed to be available.
 - Parents would like to see more proactive promotion of parent carer wellbeing



PARENT CARER SUPPORT PATHWAY SURVEY FEEDBACK

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BACKGROUND

Warwickshire County Council has a duty to ensure the needs of parent carers with a disabled child are assessed and supported. Feedback on the current Parent Carer Assessment Pathway indicated that it did not always meet the needs of parent carers. A new approach has been proposed in which the process will move away from an assessment process to one based on a Wellbeing Conversation with changes to the way this is accessed and implemented. Additionally, there would be changes to the outcomes available.

The consultation on the new Parent Carer Support Pathway took place between 06/01/2020 to 09/02/2020.

METHODOLOGY

A range of methods were used to gather views during the consultation period. These included:

- An online survey on Ask Warwickshire using Citizen Space.
- A paper-based version of the standard online survey could be requested by telephone or email. Alternative formats and languages could also be requested.
- A number of face-to-face drop in sessions were available for people to comment in person

In addition, comments in relation to the proposed draft strategy could be emailed directly to parentcarerconsult@warwickshire.gov.uk or in writing to the Children with Disabilities Team at the county council.

This report presents an analysis of data from completed online and paper survey responses. In addition, material received direct to the service area is highlighted and referenced in this document.



KEY MESSAGES

- The majority of respondents to the survey were parent carers and of these the majority were female.
- Fewer responses were received from both North Warwickshire Borough and Rugby Borough.
- Just over half of respondents had heard about the current Parent Carer Assessment.
- Around 40% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the proposed change of name from Parent Carer Assessment to Parent Carer Support Pathway. However, roughly the same number were neutral and a further 20% disagreed with the name change suggesting some ambivalence with regard to what the proposed changes were actually called.
- Just over half of respondents indicated they thought the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway was easy to understand. However, one in three respondents disagreed that it was easy to understand.
- Preferences for finding out about support for parent carers were strongest for direct from WCC website and other organisations/charities. Other suggestions made by respondents included other health, education and local authority sources as well as named charities/support groups locally. More proactive measures for offering support to parent carers were also mentioned.
- Half of respondents thought it was clear who could request a Wellbeing Conversation from the material provided to them. However, a third did not think it was clear and the remainder were unsure/didn't know indicating some uncertainty from respondents about the clarity of who could request a Wellbeing Conversation.
- A number of reasons why it was not clear were given by respondents including clarity about who counted as a parent carer, concern about awareness of the process by parent carers and the material provided was difficult to understand.
- Over half of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the new process would enable parent carers to make contact easily. However, around 45% either disagreed or were neutral about the ease with which parent carers would make contact.
- Around 55% of respondents agreed that the proposed Wellbeing Conversation would enable parent carers to communicate their support needs. As with a number of previous questions there were relatively high levels of uncertainty with a sizable proportion of respondents (25%) selecting the neither agree or disagree option while the remainder disagreed that the Wellbeing Conversation would help parent carers communicate their needs.
- Around half of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed Wellbeing Conversation would identify and understand parent carer support needs. Almost a third of respondents were uncertain and opted to neither agree or disagree.
- Just under a third of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that parent carers will be comfortable discussing their wellbeing needs. A further third neither agreed or disagreed and the remainder (35%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement.
- Almost 40% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the Wellbeing Conversation would be more person centred than the current assessment process. However, almost the same proportion neither agreed or disagreed while just over 20% either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement.
- A lower proportion of respondents (28%) either agreed or strongly agreed that parent carers will get access to support more quickly – as with previous questions, there were noticeably high (almost 40%)



levels of ‘neither agree or disagree’ – respondents were generally unwilling to commit to the idea that outcomes would clearly be improved through the new process.

- Levels of support for the proposed outcomes of the Wellbeing Conversation were generally high at between 78% and 81.7% . Suggestions for other types of support included access to specialist services and wider wellbeing services.
- There was generally high levels of support for parts of the Parent Carer Support Pathway relating to the inclusion of a review process and no restrictions on the number of times a parent carer could access a Wellbeing Conversation. However, agreement levels were much lower for those statements which sought agreement from respondents that the process would be more easily accessible and meet their needs in a targeted and focused way.
- When asked about the positive impacts of the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway, respondents did indicate they thought the process should be easier to access and possibly offer a wider range of support. There was a hope that the experience of requesting help would be kinder emotionally on parent carers and less stigmatising. However, caution was also expressed that much of this hinged on the process being implemented appropriately including being properly funded and provision made for staff training to deliver the new pathway sensitively.
- When asked about potential negative impacts of the new process, respondents highlighted the difficulties of asking for help as a parent carer and the need to understand the context in which parent carers were operating – limited time, money and energy to access support even when it existed. Some respondents questioned the availability of services to which parent carers might find themselves ‘signposted’, highlighting the often stretched nature of these local support groups. Again, the role of staff or ‘skilled practitioners’ was considered crucial to the success of the new pathway.
- There was a clear body of respondents who remained unconvinced by the proposed changes and much of this appeared to be based on unsatisfactory experiences of the current system. Conversely, poor experiences by some respondents of the current system appeared to have left them with the view that almost anything had to be an improvement.
- There was support for the proposed changes and introduction of the new Parent Carer Support Pathway. However, relatively high levels of ‘neutral’ responses to many questions along with the caveats to support when asked to comment, suggest respondents were unwilling to be drawn fully on whether the proposed new pathway would deliver improved outcomes for parent carers.

RESULTS – CONSULTATION ANALYSIS

RESPONDENT PROFILE

The number of respondents completing the survey was 61. Figure 1 provides details of the profile of respondents. The majority of respondents identified their ethnicity as ‘White British’. In addition, the majority of respondents were female (n=51/83.6%).



Figure 1 Respondent Profile

| | | Count | % |
|--|---|-------|-------|
| Gender | Male | 4 | 6.6% |
| | Female | 51 | 83.6% |
| | Prefer not to say | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Not answered | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Prefer to self-describe | 0 | 0.0% |
| | Non-binary | 2 | 3.3% |
| Does your gender identity match your sex registered at birth? | Yes | 55 | 90.2% |
| | No | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Prefer not to say | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Not answered | 2 | 3.3% |
| Age in years | Under 18 | 0 | 0 |
| | 18-29 | 1 | 1.6% |
| | 30-44 | 22 | 36.1% |
| | 45-59 | 32 | 52.5% |
| | 60-74 | 2 | 3.3% |
| | 75+ | 0 | 0 |
| | Prefer not to say | 3 | 4.9% |
| | Not answered | 1 | 1.6% |
| Long standing illness or disability | Yes | 17 | 27.9% |
| | No | 39 | 63.9% |
| | Prefer not to say | 3 | 4.9% |
| | Not answered | 2 | 3.3% |
| Ethnicity | White British | 48 | 78.7% |
| | White Irish | 1 | 1.6% |
| | Gypsy or Irish Traveller | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Other White | 4 | 6.6% |
| | Mixed - White and Black Caribbean | 0 | 0% |
| | Mixed - White and Black African | 0 | 0% |
| | Mixed - White and Asian | 0 | 0% |
| | Mixed - Any other mixed background | 0 | 0% |
| | Arab | 0 | 0% |
| | Asian or Asian British - Pakistani | 0 | 0% |
| | Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi | 0 | 0% |
| | Asian or Asian British - Chinese | 0 | 0% |
| | Asian or Asian British - Indian | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Asian or Asian British Any other background | 0 | 0% |
| | Black or Black British - African | 0 | 0% |
| | Black or Black British - Caribbean | 1 | 1.6% |
| | Black or Black British - Any other background | 0 | 0% |
| | Any other Ethnic group. Please specify | 0 | 0% |
| | Prefer not to say | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Not answered | 1 | 1.6% |
| Religion | Buddhist | 1 | 1.6% |
| | Christian | 22 | 36.1% |
| | Jewish | 0 | 0.0% |
| | Muslim | 0 | 0.0% |
| | Hindu | 1 | 1.6% |
| | Sikh | 1 | 1.6% |



| | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|----|-------|
| | Spiritual | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Other - please specify | 2 | 3.3% |
| | No religion | 29 | 47.5% |
| | Prefer not to say | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Not answered | 1 | 0.0% |
| Sexuality | Heterosexual or straight | 47 | 77.0% |
| | Gay Man | 0 | 0.0% |
| | Gay Woman/Lesbian | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Bisexual | 2 | 3.3% |
| | Prefer not to say | 7 | 11.5% |
| | Other | 1 | 3.3% |

ABOUT RESPONDENTS

Respondents were asked in which geographical area they lived/worked and the main reason for which they were completing the survey. Figure 2 presents the results of these questions. The majority (n=54/88.5%) of respondents were parents or carers. Remaining respondents were either a professional/specialist working with parent carers (n=2/3.3%), a member of the public/'other' (n=5/8.2%). The later included those unsure if they had had an assessment or in the process of undergoing one.

Figure 2 Number and proportion of respondents by location and reason for completing survey

| Area | Parent/carer who has previously had an assessment | Parent/carer who has not previously had an assessment | Professional /specialist working with parents | Other/member of the public | All respondents % |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|----------------------------|-------------------|
| North Warwickshire Borough | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 6.6% |
| Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough | 8 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 23.0% |
| Rugby Borough | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 9.8% |
| Stratford-on-Avon District | 7 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 27.9% |
| Warwick District | 10 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 27.9% |
| Other/work countywide | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 4.9% |
| All respondents % | 50.8% | 37.7% | 3.3% | 8.2% | |

Of those respondents who were parent carers (n=54/88.5%), 31 were parent carers who had previously had an assessment while 23 were parent carers who had not previously had an assessment.

Fewer responses were received from both North Warwickshire Borough and Rugby Borough areas. Ten responses in total were received from parent carers living in these two areas.

Respondents were also asked if they were in receipt of a financial award following a parent carer assessment. Of those answering this question (n=21), 12 respondents were in receipt of a financial award while 9 were not. Half



(n=6) of those in receipt of a financial award had been receiving it for more than a year. Remaining recipients had done so for less than a year.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE CURRENT PARENT CARER ASSESSMENT

The current process

Respondents were asked if they had heard about the current Parent Carer Assessment. Of those answering this question (n=40) over half (n=24) had heard of it while 16 respondents who answered this question had not.

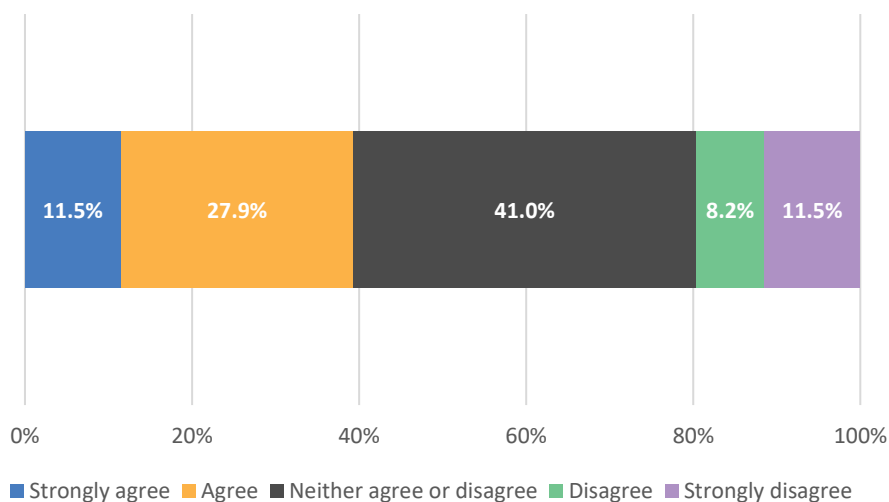
Typical ways in which respondents reported they had heard about the Parent Carer Assessment were, word of mouth (n=7), professional advice (n=7), on-line (n=6) and other (n=5). The latter included the Parent Carer Forum and friends and relatives.

PROPOSED PARENT CARER SUPPORT PATHWAY

Changing the name of the current process

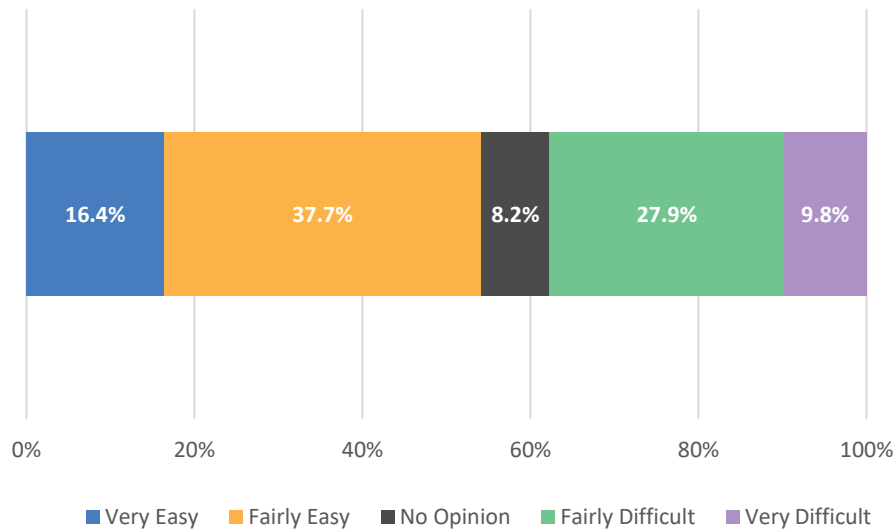
New proposals would involve changing the name of the existing process from ‘Parent Carer Assessment’ to ‘Parent Carer Support Pathway’. Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with the proposed name change. Of all respondents, 39.3% (n=24) either strongly agreed or agreed with the proposed change. Conversely, almost 20% (n=12) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the name change. However, the most frequent response was to neither agree or disagree (41.0%/n=25) with the proposal to change the name of the assessment. Figure 3 illustrates the range and proportion of each response to this question.

Figure 3 Agreement with proposed name change



Respondents were asked how easy or difficult it was to understand the proposed process. The results are illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4 Understanding the proposed new process



Understanding the proposed new Parent Carer Support Pathway

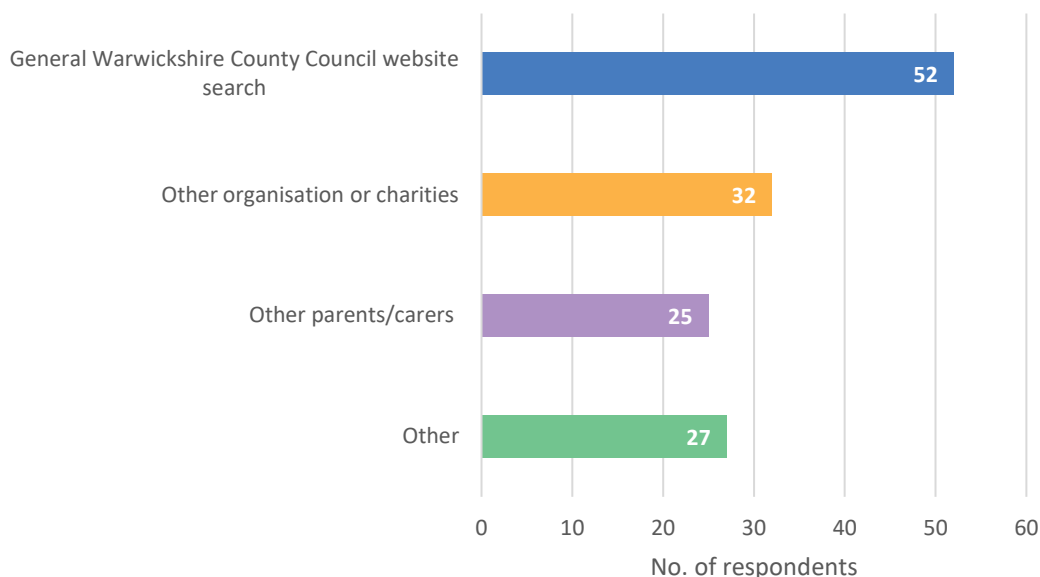
Just over half of respondents (54.1%/n=33) indicated they thought the proposed new process was either very easy or easy to understand. In contrast, 37.7% (n=23) respondents felt the new process was either fairly difficult or very difficult to understand. A smaller number (8.2%/n=5) indicated they had no opinion on the ease of the process.

Finding out about support for parent carers

Respondents were also asked to select (from a list) where they would like to find out information about the support available to parent carers. The most popular place for finding out about support for parent carers was the general Warwickshire County Council website search (n=52, 85.2%), followed by other organisations/charities (n=32, 52.5%). Figure 5 highlights the most popular options selected by respondents.



Figure 5 Preference for finding out about support for parent carers



A range of organisations and sources of information were highlighted as part of the category ‘other’. These are summarised in Figure 6. The majority of suggestions were about how parent carers could seek out information or where it could be made available. However, there were also suggestions that support for parent carers could be more proactively directed through the existing channels that may be available.

Figure 6 Finding out about support available for parent carers suggested by respondents

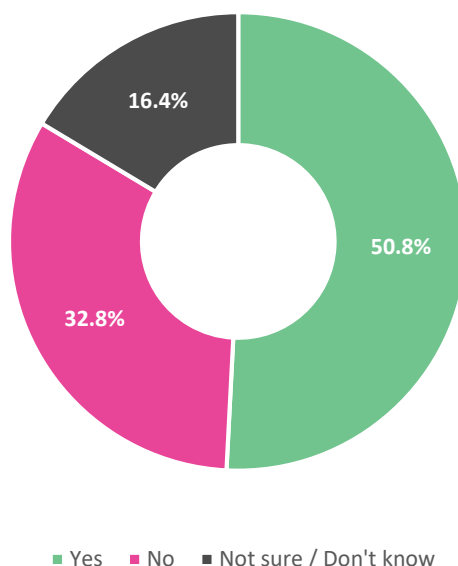
| Information source | Examples |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Education related | Schools, libraries, children’s centres. |
| Health related | GP, health visitors etc. |
| Local authority | Social workers, SEND professionals, Family Information Service, any WCC workers who can cross reference, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services |
| Charities/support groups | Local support networks – Local Minds, Act for Autism, Special Education Needs Information Advice and Support Services (SENDIAS), Asperger’s United, Carers Trust, Take a Break charity, Citizens Advice, local churches, ENTRUST care partnership. |
| Proactive support | Proactive contacting of parents to let them know about support available – e.g. through those with a blue badge, on a health pathway, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) annual review. |



Clarity about who can request a Wellbeing Conversation

Respondents were asked to indicate if it was clear from the information provided who will be able to request a Wellbeing Conversation. Figure 7 indicates that half of respondents (50.8%/n=31) thought it was clear while around a third (32.8%/n=20) thought it was not. In addition, 16.4% (n=10) were unsure. This would suggest there is still some uncertainty about who can request a Wellbeing Conversation.

Figure 7 Is it clear from the information presented who can request a Wellbeing conversation?



A number of respondents who indicated it was not clear who can request a Wellbeing Conversation went on to say why. Comments are summarised in Figure 8.

Figure 8 Reasons given why it is not clear who can request a Wellbeing Conversation

| Theme | Explanation | Examples for illustration |
|---|---|---|
| Who counts as a parent/carer of disabled child | A number of comments were made regarding the ambiguity of who is a parent carer i.e. could both parents count, would young carers be eligible and concerns of not meeting the criteria as a parent carer of a disabled child. | <p><i>“Can both parents have an assessment? If not, why not?”</i></p> <p><i>“It is not clear who is classed as a ‘Parent carer’”</i></p> <p><i>“Using the term ‘Disabled’ is not explicit enough”</i></p> |

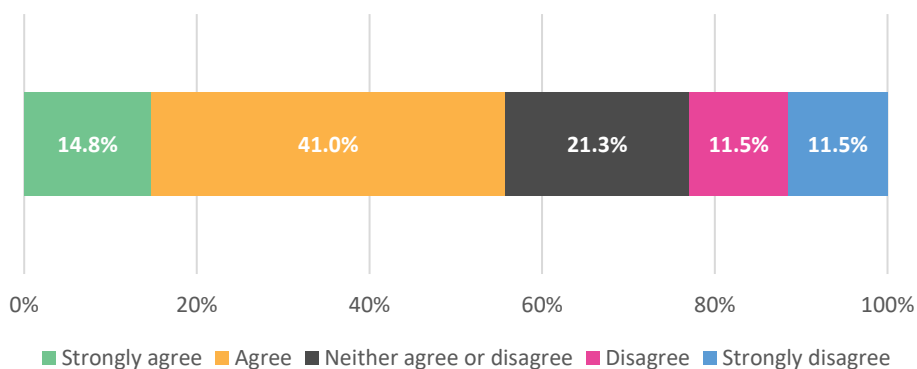


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | <i>"But only one parent can have that conversation. Even if both give equal care"</i> |
| Initiating a conversation | Some respondents commented that it was unclear who could initiate the process | <i>"Do these requests need to come from the parent/carer?"</i> <i>"There's nothing to tell me who instigates the process"</i> |
| Concern that eligible parent carers will not be aware of the process | General comments about awareness of the process among those eligible. | <i>"Nothing is clear, you have to go looking for it"</i> <i>"They may not be aware of this service. There should be an organisation to get in touch with parents to see where they can help"</i> |
| The material/process was not clear | Some respondents found the material difficult to understand and not clear. | <i>"I don't understand any of it"</i> <i>"no, it isn't clear at all"</i> <i>"There was too much information for me to understand."</i> |

Making contact in the proposed parent carer support pathway

Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed that the proposed new contact process will enable parent carers to make contact easily. Over half of respondents (55.8%/n=34) either strongly agreed or agreed that the new process would be easier for parent carers to make contact. The proportion of respondents who disagreed was 23% (n=14) while around 1 in 5 (21.3%/n=13) respondents neither agreed or disagreed.

Figure 9 Will the proposed new contact process enable parent carers to make contact easily?



Further comments were sought from respondents in relation to this question. Mostly these further emphasised from parent carer experience the limitations of the current system and the need for well-informed trained staff who are aware of the new pathway and recognition of context in which carers are living. In talking about the parent carer experience, there was a sense that any new system needed to be different and avoid the confusion that some parent carers had experienced under the current system. These are summarised in Figure 10.

Figure 10 Comments relating to whether the new contact process will enable parent carers to make contact more easily

| Theme | Explanation | Examples for illustration |
|---|--|---|
| <p>The existing process</p> | <p>Respondents made frequent references to their experiences of the current process and its unsuitability in meeting parent carer needs particularly contacts made through MASH.</p> | <p><i>“I have found the process chaotic and very amateurish.”</i></p> <p><i>“I have found some of the individuals not knowing what they are talking about and have done the process wrong and been very rude and unhelpful.”</i></p> <p><i>“MASH is not appropriate for most families with disabled children, however I strongly believe having a section 17 assessment is. Direct contact for assessment should be easier”</i></p> <p><i>“I knew who to get through to and made contact and it still took almost nine months to get an answer. The answer was no. I could have made another human being in the time it took to tell me that you couldn’t help”</i></p> |
| <p>Staff knowledge/ training</p> | <p>Respondents highlighted the need for appropriate staff training to make sure the new pathway worked as proposed as much hinged on staff knowing the system.</p> | <p><i>“The contact people need to be named or their role particularised, so people know who they can expect to speak to”</i></p> <p><i>“Also, the skilled practitioner does actually need to be a skilled practitioner with a comprehensive understanding of disability and the impact on families... Not just a lower paid practitioner using a flowchart.”</i></p> <p><i>“What constitutes a ‘skilled</i></p> |



| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | | <i>practitioner’?”</i> |
| Parent carer context | A number of comments highlighted the context in which parent carers are making contact and the need to bear this in mind. Awareness about the process was also highlighted. | <p><i>“At the point parent carers are requesting help things normally are very hard for them, even picking up the phone to make that call is not always easy”</i></p> <p><i>“Parents aren't always aware that they can get help for themselves. I only found out because another parent told me.”</i></p> |
| Clarity of the proposed new pathway | A number of comments indicated it was still not clear how the process would work and so difficult to say if it would be easier for parent carers. | <p><i>“it is not clear from the consultation documents where the on-line or Customer Service Centre will direct you? Is the Customer Service well-known enough or would Family Information Service be a better route (as more well-known and up to age 25) “</i></p> <p><i>“I agree with this statement if there is a designated department for the parent carer support pathway.”</i></p> |
| Improvement in access | A number of comments acknowledged the new approach was likely to be an improvement on the current system. | <p><i>“It will be better to know that if a professional feels that a parent should be referred for assessment (or whatever it's called), it's easier for that referral to be made. Equally, if a parent feels that he or she needs help, it's good to know that we don't have to go through as many hoops to ask for an assessment.”</i></p> <p><i>“This means parents can attempt to get support themselves rather than go through the MASH team”</i></p> |

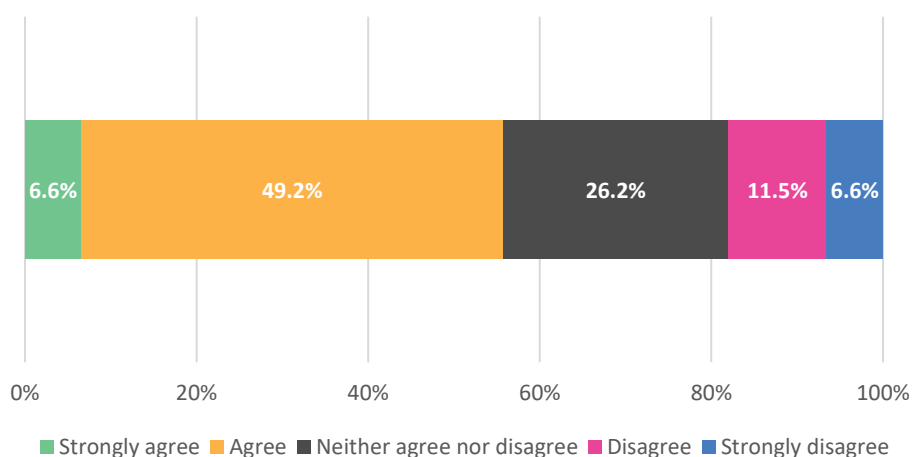


PROPOSED WELLBEING CONVERSATION

Communicating parent carer support needs

Just over half of respondents (55.7%/n=34) either strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed Wellbeing Conversation will enable parent carers to communicate their support needs. A smaller proportion either disagreed or strongly disagreed (18.0%/n=11) that the proposed process would enable parent carers to communicate their support needs. However, a noticeable proportion – over a quarter – of respondents neither agreed or disagreed with the question. Figure 11 illustrates these findings.

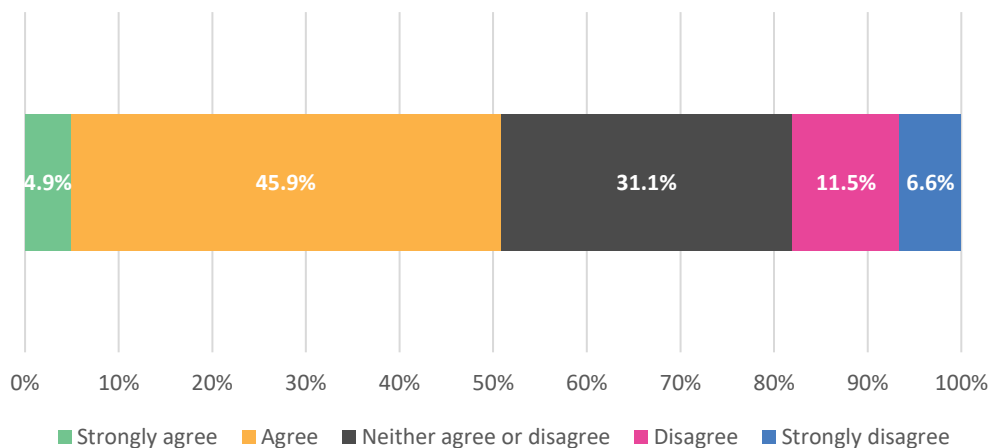
Figure 11 Will the Wellbeing Conversation enable parent carers to communicate their support needs?



Similarly, half (50.8%/n=31) of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the questions in the Wellbeing Conversation will identify and understand parent carers support needs. Almost a third (31.3%/n=19) of respondents, however, neither agreed or disagreed with the question. This suggests a noticeable proportion of respondents felt unable to commit to the proposal that the Wellbeing Conversation would enable parent carers to communicate their support needs. Figure 12 highlights responses to this question.



Figure 12 Will the proposed questions for the Wellbeing Conversation identify and understand parent carer support needs?

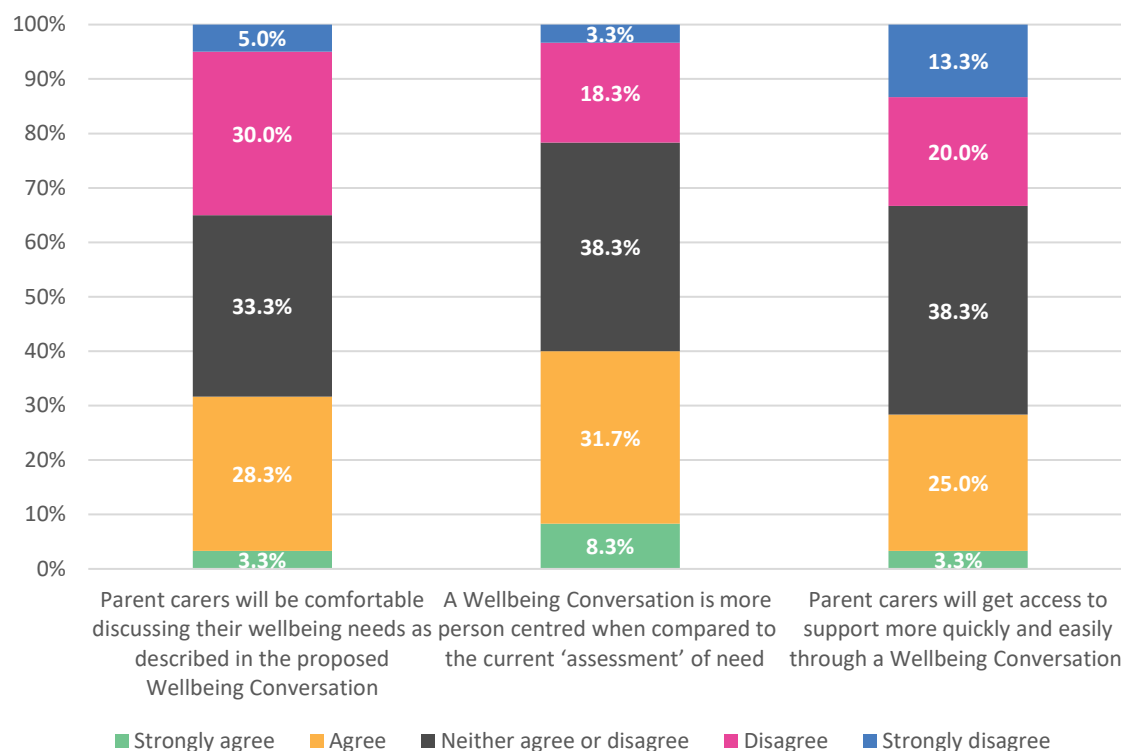


Statements about the Wellbeing Conversation

Respondents were asked the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements relating to the Wellbeing Conversation. Figure 13 illustrates responses to all these statements. At least a third (n=20) of respondents neither agreed or disagreed with the statements suggesting there is some uncertainty about how the proposals will be experienced by parent carers. Respondents were more likely to agree or strongly agree (40.0%/n=24) that the new Wellbeing Conversation was more person centred compared to the previous arrangements. However, they were less likely to strongly agree/agree (28.3%/n=17) that parent carers will get access to support more quickly and easily with the new arrangements.



Figure 13 Level of agreement/disagreement with selected statements



Further comments were sought on the Wellbeing Conversation. Previous experience of seeking support as a parent carer feature noticeably in the comments made with many cautious that the proposed new arrangements will make a difference. Reference to staff training and the role of those delivering the questions was highlighted as was the need to understand the parent carer experience and the context in which they are seeking help. A number of comments saw the Wellbeing Conversation as a diversion from other help and indeed questioned whether support was reliably or readily available from local groups or if funding would be available. However, there was also acknowledgement from a number of respondents that the Wellbeing Conversation questions covered much of the needs that parent carers are likely to have and were an improvement on the previous assessment process.

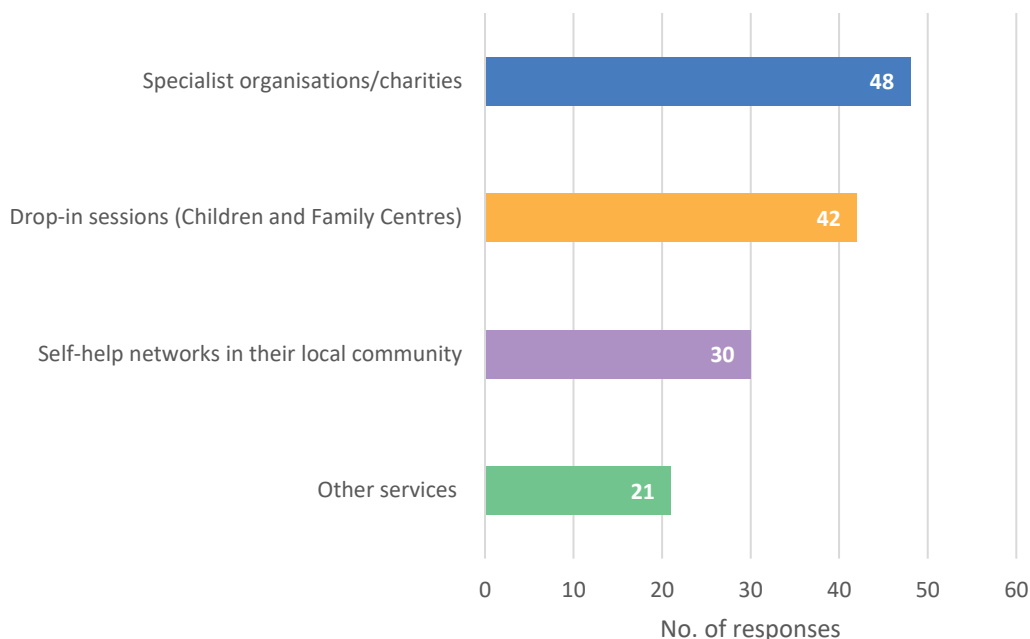
SOURCES OF SUPPORT AND INFORMATION FORMATS

Providers of support and information to parent carers

Respondents were asked which providers of support and information (from a list provided) would be helpful to parent carers. Figure 14 indicates respondents' preferred options. The most popular source was a specialist organisation/charity, followed by drop-in sessions (Children and Family Centres) and then self-help networks in the local community.



Figure 14 Preferred sources of support for parent carers



Around a third of respondents (n=31) also made comments or suggested other providers of support and information. Figure 15 summarises these.

Figure 15 Comments on sources of support and information

| Theme | Explanation | Examples for illustration |
|---|--|--|
| Professionals/practitioners and informal support | <p>A number of specific professionals were referenced by respondents including GPs, health visitors, family and carer support workers, schools and social workers.</p> <p>In addition, respondents highlighted more informal settings which they regarded as useful like support groups locally and the need for more of this.</p> | <p><i>“Social workers because the support may well need to be provided to the children in need in order for the Carers to benefit”</i></p> <p><i>“FIS, SENDIAS, GP, mother & baby groups / health visitors, adult learning centres, schools / colleges”</i></p> <p><i>“Support network with other carers/ children with similar needs”</i></p> <p><i>“SEN events/sessions”</i></p> <p><i>“The main issue with much of this is lack of community and other services to provide support”</i></p> |



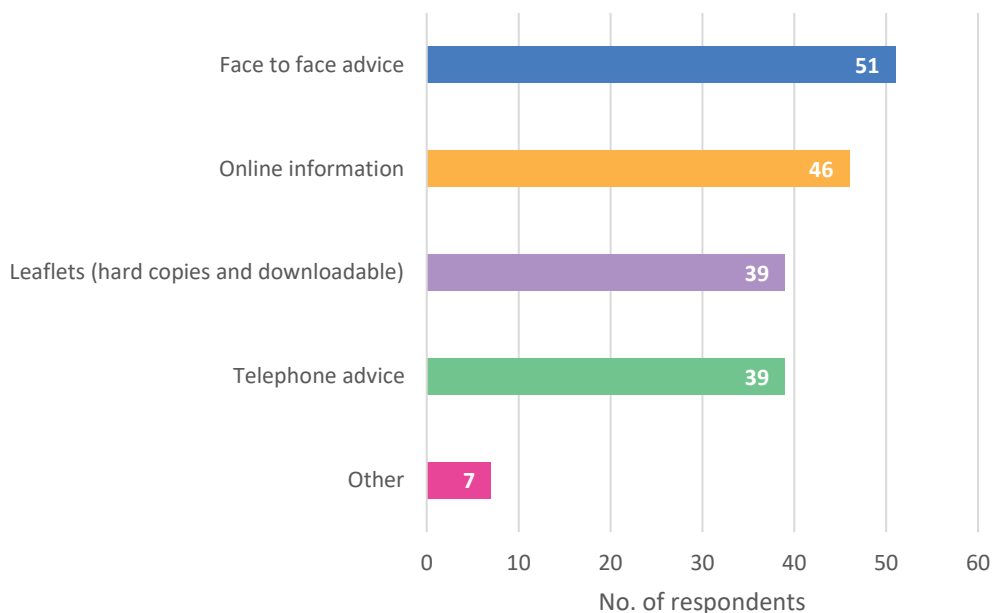
| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Access to services | Access to specific services which might provide support for parent carers were mentioned. These ranged from specialist services to social care respite and activities for children. | <p><i>“Access to timely and appropriate services such as sensory occupational therapy and therapeutic activities for children”.</i></p> <p><i>“Information on how to access specialist professional services”</i></p> |
| Finance | Issues relating to financial considerations were highlighted. | <p><i>“A financial award which can flexibly meet need is the best way of providing support”</i></p> <p><i>“Costs involved in accessing charities should also be addressed.”</i></p> |
| Context of being a parent carer | A number of comments alluded to the difficulties parents face in having the time to attend/seek help and limits on knowing what to ask for. | <p><i>“not enough provision and parents don’t have time or energy for more groups that never help anyway”</i></p> <p><i>“We wouldn’t have the time for any of the above as we provide 24 hr care”</i></p> <p><i>“Parents don’t know what they don’t know so any information about other services needs to be included”</i></p> <p><i>“It would be really helpful for the Assessor to contact the charity for the parent and then the charity can get in touch with the parent. A simple letter from you would be a HUGE help as we sometimes don't know what is available so we cannot convey what we need!”</i></p> |
| Education | Reference made to sessions to help parents cope. | <i>“Learning opportunities to help parents cope with their child's needs.”</i> |

Information formats

Respondents were asked to select from a list which information formats would be helpful for parent carers. The most popular format was face-to-face advice (n=51, 83.6%) followed by online information (n=46, 75.4%). Less popular were leaflets and telephone advice (both n=39, 63.9%) – see Figure 16.



Figure 16 Which information formats would be helpful to Parent carers?



Suggestions made in the 'other' category mostly included other ways of getting advice e.g. advice from specialist schools, professionals and community notice boards. Local authority representatives coming out to groups where parent carers meet to support them was also mentioned

OUTCOMES FROM A WELLBEING CONVERSATION

Specific proposed outcomes

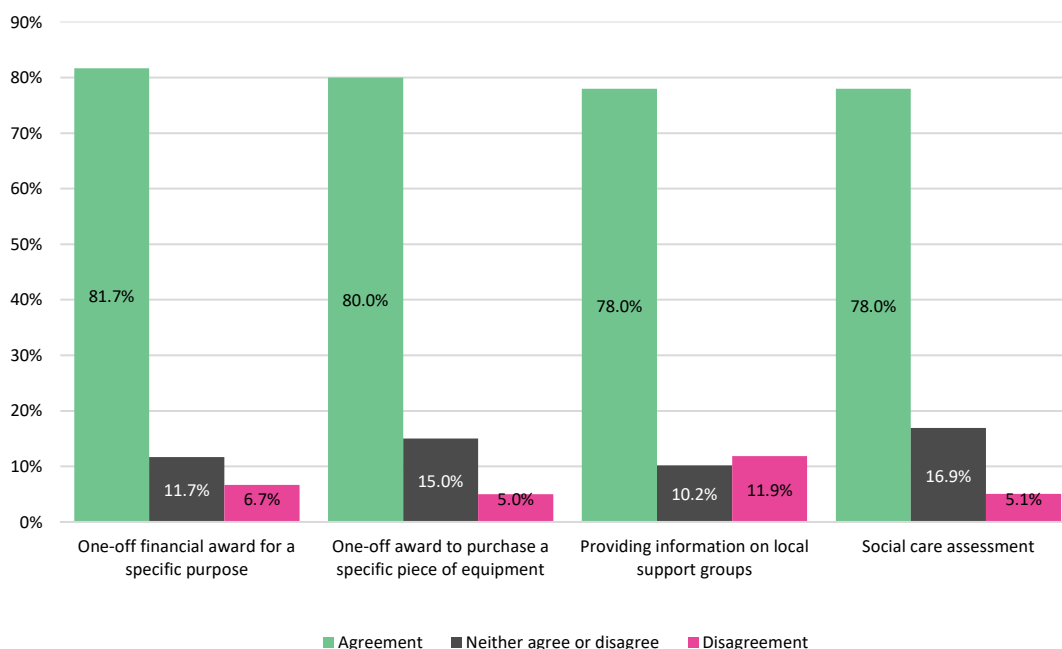
A number of outcomes are proposed following a Wellbeing Conversation. These are broadly:

- A one-off financial award for a specific purpose
- A one-off award to purchase a specific piece of equipment
- Providing information/signposting to local support groups
- A social care assessment

In general, respondents agreed with the types of support being proposed from a Wellbeing Conversation. Figure 17 highlights levels of agreement from respondents for each of the proposed outcomes.



Figure 17 Agreement levels for proposed outcomes from a Wellbeing Conversation



Suggestions for the types of support that should be offered to parent carers

Following this question, respondents were asked if they had any other suggestions for the support that should be offered to parent carers during the Wellbeing Conversation. Figure 18 indicates the range of themes covered by the comments supplied.

Figure 18 Other support services

| Theme | Explanation | Examples for illustration |
|--|--|---|
| Access to specialist services and general support | Suggestions for specific specialist services both for child and/or parent carer – Behaviour therapy/Occupational therapy/Counselling/Sign language/Emergency support/Family support workers. | <p><i>“we need sign language classes readily available. There are none for children and families to access in Warwickshire”.</i></p> <p><i>“Access to behaviour therapy and occupational therapy.”</i></p> <p><i>“Life skills for autistic young people. Autism services are almost non-existent”</i></p> |
| Access to wider wellbeing services | Services that may help parents manage wider wellbeing issues associated with being a parent carer. | <i>“Anything that individual thinks will help them achieve the outcomes to have a life outside of</i> |



| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | | <p><i>their caring role: to work; to have leisure activities; to follow education; to look after their health and wellbeing, including their mental health."</i></p> <p><i>"Social networks for carers"</i></p> |
| Finance | <p>Comments around the financial challenges of the parent carer role including being able to access employment and the cost and availability of care during holidays etc.</p> | <p><i>"I think most parent carers need ongoing funding to manage not only their child's health and wellbeing but also their own".</i></p> <p><i>"I get paid £60 a week to look after my 2 disabled sons full time, not able to work and earn more, my husband had the weight on his shoulders to earn enough money"</i></p> <p><i>"The ups and downs of charges-charities charge too much for their activities, which are not affordable to all. Despite saying the subsidise costs, they do not and are not inclusive and do not offer any emotional support to parents and carers.</i></p> |
| Navigating the carer system/joining up services | <p>Comments indicating the need for support to work though what might be available.</p> | <p><i>"Often, parents don't really know what support is available and from where.Having some sort of contact that knows how to navigate the system and knows who to contact for specific queries would be very useful."</i></p> <p><i>"Please don't expect Parent Carers to know what they need"</i></p> |
| Quality of the Wellbeing Conversation | <p>Reference to the sensitivity and care with which a Wellbeing Conversation might need to be delivered.</p> | <p><i>"Please do not underestimate that these discussions may open up a range of emotional issues for carers that must be handled sensitively"</i></p> <p><i>"Respect and helpful advice not the patronizing unhelpful comments"</i></p> <p><i>"what the person feels they need and what they know will work for"</i></p> |



| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | | <p><i>them. Not some unqualified person telling them how it is going to be”</i></p> <p><i>“Skilled Practitioners’ need to be well trained and there should be a robust system to receive input from other professionals if parent carers disagree with the services offered.”</i></p> |
| <p>Experience of support groups</p> | <p>Respondents reported a sometimes mixed experience of support groups and their place in providing help and support – they were highlighted as a source of support for parent carers but not universally so.</p> | <p><i>“Support groups work if there are many families with the same ...When a child has a very rare condition support groups do not help.”</i></p> <p><i>“People are not only offered financial reward in response to an assessment - they're also offered voluntary support - generally a waste of time.”</i></p> |

THE PROPOSED PARENT CARER SUPPORT PATHWAY

Specific questions about the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway

Respondents were asked the degree to which they agree/disagree with a number of statements about the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway. These included:

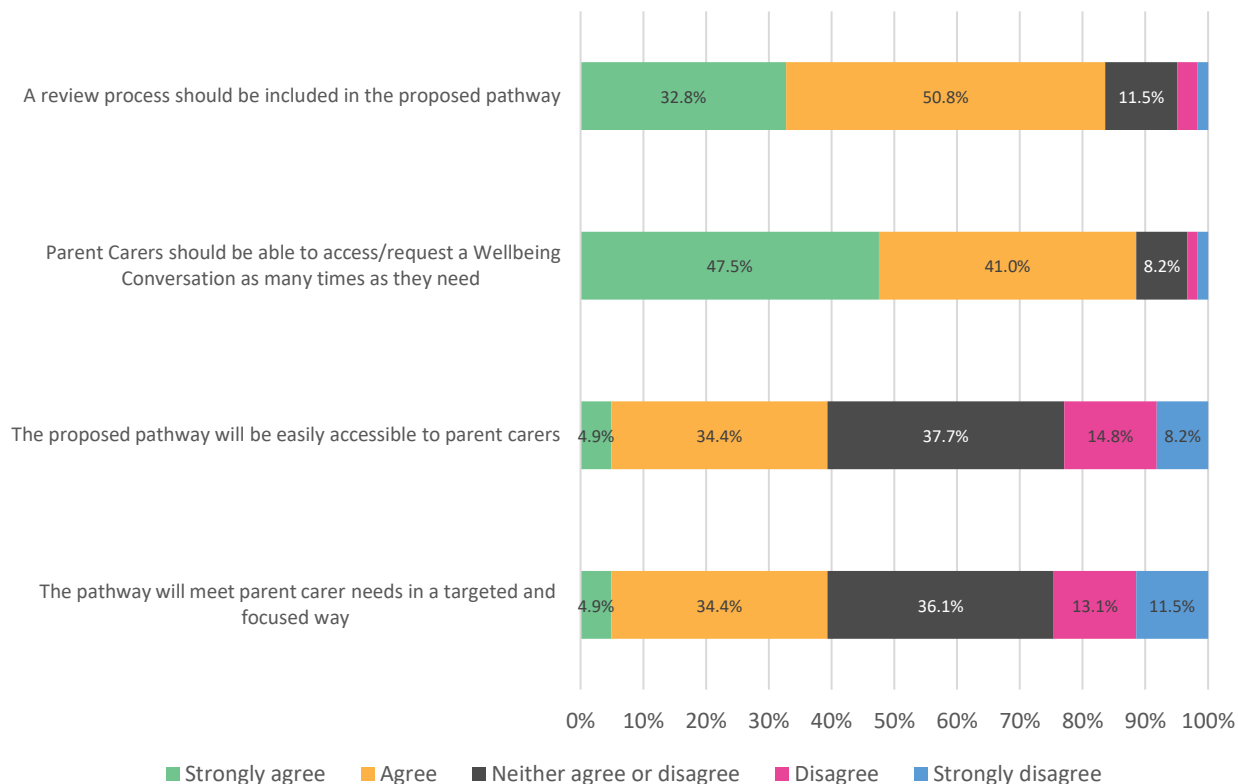
- A review process should be included in the proposed pathway
- Parent carers should be able to access/request a Wellbeing Conversation as many times as they need
- The proposed pathway will be easily accessible to parent carers
- The pathway will meet parent carer needs in a targeted and focused way

Overall, agreement levels (strongly agree/agree) were highest when respondents were asked whether a review process should be included in the proposed pathway (83.6%/n=51) and whether parent carers should be able to access/request a Wellbeing Conversation as many times as they need (88.5%/n=54) (Figure 19). Conversely, agreement scores were much lower for the questions asking if the proposed pathway will be easily accessible to parent carers (39.3%/n=24) and whether the pathway will meet parent carer need in a targeted and focused way (39.3%/n=24). Respondents were more likely on these two questions to neither agree or disagree than on the



first two questions suggesting respondents were unwilling to commit to whether the proposed pathway would deliver better outcomes for parent carers.

Figure 19 Level of agreement with questions about the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway



Potential positive and negative impacts of the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway

Respondents were asked comment on the positive and negative impacts on parent carers of the move to the proposed Parent Carer Support Pathway. Overall, a range of potential positive and negative impacts were identified. Figures 20 and 21 summarise the responses made.

Figure 20 Responses to being asked what positive impacts the proposals could have on parent carers

| Theme | Explanation | Examples for illustration |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Access to services and support | <p>A number of respondents commented that they thought the process would be an improvement on the previous system. It was perceived to be more accessible and timely with quicker turnaround on outcomes.</p> <p>Some respondents indicated they thought the focus of support would be wider and this was a positive outcome.</p> | <p><i>“Easier and simpler to access the support”</i></p> <p><i>“It will/should be more accessible to all parent carers”</i></p> <p><i>“Necessary equipment could be obtained more quickly”</i></p> <p><i>“More varied support other than</i></p> |



| | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| | | <p><i>just financial, which could improve wellbeing and mental health.”</i></p> <p><i>“You may be able to get additional support which is not available elsewhere.”</i></p> |
| Positive but cautious | <p>While respondents did respond with positive comments about how the process may improve outcomes for parent carers, there were frequently caveats and references to words such as ‘hopefully...’ ‘if...’ . Respondents could see potential positives, but these hinged on the process being implemented properly including staff training and funding.</p> | <p><i>“It all looks and sounds good but skilled people need to execute it to make it work”</i></p> <p><i>“If done correctly, by competent practitioners, prepared to properly explore needs and assess support, with the ability to signpost meaningfully and not limit access to social care assessments it could be powerful. that is a lot of ifs though....”</i></p> <p><i>“In principle it sounds like this could make access to support for parents easier. I am however cautious because this process, and the support available as a result of it, needs to be appropriately funded.”</i></p> <p><i>“Hopefully, there will be more awareness about it among parents who need it”</i></p> <p><i>“Hopefully clear, targeted, meaningful, impactful support that is fit for purpose, tailored and delivered for long enough to make a difference to the parent carer.”</i></p> |
| Easier on carers | <p>References were made to the expectation it would be easier emotionally to use this pathway for parent carers.</p> | <p><i>“The previous method was very stressful and upsetting, hopefully this won't be”</i></p> <p><i>“Take away the stigma”</i></p> <p><i>“Quicker decisions, someone understanding their needs without being judged”</i></p> |



| | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| | | <i>"I would think it would be less intimidating and scary"</i> |
| Negative remarks | Some respondents remained unconvinced the new process would improve outcomes for parent carers. | <i>"Think the whole process is rubbish and puts more pressure on parent carers to express their needs when it's extremely hard to say what really goes on".</i> <i>"none, they will think it is Warwickshire council trying to get out of their responsibilities. There is I believe a legal entitlement to this help so I'm sure you can expect court cases coming your way"</i> |

Figure 21 Responses to being asked what negative impacts the proposal could have on parent carers

| Theme | Explanation | Examples for illustration |
|--|---|--|
| Vulnerability of parent carers | <p>A number of respondents reported how difficult it was to ask for help, know how to ask for help and associated feelings of failure and stigma attached to the process.</p> <p>There was a reported need to understand the context in which parent carers were operating – limited time, money and energy to access support even if it existed.</p> | <p><i>"I think some people would struggle to really articulate their needs as carers because it just becomes so all-consuming and overwhelming and exhausting that it can be challenging to</i></p> <p><i>"You can feel ashamed or like a failure as a parent depending how sensitively this is treated."</i></p> <p><i>"Feel judged as not coping, useless parent"</i></p> <p><i>"Also, parents who don't know how to ask for help may still be left with no support if they are not encouraged to access this service"</i></p> <p><i>"Do-it-yourself pathway - good for those who are IT savvy, articulate and not in crisis but what about those who are struggling?"</i></p> |
| Quality/availability of support/service available | Some respondents questioned whether signposting parent carers would deliver better outcomes | <i>"I believe parents will lose out on support with signposting to support agencies being touted"</i> |



| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>highlighting the stretched nature of local support groups.</p> | <p><i>as an alternative when it really isn't!!!!!!</i></p> <p><i>“Local support groups are often only funded by families themselves and are overwhelmed and at crisis point”</i></p> <p><i>“I suspect this is a cost-cutting exercise which means people will just be 'signposted”</i></p> <p><i>“Just giving out information on who 'might' be able to help is not enough.”</i></p> |
| <p>Role of staff/'skilled practitioner'</p> | <p>Several comments were made about the skill of practitioners/staff involved in the process (linked to theme of parent carer vulnerability) and how they could impact on the process in a negative way if not handled sensitively</p> | <p><i>“A lot depends on the skill of the practitioner with seemingly little oversight.”</i></p> <p><i>“Lack of transparency around what 'trained practitioners' actually are”</i></p> <p><i>“I worry that the discussions will need to be handled carefully.”</i></p> |
| <p>Managing expectations/Misleading</p> | <p>Some comments pointed to the potential for the new process to offer something that in practice they did not expect would deliver and therefore a negative experience.</p> <p>A few respondents also thought the new process could be misleading and attempt to re package a process that should be there anyway.</p> | <p><i>“Too many people might get their hopes up”</i></p> <p><i>“False hopes, waste of time filling in form. Feel even more disheartened. Just more false promises.”</i></p> <p><i>“Leaving parents with a single one off payment when they should have had Section 17 assessment and ongoing support.”</i></p> <p><i>“This proposal misrepresents the LAs statutory obligations & the terminology will confuse parents. There is no need to call a Carer's Assessment anything else nor to introduce new/different criteria for carrying out the assessment - stick to what is already in the regulations.”</i></p> |



| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | <i>"There are not the services available to meet parents individual needs already so not sure where they will come from"</i> |
| Finance | Comments were made which related to whether levels of funding would be sufficient with subsequent negative outcomes. | <i>"If the budget for this service is restricted, then parents in need may still be let down". "Pointless to have the conversation unless support is funded and child care is organised"</i> |
| General transparency of the new process | Comments around the detail of the proposals, suggesting some elements are still unclear especially around who may be eligible. | <i>"No transparency around criteria for awards" "Parts are unclear, and it does not appear targeted meaning some groups will miss out"</i> |

Any other comments

Finally, respondents were asked if they had any other feedback on the proposals. Figure 22 highlights responses submitted.

Figure 22 Any other comments

| Theme | Explanation | Examples for illustration |
|--|--|---|
| Awareness of the proposed new process/Targeting those in need | A number of respondents emphasised the need for awareness raising about the new pathway because of a lack of knowledge about the current process and to avoid confusion with the new one. The system, as indicated by some respondents, can be difficult to navigate especially in the context of being a parent carer and its impact on health and wellbeing. | <i>"Please make this information accessible to all parents and carers ... no one has ever told me and us as parents have struggled and no support offered or us told who or where to turn." "Very few people know about Parent Carer assessments at the moment. They could be useful for picking up problems earlier, but parent carers need to be told about them." "Can this be widely advertised through special schools, local groups, doctors' surgeries and so on so that it reaches the widest audience"</i> |



| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Positive comments | Comments that were generally positive about the proposed new parent carer pathway albeit sometimes because the current system was perceived as flawed. | <p><i>"I am feeling encouraged and hopeful that this process will provide some very real intervention and support for carers because this is such a challenging roll",</i></p> <p><i>"To be honest the system is so bad at the moment, any improvement will be a start"</i></p> |
| Negative comments/Role of support groups | A number of respondents were unconvinced there would be any improvement for parent carers – this included questioning the level of support that could be provided by local support groups. | <p><i>"The current system is flawed in that social workers deny eligible people carers assessments, but this new way will only serve to make this worse!!!" "Money saving exercise 100%"</i></p> <p><i>"How can you make comments when there is no evidence of what support and groups are out there"</i></p> <p><i>"In all my years these kind of supports are non-existent so unless you have magicked some then this isn't worth the adopting as a policy"</i></p> |
| General comments about the running of the new pathway | A number of comments were made relating to the detail of how the new process would run. This included eligibility e.g. one or both carers of a child, how the process would be 'scored', and timescales involved in the process. The need for well-informed, trained staff was reiterated from elsewhere in the survey. | <p><i>"Will this now be open to all carers in the household or for one person only?"</i></p> <p><i>"Practitioners should be well trained and do the research for you if they don't know something. Giving parent carers more to do is the opposite of helping."</i></p> |

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

As mentioned at the outset, three responses to the consultation were received via email direct to the designated consultation inbox. All touch on themes which have been highlighted in response to the survey questions detailed above. In particular, the following points were made:



- Concerns expressed about the consultation process itself. One organisation felt that they could have been more involved in the process of re-designing the new pathway. There were comments that communication about the survey had been limited, there were reported access issues with links not working and the volume of material to which respondents were required to refer was off-putting for parent carers who may not have the time to do this. Similarly, the wider consultation was reported to be particularly difficult for parent carers to take part in given the demands of their caring role. There was concern that some voices would not be heard because of this.
- There was acknowledgement that change to the current process was required – an easier streamlined service with less jargon was requested. As in the survey, there was reference to very difficult parent carer journeys through the system and this in itself was a motivator for change.
- As in the survey, the context in which parent carers are operating was highlighted especially the limited time, energy and funding. It was mentioned that there could be a tension between parents feeling like they need to be seen to be coping whilst at the same time needing to ask for help. Parent carers reported frequently feeling their parenting was under scrutiny and they felt judged particularly in the context of social care assessments.
- The role of skilled staff in supporting parent carers sensitively through the proposed pathway was emphasised. It was crucial to navigating the system in a way that did not mean the process impacted negatively on parent carers. Concern was raised that the Wellbeing Conversation may raise emotional issues not previously discussed by parents and there needed to be support available to deal with this.
- Finally, there was a suggestion which echoed several comments in the survey, that respondents would like to see a more proactive approach to promoting parent carer wellbeing.



COMMUNICATIONS LOG

| <u>Channel</u> | <u>Detail</u> | |
|------------------|---|--|
| External | | Circulation numbers during consultation (where known numbers of residents reached) |
| Ask Warwickshire | Dedicated consultation webpage | Unknown |
| Email (outbound) | Email distribution list of current recipients - Sent to 120 families | 120 |
| | SENDIAS – information provided to cascade | Not known |
| | Short breaks providers – information sent to cascade | Not known |
| | Special needs schools – information sent to cascade | Not known |
| | SENCO network co-ordinator (2 events w/c 3 rd Feb) | Not known (across Warwickshire) |
| Email (inbound) | Published email address available for people to respond via email. | Received 3 responses |
| Social Media | <u>WCC channels</u> Warwickshire County Council Facebook (3 times per wk) | 12 posts – reaching 4,112 followers |
| | Warwickshire County Council Twitter (3 times per wk) | 12 Twitter posts – 14.1k followers |
| | Warwickshire Parent Carer Forum virtually (shared min. 2 x per wk) | Reached 952 |
| | Hearing the Voice groups (2 x per wk) | 227 members |
| | Family Information Service – Twitter | 1,413 followers |
| | FIS Facebook (3 times per week) | 3,114k followers |
| | Public Health networks and partners / stakeholders | Not known |
| Newsletters | Working for Warwickshire | 6-7k (187 views) |
| | Heads Up (06.01.20 – 09.02.20) | 1,343k subscribers |
| | FIS Newsletters (06.01.2020 – 09.02.2020) | |



COMMUNICATIONS LOG

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| | <p>Consultations and Engagement subscriptions</p> <p>Stakeholder / partner newsletters (all publications between 06.01.2020 - 09.02.2020)</p> <p>Ridgeway school newsletter -</p> <p>Bilton Junior school newsletter</p> <p>Rugby Observer</p> <p>Newton & Biggin Parish Council Newsletter</p> | <p>8,943k subscribers</p> <p>755</p> <p>Not known</p> <p>Not known</p> <p>Not known</p> <p>Paper to 40k homes Fb followers – 4k Twitter – 4,032 followers</p> <p>Not known</p> |
| Media relations | <p>Presence on WCC news page (links from FIS newsletter to this page)</p> <p>Press news release on 6th Jan 2020</p> | Not Known |
| Paper Surveys | Available on request | 1 paper copy sent (not returned) |
| Verbal briefings | Press release by Portfolio Holder on launch day | Unknown |
| Face to face | <p>Warwick Racecourse: 20th Jan 13:30 – 15: 30 23rd Jan 18:30 – 20:30</p> <p>Nuneaton (Chess Centre): 30th Jan 10 – 12 3rd Feb 18:00 – 19:30</p> | 2 attendees 20 th Jan |
| Internal | | |
| Face to face meetings | N/A | |
| Internal newsletters | <p>Working for Warwickshire</p> <p>John's Blog</p> | <p>6-7k subscribers</p> <p>Warwickshire Children & Families</p> |
| Email sent / information provided | WCC Customer Contact Centre staff | N/A |
| Verbal / written briefings | Colleagues and direct work with families | Unknown |



COMMUNICATIONS LOG



Summary of findings from Carers Assessment Questionnaire

Warwickshire Parent Carer Forum circulated a form to ascertain views and experiences of the SEND Social Care Carer's Assessment process. Responses were anonymous.

134 people responded to the questionnaire

Summary of responses

Have you heard of a Carer's Assessment?

| | | |
|----------|----|-------|
| Yes | 76 | 56.7% |
| No | 51 | 38.1% |
| Not sure | 6 | 4.5% |
| Other | 1 | 0.7% |

Comments

- Only told by a friend

Have you ever had a Carer's Assessment?

| | | |
|----------|----|-------|
| Yes | 45 | 33.6% |
| No | 87 | 64.9% |
| Not sure | 1 | 0.7% |
| Other | 1 | 0.7% |

Comments

- Waited years to have an assessment

Has your child/young person had a social care assessment by a family support worker or social worker?

| | | |
|----------|----|-------|
| Yes | 63 | 47.0% |
| No | 62 | 46.3% |
| Not sure | 2 | 1.5% |
| Other | 7 | 5.2% |

Comments

- Not applicable. My carers' assessment was for an adult in another county.
- This is still in progress
- I think so
- Didn't receive a copy of the RAS
- Not sure. We do have a Family Support Worker.
- Being redone

- I have tried unsuccessfully to get an assessment as I would like my son to receive direct payments. I have tried repeatedly to contact someone regarding this but nobody seems to know how I go about it as we do not have a social worker. When I asked my son's (special) school to refer us to social care, he said he wouldn't do the referral because we would get turned down because we seem to be 'coping', despite me explaining that we are not! I am very frustrated - any help would be appreciated.

Would you like a carer's assessment?

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----|-------|
| Yes | 45 | 33.6% |
| No | 9 | 6.7% |
| I've already had an assessment | 47 | 35.1% |
| Maybe | 33 | 24.6% |
| Other | 0 | 0.0% |

Are you aware of the assessment criteria?

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Yes | 17 | 12.7% |
| No | 102 | 76.1% |
| I've already had an assessment | 15 | 11.2% |
| Other | 0 | 0.0% |

If you have not had a carer's assessment, or have been refused an assessment, please give further details

32 Comments were received:

Examples of Comments

- First social care assessment we had 3 years ago the social worker left the form and was supposed to come back to help fill it in and I never heard any more about it
- Did not meet criteria
- I asked for one but it's never happened!
- I've never been told about it, another parent told me.
- I've never heard of this so have no idea what this is
- I think we had one of these from a social worker from SEND. Basically we were functioning too well despite being in crisis to attract support. We didn't tick enough boxes like having DLA or other benefits and we have no social problems etc so we were below the threshold. We were initially refused an assessment but we and the school said we really needed one, it was also a really long form and it wasn't made clear we didn't need to fill it in ahead of the meeting if we didn't want to and then had to go through it all again. It is uncomfortable to go through it all then to have no support at the end of it.
- I was given an assessment & awarded direct payment but never given the money! Told later it was a mistake
- I have asked my GP, child's doctor and school but nobody seems to be able to point me in the direction of how to apply for one.

- My / our assessment was very upsetting and adversely affected my mental health. I would welcome an updated assessment if I could be certain I would be treated fairly and with respect, unfortunately experience had taught me that would be unlikely
- I have been trying to get a carers assessment but had no joy
- only had one in children's services think I should have had more
- Not had an assessment as I do not wish to affect the benefits that my brother currently receives. I am told that by receiving an assessment/benefit for my caring role, it is likely that his benefits will be reduced. I feel he benefits from access to the benefit than I would.
- We were just refused in July, 2019

Were the assessment criteria explained to you?

| | | |
|----------|----|-------|
| Yes | 12 | 9.0% |
| No | 42 | 31.3% |
| Not sure | 12 | 9.0% |
| Blank | 64 | 47.8% |
| Other | 4 | 3.0% |

Comments

- It was all very vague
- Not had one
- Probably but when you need the support you are usually least able to process that sort of information
- Sort of. Was given paperwork

Did you find the assessment process transparent and accessible?

| | | |
|-------|----|-------|
| Yes | 12 | 9.0% |
| No | 55 | 41.0% |
| Blank | 67 | 50.0% |
| Other | 0 | 0.0% |

Have you received support of funding after the assessment?

| | | |
|-------|----|-------|
| Yes | 14 | 10.4% |
| No | 37 | 27.6% |
| Blank | 68 | 50.7% |
| Other | 15 | 11.2% |

Comments

- A very small amount
- Appealing assessment
- Assessment was 3 years ago, but I need another
- Yes, but only for a short period and even though circumstances had not changed I was told another (traumatic) assessment would be necessary for support to continue
- Never had don't know what it is
- On round 3 at present - received funding after the first on 3 years ago

- Awaiting outcome
- Awarded 12 weeks ago still no payment
- Yes. One off grant some years ago.
- Going through the long drawn out appeal process
- Only done 2 weeks ago
- Still awaiting after 4 years
- I did twice then after completed another assessment told the support was stopped

Was the amount awarded following the assessment satisfactory, do you feel?

| | | |
|-------|----|-------|
| Yes | 10 | 7.5% |
| No | 26 | 19.4% |
| Blank | 82 | 61.2% |
| Other | 16 | 11.9% |

Comments

- Don't know
- Not had offer
- Not had one
- We were refused
- Not assessed
- Not had one
- Not sure
- Still waiting
- Don't know as no one said what it should or shouldnt be
- Still haven't heard had assesment over 6 months ago have rang and been told still going through
- Unclear as to what, if anything, was happening next. Heard nothing since
- Only done 2 weeks ago
- N/A didn't get anything. Was told it was to give further evidence in my son's assessment, and that if I wanted anything specific I would have to request it
- It paid for a specific one off thing
- Not sure how long it is meant to last.
- Don't know how to apply

Have you ever had a Carers Assessment No or Other.

34 Comments were received

Examples of comments

- Never asked
- Not sure what it is
- Don't know how to apply
- We were refused
- Never had one
- Not assessed

- The amount paid is only basic and does not cover the needs of the child
- The carers assessment I received I used to help give my other child a break aswell, as he too is a Carer.
- I have 30 mins a week I don't feel it's adequate for the impact it has on me.
- It was a token amount which in no way supported my needs, especially as I was forced to the point of crisis by the assessment process
- We were shown to meet criteria based on 2 of our children from the assessment but the social worker refused to take it further.
- It would have been good if it had been more than once
- It was significantly lower than expected
- Couldn't get to the point where an assessment was offered. Social care workers seem to have little understanding or knowledge
- Not a clear process, not easy to understand, not explained properly, takes a long time to organise, peer group meetings are not making decisions easy as social workers have to check with further managers

Have you undergone a fresh assessment annually?

| | | |
|------------------|----|-------|
| Yes | 5 | 3.7% |
| No | 61 | 45.5% |
| Not sure / maybe | 5 | 3.7% |
| Blank | 63 | 47.0% |
| Other | 0 | 0.0% |

Were you told what you were allowed to spend the payment on?

| | | |
|-------|----|-------|
| Yes | 21 | 15.7% |
| No | 33 | 24.6% |
| Blank | 80 | 59.7% |
| Other | 0 | 0.0% |

If you were granted a carer's payment, please indicate the amount offered below

| | | | |
|------|----------|-------------------|---|
| £0 | £300 | £1100 per 4 weeks | £14 for an hour a week |
| £61 | £324 | £300 per annum | £150 for 6x counselling sessions |
| £160 | £340 | £7 a week! | Never got to this stage! |
| £180 | £377 | £292 monthly | DLA we received £315 so I would expect the same for PIP |
| £180 | £400 ish | £750 for the year | Indicative figure so not been confirmed |
| £200 | £600 | Can't remember | Don't know not shared |
| £200 | £700 | Can't remember | Not applicable |
| £300 | £750 | No I wasn't | N/A |

Did you have to evidence what you had spent your payment on?

| | | |
|-------|----|-------|
| Yes | 17 | 12.7% |
| No | 28 | 20.9% |
| Blank | 89 | 66.4% |
| Other | 0 | 0.0% |

Were you able to spend the payment on what you had been told to spend it on?

| | | |
|-------|----|-------|
| Yes | 16 | 11.9% |
| No | 20 | 14.9% |
| Blank | 86 | 64.2% |
| Other | 12 | 9.0% |

Comments

- Had no payments
- Haven't spent it yet
- I've been told nothing
- Haven't received funding
- Not specified
- Was not told

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

31 Comments were received

Examples of comments:

- How do u apply
- Very poor process
- Have asked for one several times but no joy!
- People need a definite of what can and can't be used
- I need more information and is it back dated??
- Have to ask several times for an assessment and then wait for 4- 6 months each time to receive carers payments allocated.
- I don't really know what a carers assessment is or the payment. I am a carer for my son and would like to find out more.
- I do not feel that this assessment is explained clearly. I was told it was a 1 off payment for my well being and was not told that it can be reviewed 6 monthly/yearly. Having spoken to others it is showing that the communication is poor and not a transparent communication.
- I use towards 2 hours cleaner every week....this makes my life easier
- I would like a carers assessment but I'm finding applying confusing
- To be told about it by key worker and not to have to find out through third party

- I am having to pay upfront and reclaim the funds so no actual money received to date.
- Not sure why this is offered in addition to the DLA
- It's not openly shared, I feel let down that regular assessments are not carried out automatically and even when they are completed they are left in a pile somewhere and ignored.
- How awful, long winded and difficult the whole process is! My son would never be able to access funding by himself with the many obstacles placed. It saddens and angers me to think how many people need and deserve this service but don't have the support to apply. **SOMETHING NEEDS TO CHANGE!**
- The assessment system is flawed, the process takes too long, the peer groups are used by social workers but it takes far too long for decisions to be made. It's not an easy process, it's difficult to understand the assessment and how the funding is agreed at the end .
- The system is not transparent and that when as a single parent I felt I needed help in a crisis that the 'help' took a long time coming- it was months until I had any feedback and then it was more damaging than anything else- even when I complained about the process the complaint was never followed up.
- An acknowledgement letter would of been nice, also a decision letter

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