



CABINET

11 November 2020

Report Title:	Cabinet Response the Scrutiny Review of Apprenticeships for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
Cabinet Portfolio	Children and Young People
Cabinet Member	Councillor Nova Charlton
Exempt Report	No
Reason for Exemption	N/A
Key Decision	No
Public Notice issued	N/A
Wards Affected	All
Report of	Jim Leivers Interim Director of Children's Services jimleivers@sthelens.gov.uk 01744 671802
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<p>Borough priorities</p> <p>Please mark X for any priority supported by this report</p> <p>NB Use Section 4 - Background Information to explain how each selected priority is supported</p>	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life	X
	Promote good health, independence and care across our communities	
	Create safe and strong communities for our residents	
	Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy	
	Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of	
	Be a modern, efficient and effective Council	

1. Summary

Initial report considered by:

- Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel - March 2020
- Cabinet - 23 September 2020

2. Recommendations for Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the Action Plan attached at Appendix 1 setting out the response to the recommendations arising from Children and Young People Services Scrutiny Panel that reviewed apprenticeships for looked after children and care leavers.

The aims and objectives of the review were to:

- Review previous scrutiny work on apprenticeships.
- Consider the Council's current offer for children we look after, and the support offered to them.
- Consider the support provided by schools and colleges; and
- Investigate how employers within the borough can offer support for children we look after.

3. Purpose of this Report

- 3.1 The Children and Young People Services Scrutiny Panel undertook a review of apprenticeships for looked after children and care leavers that commenced in February 2020. The Panel's report and recommendations were reported to Cabinet on the 23 September 2020. The Action Plan attached at Appendix 1 sets out the response to the Panel's recommendations and the timescales for completion of the actions identified.

4. Background /Reasons for the recommendations

Apprenticeships

- 4.1 Apprenticeships are full-time, paid jobs which incorporate on and off the job training. There are over 200 different types of apprenticeship currently available in England, through existing apprenticeship frameworks available in 13 broad sector subjects. A successful apprentice will receive a nationally recognised qualification on completion of their contract.
- 4.2 For many years, St Helens Borough Council has been supportive of apprenticeship (and graduate) positions within the authority. The current business administrator apprenticeship is a 12-month learning contract for 16 - 19-year olds. Apprentices are subject to standard HR procedures - such as the 37-hour working week and are paid the national apprentice wage of £3.90 per hour. However, due to the Apprenticeship Levy that was introduced in 2017, the length of some learning contracts has been extended to 18 months.
- 4.3 Although apprentices can be recruited throughout the year, opportunities will only arise if there is a suitable role available that will develop a young person, and when a department/section has the budget available, given that there is no designated budget in each department for apprenticeships. Including salary, on-costs and other associated costs, an apprenticeship costs around £9,000 per year.
- 4.4 The panel were informed at the time of the review in February 2020 that there were two looked after children/ care leavers who were employed by the Council as apprentices. However, at that time there were no looked after children or care leavers on apprenticeships outside the Council.
- 4.5 In carrying out its review, the Panel considered the local resources and work that is ongoing to create more apprenticeship opportunities and heard about some of the barriers and challenges that exist.
- 4.6 In reaching its conclusions and presenting its recommendations the Panel identified that there is established partnership work being undertaken and plans to further develop this area of work. However, the panel identified where improvements are needed to generate greater apprenticeship opportunities for looked after children and care leavers.
- 4.7 To address these and other issues identified in the report the Panel has made nine recommendations following its review. These recommendations are set out in the Action Plan together with the proposed response and timescale for implementation.

5. Community Impact Assessment

- 5.1 None. There are no risks directly associated with this report or the Action Plan.

6 Consideration of Alternatives

- 6.1 Not Applicable.

7 Conclusions

7.1 See above.

8. Implications

8.1 Legal Implications

None.

8.2 Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Implications

None.

8.2.1 Social Value

None.

8.2.2 Sustainability and Environment

None.

8.2.3 Health and Wellbeing

None

8.2.4 Equality and Human Rights

8.2.4.1 The recommendations identified by the Children and Young People's Service Scrutiny Panel are intended to generate opportunities for looked after children and care leavers and reduce the disadvantage.

8.3 Customers and Resident

None.

8.4 Asset and Property

None.

8.5 Staffing and Human Resource

None.

8.6 Risks

None.

8.7 Finance

None.

8.8 Policy Framework Implications

None.

9. **Background papers**

None.

10. **Appendices**

10.1 Action Plan, Apprenticeships for Children We Look After and Care Leaver.