

**Report for:****Scrutiny Committee**

---

Date of Meeting:	15 July 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Care Leaver Friendly Employer Charter</b>
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Jane Lock, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Working Environment
Responsible Officer:	James Hamblin, Operations Manager – People Services
	Matthew Page, Head of People, Performance and Waste
Exempt:	N/A
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 - Care Leaver Friendly Employer Charter

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)**

Following the publication of the ‘Keep on Caring’ policy document in 2016, the Council has the opportunity to cement our commitment to Care Leavers by signing the Care Leaver Friendly Employer Charter. This commitment will follow examples set elsewhere within the county and emphasise our commitment to supporting care experienced young people in the Mid Devon area.

**Recommendation(s):**

- 1. That Scrutiny committee notes the intent for a report to go to Cabinet recommending that Mid Devon District Council signs the Care Leaver Friendly Employer Charter as outlined in Appendix 1.**
- 2. That Scrutiny committee provides any feedback relevant to inform the report and advice that goes to Cabinet.**

**Section 2 – Report****1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2016 the Government’s ‘Keep on Caring’ policy document was published with the aim to support young people from care to independence. As part of**

this policy, a pledge was made to introduce the national Care Leaver Covenant. The Covenant is focused on Care Leavers aged 16-25 to help them live independently, aiming to commit organisations to provide additional support for those leaving care, including commitments from an employment perspective.

- 1.2 The Covenant has been supported by other local authorities and public bodies such as South Hams and West Devon Borough Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, and the University of Exeter and University of Plymouth.

## **2.0 The Charter**

- 2.1 In agreeing to The Charter put forward, the Council will be making a commitment in the areas of Recruitment, Tracking and Development to Care Leavers in the Mid Devon area. Full details of pledge can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Over time this commitment can be reviewed and where appropriate additional measures added or existing measures amended to reflect the employer offering put forward by the Council.
- 2.3 A key commitment made would be focused on our existing recruitment vendors/partners to adopt principles contained within The Charter.

## **3.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

- 3.1 Our support to Care Leavers in Mid Devon District Council is wide ranging and including a Council Tax reduction policy and free Leisure membership. At present an employment commitment has not been made. The Charter puts in place the opportunity for the Council to take a clear stance.

## **Financial Implications**

Acknowledging the commitments contained within The Charter there will be a requirement to update both process and relevant forms. Additionally acknowledging the possible time spent by employees supporting Care Leavers, such as being assigned as a 'workplace buddy', there will be a cost in terms of staff time.

## **Legal Implications**

By the very nature of The Charter, we will be treating a certain population within Mid Devon differently to the wider population. However whilst being a Care Leaver is not a protected characteristic from an Equality Act (2010) perspective, Devon County Council formally agreed to treat children and young people who have experienced care with protected characteristic status. Nevertheless, supporting Care Leavers is an expectation when considering our corporate parenting role. The Council does already support groups that are not identified under the Equality Act 2010 (e.g. Armed Forces Covenant).

## **Risk Assessment**

Risks have been identified within the legal implications of this paper.

## **Impact on Climate Change**

There are no implications regarding climate change.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

EIA screening has been completed and reviewed by the Head of People, Governance and Waste. A full EIA will be completed when reviewing policy.

## **Relationship to Corporate Plan**

The report highlights the opportunity for the Council to support the local population with employment and work experience opportunities

## **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:** Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

**Date:** 02 July 2024

**Statutory Officer:** Maria de Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

**Date:** 02 July 2024

**Chief Officer:** Stephen Walford

Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director

**Date:** 02 July 2024

**Performance and risk:** Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

**Date:** 01 July 2024

**Cabinet member notified:** Yes

**Report:** Exclusion of the press and public from this item of business on the published agenda on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. No

**Appendix:** Exclusion of the press and public from this item of business on the published agenda on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. No

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** James Hamblin, Operations Manager People Services

Email: [JHamblin@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:JHamblin@middevon.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01884 234203

### **Background papers:**

Care Leavers Covenant

Keep on Caring Policy (2016)

Council Tax Reduction Policy