

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 05 December 2024
Subject:	Proposal for Bury Council's to sign up to the Care Leaver Covenant	
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	

Summary

1. The report seeks approval for Bury Council to sign up to the Care Leaver Covenant (CLC). CLC work with more than 500 organisations to connect young people with care experience to exclusive opportunities. By becoming a partner of the CLC, Bury Council will join 92 other unitary local authorities in demonstrating their commitment to care experienced young people.

Recommendation(s)

2. Cabinet to endorse and note Bury's Council's partnership with the Care Leaver Covenant, placing it alongside strategic partners within the sector, such as the Local Government Association and SOLACE, as well as leading councils, such as Leeds City Council, and signifying Bury's support for a 'whole council' approach to supporting our care experienced young people.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

Signing up to the Care Leaver Covenant will reinforce Bury Council's commitment to supporting young people with care experience by providing them with valuable opportunities for their future. The Care Leaver Covenant provides a framework for councils to support young people with care experience by connecting them to exclusive opportunities. By becoming a partner of the CLC, Bury Council will join 92 other unitary local authorities who have adopted the 'Whole Council Approach'. The key benefits include:

- **Opportunity Take-Up:** Encouraging care leavers and support workers to register with the 'Connects' app, enabling offers and opportunities to be shared with them. Internal council opportunities will be promoted through the 'Care Leaver Friendly Employers Charter.' The 'Inclusive Employers Toolkit' can also be shared with external employers.
- **Awareness Raising:** Promoting the Care Leaver Covenant within the council's supply chains, procurement, and commissioning services. The council can invite the CLC to speak at events or meetings with businesses and partners, enhancing social value requirements to include outcomes for care leavers. The Social Value Toolkit can be used to strengthen these outcomes.

- Policy Collaboration: Forming a council-wide representative working group to demonstrate partnership working and support the Covenant's initiatives. The economic development and procurement teams can offer proactive support.
- Care Leaver Covenant Ambassador: Appointing an ambassador who will work with the CLC engagement team and be kept informed about ongoing efforts and opportunities – an officer has already been identified for this role.
- Working in collaboration with the CLC, Councils bring together care leaver champions from across their authority with a view to unlocking opportunities from both internal and external partners. The Covenant's engagement team collaborate with business and community partners, linked to the Council's economic development team, to develop a localised network of Covenant signatories.
- As an employer, leading by example, Bury Council will also create protected employment opportunities for their care leavers alongside a supportive pre/post-employment pathway defined by the principles of the CLC's 'Care Leaver Friendly Employer's Charter.'

Alternative options considered and rejected

The main alternative option would be not to sign up and to seek to develop our own support networks and arrangements. However, it costs nothing to sign up to the covenant and the Care Leavers Covenant has widespread sector credibility and profile. Signing up to the Covenant signals the council's commitment to care experienced young people, while also providing a framework to develop that commitment further and to support improved outcomes for our care experienced young people.

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Background

In July 2016, the Government published a major policy document 'Keep on Caring' to support young people from care to independence.

A key policy commitment in the paper is a strategic pledge to introduce a Care Leaver Covenant. The Covenant is a promise made by the private, public, and voluntary sectors to provide support for care leavers aged 16-25 to help them to live independently.

The aim of the Care Leaver Covenant, to which organisations commit, is to provide additional support for those leaving care; making available a different type of support and expertise from that statutorily provided by local authorities

The CLC have previously supported a Bury Council event aimed at engaging external businesses – Bury Works Together for Care Leavers. This event helped bring

businesses that are in the locality to participate and show support for our care experienced young people, with the CLC inputting into this event and bringing along some employers they are already in contact with in the local area. It is hoped that by encouraging local businesses to sign up to the CLC that this will improve opportunities for our young people whilst also providing opportunities, work experience and support events aimed at our young people such as the 'Meet the Manager' event held during Care Leaver Week.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

The proposal aligns tightly with the Let's Do It Strategy, focusing on delivering more support and better outcomes for local young people for whom Bury Council has been the corporate parent during their childhood.

The clear intention of signing up to the Covenant is to combine local business and enterprise together with the council to enhance the support and opportunities available to Care Experienced young people, building on the strengths that those young people possess and further developing the local community capacity to support the group of local residents who have faced the greatest challenges growing up and moving on into the adult world.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

A full EIA has been completed with only positive impacts identified. No further actions or mitigations are required – see appendix for link.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact climate@bury.gov.uk for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk for advice)*

Signing up to the Covenant has no Environmental Impact

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation

Legal Implications:

The proposals align with the Council's corporate parenting principles set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and to leaving care duties under the Children

(Leaving Care) Act 2000.

Financial Implications:

Signing up to the Covenant incurs no cost for the council

Appendices:

Completed EqIA: [241219_EQIA_Care Leaver Covenant_signed off.docx](#)

Background papers:

Care Leaver Covenant background: [CLC-Intro-Leaflet-Branded-With-Sign-up-Steps-Oct-2023.pdf](#)

Care Leaver Covenant – Local Authorities: [Local Authorities Engagement - Care Leaver Covenant](#)

Becoming a partner (signatory) to the Care Leavers Covenant: [Becoming a Partner - Care Leaver Covenant](#)

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning