

## Highland CPP – Chief Officers’ Group

27<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Agenda Item	12.
Report No	COG 17/15

### Employment of Care Leavers

#### Report by the Director of Care and Learning

##### Summary

This report provides background information, in relation to the proposal by Chief Officers to offer employment to Highland’s care leavers.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 At its March meeting, the COG considered options for a ‘breakthrough achievement for the Highland Community Planning Partnership, and agreed a proposal that every care experienced young person in Highland should have at least one job offer from a CPP partner or an organisation within partners’ network. Further background information was requested, regarding this proposal.

## 2 Support Arrangements

- 2.1 This is a ground breaking offer from the Community Planning Partnership. It is extremely important that we a milestone scheme like this is properly supported to be a success, and to ensures that our young people are skilled up to work in their employment choice.
- 2.2 There are lots of reasons why some care experienced young people find it difficult to gain or sustain employment. These may include poor attainment outcomes from school, continuing vulnerability, limited access to further education and/or little evidence of skills for work.
- 2.3 We have positive training schemes to prepare young people for employment depending on their learning needs, and these range from 6 weeks to full year programmes. It is essential we continue to use these schemes to ensure young people are ready for the work force.
- 2.4 At present, Highland Council has a Family Firm Scheme that offers work experience and training to all care experienced young people. There is a recently appointed a full time co-ordinator for the scheme, which has led to improved support and placements, and this postholder can support this new initiative – along with the wider youth employment service.
- 2.5 The Council also provide funding for Face to Face and Barnardos Works to train care experienced young people to be ready for employment and some get full time paid positions at the end of these courses. These courses can also include SVQ and certificate of work readiness qualifications.
- 2.6 There is a bid into the Life Changes Trust (Big Lottery) for £90,000, in partnership with

Barnardos and Calman Trust, with some proposed funding from the council for a peer mentoring service to be developed. This could further enhance support for young people in employment.

2.7 Through Barnardos, the Council has also employed 9 part-time care experienced young people as Development Assistants. Their role is: to work on developments and improvements for care experienced services with the Champions Board; consultation with other care experienced young people; mentoring; public facing publicity developments; training and campaigns.

### **3 Career Choices**

3.1 When considering Family Firm choices, young people have requested the following opportunities, which would appear to open up a range of options across the Community Planning Partnership:

- construction apprenticeships
- catering
- social care: child care and elderly care
- fire and rescue
- sport and leisure
- hair and beauty
- hospitality
- administration
- ICT and graphics
- mechanics
- forestry
- veterinary nursing and caring for animals
- nursing staff
- police
- gardening,
- driving
- farming and agriculture,
- estate work and game keeping
- arts, film, theatre and media.

3.2 The most commonly requested opportunities are in children's residential care, elderly care and apprenticeships in all construction areas.

### **4 Numbers of care leavers**

4.1 There are around 25 new care leavers in Highland every year.

4.2 Having left care settings, these young people generally live in the Inverness area.

### Distribution across Highland

	Young people, presently receiving support
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey	60%
Ross, Skye & Lochaber	19%
Caithness, Sutherland, Easter Ross	21%

4.3 The Service is presently engaged with 136 Care Leavers, between 15 and 25 years of age.

4.4 67 of these are seen on a minimum of a weekly basis. 52 are either living out of Highland, or do not need a regular service.

15yrs	16yrs	17yrs	18yrs	19yrs	20yrs	21yrs	22yrs	23yrs	24yrs	25yrs	Total
1	13	22	41	24	20	8	4	1	1	1	136

4.5 Of the 67 young people that the Service is in regular contact with approximately, 5% (3) are presently employed full time; 9% (6) are employed part time; 31% (21) are unemployed 46%(31) are in training or further education; and 9% (6); have parental responsibilities that are preventing them from currently pursuing employment.

### Recommendations

The COG is invited to consider this report, with a view to a presentation at the subsequent meeting of the Community Planning Board.

**Bill Alexander**

Director of Care and Learning

22 May 2015