



South Tyneside Council

Care Experienced Young People

Financial Procedures

2023/2024

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5.7.4 Financial Arrangements for Care Experienced

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Part 1 – Entitlements and Duties

1.1 Statement of Intent

Financial assistance to care experienced people, falls into two categories, entitlement, i.e., that which is laid down in statutory instruments and discretionary, known as permissive legislation.

Permissive legislation is that which allows the Local Authority to make certain payments in line with their role as Corporate Parents by discretion.

Payments are designed to assist young people who have been in the care of the Local Authority often for a considerable period of time. Care experienced people may have little or no support and rarely have savings. They are therefore dependent upon the local authority to provide a financial safety net, but also to assist them to achieve economic well-being in their own right.

These Guidelines and Procedures are designed to assist those making financial decisions in respect of care experienced people. They are also designed to give care experienced people and their carers', a transparent view of what financial support they can expect from South Tyneside Council.

Decisions will be made upon entitlement and need as defined in the 'Needs Assessment' and laid out in an individual's pathway plan. In assessing need, case workers will take into account issues of; age, gender, sexuality, race, religion, culture, disability and class. These categories will not be used to discriminate against care experienced people. Guidelines and Procedures will be reviewed annually.

1.2 Legislation

The Care Leavers Regulations place particular duties upon local authorities to support young people when they are in and have left care.

The financial policy sets out how the local authority will support young people to enhance their life chances and make a successful transition to adulthood. It is critical to integrated planning that the financial policy which guides payments particularly young people aged sixteen and older, does not operate in a silo or create inequalities and disparities.

The policy is updated to reflect the principles of the 'Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers Guidance' implemented in April 2011 and The Children & Social Work Act 2017 which introduced a new duty on local authorities, to provide Personal Adviser (PA) support to all care experienced people up to age 25, if they want this support.

Financial support is an important element of such support and clear procedures are needed ensuring that decision-making is consistent and equitable.

These procedures apply to young people who have completed Year 11 of school and are entitled to Leaving Care Services.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with South Tyneside's policy on:

- Junior ISA's, Bank Accounts, Savings and Pocket Money for Children Cared For

1.3 Defining who is eligible for support

The Care Leavers Regulations identifies five categories of young people looked after and 'care experienced people' who are entitled to support after their 16th birthday.

Duties continue to other young people under section 24 of the Children Act 1989. It is important to establish initially which, if any of these a young person falls into, as the first stage of assessing their eligibility for financial assistance.

The categories are as follows:

- Eligible child -Looked after, aged 16 or 17; and has been looked after by a local authority for a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14 (some of this period being after their 16th or 17th birthday). Financial needs should be met in the same way as other children looked after via the Care Planning process.
- Relevant child - There is a duty to financially support relevant young people up to the age of 18. Relevant young people should be no worse off through receiving financial support from the local authority, even where they do not co-operate with workers or adhere to agreements made under the Pathway Plans. The allowances paid to them should not fall below the level of Income Support or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance.
- Former Relevant child -Aged 18 to 25 and have left care having previously been Eligible or Relevant, or both. There is a duty to consider the need to financially support these young people.
- Qualifying children and young people over 16

1.4 Summary of Duties Re: Financial Support and Leaving Care Status

The nature and level of financial entitlements for young people are described within the Care Leavers Regulations. It is important that case records relating to young people in or leaving care are accurate and current. Records should clearly define a young person's legal status under the Act.

Every **Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant** young person should have their financial needs assessed and included in their Pathway Plans.

Eligible young people (16 & 17 year olds) who Remain Looked After in a Placement Eligible young people who remain in regulated placements will have their needs met through their placements.

'Eligible' and 'Relevant' (16 & 17 year olds) Young People Living Independently

The Council will fund the cost of appropriate accommodation for young people up to the age of 18 years. Young people who are earning an income, or are in receipt of means tested benefits, will be expected to make a contribution towards their accommodation and maintenance, and this will be discussed and agreed as part of the young person's Pathway Plan.

The Council will maintain eligible and relevant young people who live independently by giving them a maintenance allowance which is equivalent to the prevailing Applicable benefit allowance benefit rate for a single person under the age of 25. A deduction from this maintenance will be made to contribute towards the cost of bills if these are funded as part of the accommodation provided. In addition, financial support will be made available to young people to assist with costs associated with special needs such as disability and pregnancy. These will be identified as part of the young person's 'assessment of need' and agreed as part of the Pathway Plan.

These young people are no longer entitled to claim the major means tested benefit universal Credit. Responsibility for this financial support now lies with the local authority.

Some Eligible young people can claim non-means tested benefits e.g. Disability Living Allowance and should be assisted in doing so where appropriate.

Important exceptions to this rule are lone parents or young people with long-term health problems, or with disabilities. Relevant young people can claim non-means tested benefits e.g. Disability Living Allowance, as appropriate.

For further advice and assistance Welfare Rights should be consulted.

Former Relevant (18 -25) - Benefit entitlements remain unaltered for Former Relevant young people, as does entitlement to non-means tested benefits – e.g. Personal Independence Payment. The local authority should assist young people to maximise take up of benefits before making assessments for any additional financial support.

The local authority may assist Former Relevant young people with income and accommodation where it is deemed appropriate to do so in the Pathway Plan.

A former relevant or qualifying person aged between 21 or 25 – will be assessed to determine financial support in order to pursue a programme of training or further / higher education.

1.5 Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children and Young People

The provisions apply to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in exactly the same way as other children in this country. They will however, have an immigration status (applying for asylum, acceptance as a refugee, granted exceptional leave to remain, or refused to leave to remain), which will need to be taken into account when considering provision of services.

Children and young people who are accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 will accrue entitlements to the provisions of the Care Leavers Regulations in the normal way. In some circumstances young people who receive a service via Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 will also be entitled to the full provisions of the Care Leavers Regulations. The decision about individual's entitlements to leaving care provision should be made by the relevant Team Manager on the basis of a clear assessment of the circumstances.

Part 2 – Principles for Financial Planning - Accommodation

2.1 Accommodation - Financial Assistance with Housing and Tenancy Support Costs

Eligible Young People - financial needs met via their care plans and in most cases will living in foster care or residential placements.

Relevant Young People - the local authority will normally meet in full; a relevant young person's accommodation costs. The type and cost of provision will vary depending on the needs and requirements of each young person. The level of funding available for accommodation should be clearly discussed with each young person during the pathway planning process.

The young person will be expected to make a reasonably realistic contribution to the costs of living in accommodation. This is in preparation of young people who may be living independently. Where there are concerns about a young person's ability to do this, the young person should be given every opportunity and help to develop these skills. It should be noted that failure to do so would only perpetuate many young people's lack of financial management and sense of financial dependence.

Details of costs and services should be included in the young person's pathway plan.

Former Relevant Young People - former relevant young people are entitled to claim Housing Benefit to assist with their housing costs where this is applicable. Social workers and personal advisers should assist young people to maximise their take up of welfare benefits where it is appropriate for them to do so.

The local authority may assist with general financial support to former relevant young people aged up to 25 years. Housing Benefit must have been claimed if appropriate in these cases.

Qualifying Young People - Qualifying young people are entitled to claim Housing Benefit to assist with their housing costs where this is applicable. Social Workers should assist young people to maximise their take up of welfare benefits where it is appropriate for them to do so.

Financial support towards meeting accommodation costs may be provided to qualifying young People to assist in sustaining and promoting Education, Employment or Training outcomes. The level of financial support requested should be based upon a thorough assessment of the young person’s financial needs. The Team Manager will approve financial packages of support and payments towards accommodation costs.

Accommodation Costs (Table 1)

<p>Eligible Living in foster care or residential placements.</p>	<p>Young people should have their financial needs met via their Care/Pathway plans.</p>
<p>Eligible & Relevant Living in supported accommodation, semi – independent or independent accommodation.</p>	<p>Home and accommodation costs to be met in full for young people up to the age of 18. Where young people are living in a semi-independent home, they are expected to pay the service charge directly to the accommodation provider. (See Appendix 1 for further guidance)</p>
<p>Former Relevant</p>	<p>Able to claim housing costs via Universal Credit/Housing benefit. Young people in higher education will have an assessment of their financial needs including housing costs identified in the Pathway Plan. Arrangements for the young person’s accommodation and maintenance during holidays and vacations should be planned and where possible costed in advance.</p>

2.2 Private Sector Accommodation

Home and accommodation costs to be met in full for young people up to the age of 18. Where young people are moving into private sector accommodation the rent level should (wherever possible) be within the Local Housing Allowance for that area. Any requirement to provide a deposit and rent in advance must be clarified prior to the tenancy agreement being authorised through a Team Manager.

Housing Benefit rates for private sector tenants who rent from a private landlord is calculated using the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. The Valuation Officer sets the level of the LHA for the different types of property in each LHA designated area; these are known as Broad Rental Market Areas. This is determined by post-code, not council boundaries, as some councils might have 2 or 3 BRMA's. The same process and figures are used for Universal Credit housing costs.

Under LHA, payments will generally be made directly to the tenant unless they are particularly 'vulnerable'. Being a care experienced young person would, in principle, qualify a young person to have his or her LHA paid directly to the landlord via a request to the DWP for an Alternative Payment Arrangement (UC47 form). The intention of paying LHA directly to tenants is to encourage responsibility for paying the rent themselves.

Private Sector Accommodation (Table 2)

Maximum weekly Local Housing Allowance rates from 1st April 2023:

South Tyneside:

- shared accommodation £70.19
- one-bedroom accommodation £97.81

Note: There are different rates for properties in South Tyneside. If your postcode begins with SR6, NE35 or NE36 please contact the Benefits Office on 0191 4244333 to confirm the Local Housing Allowance rate.

Current rates for all LHA areas can be checked via the Valuation Office Agency website:

<https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/Secure/Search.aspx>

There is also an absolute cap on Local Housing Allowance rate for each property size within the private sector.

2.3 Deposit and Rent in Advance

Where a young person has access to housing authority or housing association independent accommodation a deposit and rent in advance should not be provided. In exceptional circumstances and depending on an assessment of need a deposit and rent in advance may be considered if a young person would be at risk in housing authority or housing association independent accommodation.

Where young people are moving into private accommodation a deposit and rent in advance will be provided if the rent level falls within the given Local Housing Allowance rate for that area.

Personal Advisers should check if a 'Rent Deposit Scheme' exists in the area the young person is aiming to live and/or what 'Rent Deposit Protect Scheme' the letting agent/landlord uses.

In circumstances where South Tyneside Council is providing the deposit, or is providing a bond guarantee, the deposit/bond guarantee should, where possible, be in the name of South Tyneside Council. If this is not possible and the deposit is in the name of the young person, the young person should make a signed commitment to returning the deposit to South Tyneside Council.

From April 2007, landlords and agents have, by law, had to sign up to one of three Government-backed schemes when they take a deposit. These schemes aim to ensure that letting agents, landlords and tenants have access to independent deposit protection. Social Workers/Personal Advisers should check which scheme that landlord is using.

The Tenant Fees Act 2019 came into force on the 1st June 2019 and as result tenancy deposits are capped, and most fees charged in connection with a tenancy are banned.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenant-fees-act-2019-guidance>

Private sector landlords are required to provide a copy of the ‘How to Rent’ Leaflet to all tenants.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent>

2.4 Arrangements for Young People Staying Put

With agreement from both parties, arrangements can be made for young people to remain with their current foster carers after they have turned 18 years of age. Plans for a staying put arrangement must be made well in advance and foster carers and young people must be given clear information about the effects of the change in the young person’s legal status and in the nature of the continuing provision. Plans must be identified within the needs assessment (pathway plan part 1) and the young person’s pathway plan.

Where a young person is eligible for adult services, plans may be made to convert a current foster care placement into a shared lives placement. Conversion will normally take place at the point that the young person becomes 18 years of age.

Arrangements for the conversion of placements should be considered through the transition and pathway planning process with young people and their foster carers’. Such transition plans should be discussed at the earliest opportunity and to be considered within care and pathway planning with the young person.

Young People in Staying Put arrangement who are in Employment /Training will make the below contributions. (Table 3)

Earnings	Payment required
Up to £60	£15
Up to £80.00	£20.00
£81.00 - £90.00	£22.50
£91.00 - £100.00	£25.00
£101.00 - £110.00	£27.50
£111.00 - £120.00	£30.00
£121.00 - £130.00	£32.50
£131.00 - £140.00	£35.00

£141.00 - £150.00	£37.50
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2.5 Accommodation- Other financial assistance

Young people transitioning from care who have been living outside and wish to remain outside of South Tyneside may require financial support to assist them to secure accommodation in other areas. Such arrangements should be included in the Pathway Plan and will be agreed by the relevant team manager.

When moving into a property there are sometimes unforeseen financial challenges. Whereby such challenges are identified and not covered in other sections of these procedures the Pathway Plan should detail this and in exceptional cases an amount may be proposed and considered by the leaving care manager.

Part 3 – Principles for Financial Planning - Financial Assistance and Support

The local authority operates a system of incentives, and bonuses, which supplement and/or replace other entitlements young people, may receive (i.e. Training Allowance or 16 -19 bursary allowance).

3.1 'The Principle'

Any Relevant or Former Relevant South Tyneside care leaver receiving a service via the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 aged under 25 and actively engaged in full-time equivalent EET activities will have no less than the equivalent of Income Based Job Seekers Allowance to live on.

This principle applies to all Relevant and Former Relevant young people under 25 years of age. Payments from local authority should be made in the form of incentives after other universal allowances and benefits have (where applicable) been obtained (i.e. 16-19 Bursary, Universal credit)

Where young people are receiving regular payments, for example living allowances or incentives, these should be made directly into a young person's bank account, unless there are clear reasons why this cannot take place. The risk of paying money into a bank account should be weighed against the risk of not giving responsibility to a young person at a critical stage of their life.

The following sections provide a breakdown of young people's entitlements depending upon their status under the Care Leavers Regulations and the type of EET activity that they are engaged in.

3.2 Living Allowance

Eligible Young People - Where identified in the young person's pathway plan, an eligible young person will receive an amount equivalent of income-based Job Seekers Allowance.

It is acknowledged that young people leaving care will undertake financial responsibilities at an earlier age than the majority of their peers, and it is good practice to ensure that young people whilst living in foster care or a residential placement will be afforded the opportunity to budget and manage money to develop their life-skills.

Young people who are still looked after, in foster care or residential care, but have left Year 11 of school, should be encouraged by their carer(s), social workers and personal advisor to manage money effectively, encouraged to save and have control over some elements of the money for their care wherever practical. Please see South Tyneside's policy on Junior ISA's, Bank Accounts, Savings and Pocket Money for Children Looked After.

Young people aged 16 -17 living in independent or semi-independent accommodation will receive a Living allowance payment from the local authority, in all cases the principle in section 3.1 should apply.

A young person aged 16 – 17 who has returned to parents in a planned manner. It is at the discretion of the Local Authority to top up the amount of Child Benefit received. Decisions made will be based on the assessed need of the young person.

However the young person should, if in education or training, receive the 16-19 bursary.

If they meet the laid down criteria, eligible young people can also claim non-means tested benefits and case workers are expected to check eligibility for these benefits and actively help young people to claim them. (i.e Personal Independence Payment)

Relevant Young People - In most cases relevant young people will be entitled to a weekly living allowance paid directly to them by the local authority. The basic level of this allowance is set at the equivalent of Income Based Job Seekers Allowance. Young people aged 16-17 years who have left care should receive no less than this amount to live on each week. Exceptions to this rule include lone parents and some young people with disabilities who are able to claim welfare benefits in their own right from the age of 16 years. It should be noted that the equivalent of Income Based Job Seekers Allowance is the absolute minimum amount a young person should be expected to live on. In general young people should be encouraged to engage in activities that increase their weekly income through incentives.

Other types of financial support may be available addition to the basic allowance. This might include help with things like family time, or with activities to stay fit and healthy. Where a young person is entitled to weekly living allowance, details should be recorded in their pathway plan.

Former Relevant and Qualifying Young People - The local authority is not normally financially responsible for the maintenance of former relevant and qualifying young people. Where no other forms of income are available young people should be directed to claim the appropriate benefit (in most cases this will be Universal Credit).

The Service retains the discretion to offer financial assistance as an interim measure, or where in exceptional circumstances a claim cannot be made for benefit. This will be at the discretion of the Practice Manager, to cover the period whilst proper funding can be obtained from the Benefits agency. A record of the decision, signed by Practice Manager will be recorded on the care record file.

It is advised that young people do not apply for the 'advanced first payment' when making their initial claim and draw up a financial assessment with their Social Worker or Personal Advisor. Pending assessment young people may be entitled to financial assistance until they begin to receive their benefit.

Former relevant and qualifying young people who are in full time further education are normally entitled to claim Universal Credit to meet their weekly living costs. Young people in employment will

normally be responsible for meeting their own needs in terms of living costs although for young people on a low wage extra assistance may be considered from the local authority.

Living Allowance (Table 4)

<p>Eligible</p> <p>Young People who are living In semi-Independent or fully Independent Accommodation.</p>	<p>Where identified in the young person’s pathway plan, an eligible young person will receive a Living Allowance.</p> <p>£65.00 per week</p>
<p>Relevant</p> <p>Young People aged 16-17 years who have left care.</p>	<p>£65.00 per week</p> <p>Young people should receive no less than this amount to live on each week. Exceptions to this rule include lone parents and some young people with disabilities who are able to claim welfare benefits in their own right from the age of 16 years. It should be noted that the equivalent of Income Based Job Seekers Allowance is the absolute minimum amount a young person should be expected to live on. In general young people should be encouraged to engage in activities that increase their weekly income through incentives.</p>
<p>Qualifying Young Person</p>	<p>The service retains the discretion to offer financial assistance as an interim measure, or where in exceptional circumstances a claim cannot be made for benefit. This will be at the discretion of the team manager, to cover the period whilst proper funding can be obtained from the Benefits agency</p>
<p>Young People Placed with Parents / Living with Parents</p>	<p>Cared for children (Eligible) placed at home under ‘placement with parents’ regulations and care experienced young people (Relevant) living at home:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the young person is engaged in education or training and they returned to the parent before the age of 16 (and remain cared for), the parent may be eligible to claim Child Benefit and Tax Credits/Universal Credit. 2. If the young person returned to a parent after the age of 16, remains cared for, it is unlikely the parent will be able to claim Child Benefit or Tax Credits/Universal Credit and the young person is not eligible to claim benefits in their own right, in which case local authority funding will apply. <p>An amount will be agreed at the discretion of the service, based on assessment of need.</p>

3.3 Living Allowance Reductions and Adjustments where young people are earning

Reductions are undertaken from the principle of assisting with the development of money management and budgeting skills. As such, any reduction will be saved for the young person and added to their Junior ISA/Savings or Setting Up Home Allowance.

Living Allowance, pocket money, wages and earnings, Traineeship Allowances, Modern Apprenticeship Allowances and the 16 - 19 Bursary count as income.

To monitor payments/reductions and other education, training and employment related payments, social workers and personal advisers will need to maintain close liaison with a young person's education, training, and employment provider.

Additionally, this liaison will ensure a young person receives practical assistance, if, and when required. To facilitate this process young people must sign the 'Agreement to Share Information Form' so that social workers/personal advisers can liaise with the employers and education/training providers.

To assist a young person with making a successful transition to employment and managing their wages a reduction will not be applied until they have completed five weeks of employment.

Living Allowance deductions (Table 5)

<p>Living Allowance –</p> <p>Reductions and adjustments where Young People are Earning</p> <p>Reductions are added to Savings</p>	<p>Reductions/Adjustments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a young person has a net income of £132.00 net or more per week, his/her living allowance will be reduced by 50%. • When a young person has a net income of £152.00 net or more per week, his/her living allowance, clothing and leisure allowance will cease. <p>Young people should be issued with a Reductions Notice setting out the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The level of reduction (of their allowance/s); 2. When the reduction will commence; 3. What the young person can do if their circumstances change; 4. What the young person can do if they do not agree with the assessed reduction. <p>The Reduction Notice should be issued in writing and signed by the young person.</p> <p>Reduction equation: Total income minus fares, work costs and the cost of lunches. See examples below</p> <p>Example 1 – No reduction required</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Living Allowance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£65.00</td> </tr> </table>	Living Allowance	£65.00
Living Allowance	£65.00		

16 – 19 Bursary	£40.00
Wages from part time job	£28.00
Total Income	£133.00
minus costs (lunches X 2)	£11.00-
	£122.00
Example 2 – Reduction required	
Living Allowance	£65.00
Wages from part time job	£93.00
Total Income	£158.00
Minus costs (lunches X 4)	£22.00-
	£136.00
Living Allowance reduced by 50%	-£32.50
Living Allowance reduced by 50% - net income becomes = £125.50 – reduction of £32.50 – added to the young person’s Junior ISA/Savings or setting up home allowance.	
A young person will need to provide proof of income in order that his/her social worker/personal adviser can calculate the level of the reduction. If proof is not forthcoming it will be assumed that earnings are exceeding £132.00 / £152.00 net per week and either 50% or 100% of the Next Steps Maintenance Allowance will be added to the young person’s Junior ISA/Savings or Setting Up Home Allowance	

3.4 Full and Part-time Study

The packages of support below normally apply to students engaged in a full-time programme of study. For the purposes of this policy ‘full-time’ and ‘part-time’ will follow the same definitions as those used by the education provider. A full-time course is normally one, which is 16 hours per week

3.5 Financial Support for Young People in Further Education

Relevant Young People - relevant young people will normally have their housing (+ housing support) costs met in full by the local authority. Relevant young people will normally have their living allowance paid weekly.

Relevant young people in full-time equivalent further education should be entitled to 16-19 bursary for the first 2 years (and possibly 3 years) of their studies.

Former Relevant young people under the age of 20 years - will normally be entitled to claim Universal Credit if they are on a course of full-time further education. Where appropriate young people should be assisted in applying for the maximum amount of benefit to which they are entitled. Former Relevant young people in full-time equivalent further education may be entitled to 16-19 bursary up to age 19 years.

Former Relevant Young People (aged 20 years +) - Financial support for Former Relevant young people may continue beyond age 21 years where the young person is continuing an agreed course of education or training.

Qualifying Young People (aged 16 – 21/25 years) - Financial support may be provided to qualifying young people to assist them in education. The level of financial support requested should be based upon a thorough assessment of the young person’s financial needs. The Team Manager will be required to approve financial packages of support for qualifying young people.

Where additional financial support is being sought, young people’s uptake of Welfare Benefits entitlements and other reasonable sources of funding must be taken into account.

Where a young person is planning to embark upon a course of further education which will continue beyond their 21st birthday, plans should be put in place at the outset, detailing the total package of support for the course’s duration.

Young People in Further Education- Table 6

Former Relevant – Aged 18-24	Where a young person is aged 19 years or is unable to claim the 16-19 bursary for a legitimate reason, The service will pay the equivalent rate providing that they are undertaking their course of study satisfactorily and are attending regularly.
Former Relevant Young People (aged 20 years +)	<p>Young people aged 20 years + may not be entitled to claim Universal Credit and Housing Costs if they are in full time study. Other forms of assistance through the Welfare Benefits system may be available and these should always be explored with the young person.</p> <p>In such circumstances The Leaving care service will provide financial support in line with current rate of universal credit. (£65 per week)</p> <p>Financial support for Former Relevant young people will continue beyond age 21 years where the young person is continuing an agreed course of education or training following an assessment of need. Financial support beyond age 21 years will be assessed by the personal advisor.</p>

3.5 Financial Support for Young People in Higher Education

The local authority has the discretion to provide financial support to care experienced people in further and higher education to have a basic standard of living. Young people in Higher Education will be supplied with a laptop computer to assist with their studies.

As a general rule, young people planning to attend an HE institution will be expected to apply for the maximum amount of financial assistance available through universal grants, loans and bursaries available for the course that they are intending to study. The Social Worker/Personal Advisor should check eligibility for any grants, bursaries or student loans. Provision for any grants, student loans and bursaries available for the young person should be detailed in the Pathway Plan.

Care experienced people who are starting university should also receive a bursary to help with the costs of academic life under the Higher Education Bursary Regulations.

A clearly informed estimate of the level of funding available should be made at the earliest opportunity. Young people's accommodation options must also be explored and costed. Income from grants and loans should be included in calculations for term time only.

Arrangements for the young person's accommodation and maintenance during holidays and vacations should be planned and where possible costed in advance. In some circumstances it may be possible to plan for the young person to return to stay with ex-carers during these periods. Some Institutions may also be able to offer students 52-week accommodation. Creative options, such as providing young people with the opportunity to travel, or engage in planned activities should be considered where appropriate.

Apart from in exceptional circumstances, young people should be encouraged to supplement their income whilst in higher education through appropriate part-time work. A financial plan should be drawn up covering at least the period of the first academic year (including the summer vacation). The plan should include all sources of income and essential outgoings, including the young person's living and accommodation costs and should be in two parts covering term-time and academic holidays/vacations.

Financial Support for Young People in Higher Education- Table 7

The PA will make an assessment with the young person and support will be documented within the Pathway Plan.	Former Relevant young people will be entitled to a maximum of £6000 towards accommodation costs per academic year whilst studying
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3.6 Additional Support for Young People in Further/Higher Education

Additional support for young people might include:

- Help with clothes for interviews, work placements etc.
- Fares to get to interviews, work placements etc.
- Special equipment/clothing not provided by the college/university
- IT equipment
- Help with transport costs

- Help with special needs or health issues

The list is not exhaustive and Pathway Plans should take account of individual circumstances when detailing support to be provided.

Education Grants- Table 8

One Off Grants	
These Grant are per academic year and not transferable and is only available for stationary, educational visits, books, general equipment and I.T. equipment.	
Stationary Grant	Up to £30
Educational Visits Grant	Up to £100
Books and Equipment/IT Equipment Grant	Up to £100
All young people entering full time further education (level 2 or above) or higher education (academic courses) will be provided with a one-off Computer Grant. Age 16-24.	Up to £400

Young People on Training Courses- Table 9

Eligible	Young person to claim 16-19 bursary Where identified in the young person's pathway plan, an eligible young person will receive an allowance.
Relevant	£65.00 per week Young person will claim 16-19 Bursary

3.7 Incentive Payments

Young people engaged in Employment, Education or Training will be provided with a monthly financial incentive which will be based on 90% attendance, which will be assessed at the end of the calendar month by the Personal Advisor and payments made approximately 2 weeks later, directly to the young person's bank.

Work and learning Incentive (Table 10)

For Relevant and Former Relevant young people who have financial responsibility linked with their own tenancy	
Attending 4-7 hours	£20 per month

Attending 8 – 15 hours	£30 per month
Attending 16-25 hours	£50 per month
Attending 25 hours and over	£70 Per month
For Young People earning more than £200 attending 16-24 Hours per week.	£25 per month
For Young People earning more than £200 attending 25 Hours + per week.	£35 per month
For Relevant and Former Relevant young people who do not have financial responsibilities linked with their own tenancy.	£25 per month.

Part 4 - Assistance and Support for Young People in Non-employed

Work Based Learning / Training

4.1 Financial Support for Young People in Work Based Learning / Training (WBL)

Relevant Young People -in all cases the principle in section 3.1 should apply. Relevant young people will normally have their housing (+ housing support) costs met in full by the local authority. Relevant young people will normally receive an amount equivalent to Job Seekers Allowance. Relevant young people who are engaged in WBL / Training will normally be entitled to 16 -19 bursary payments.

Former Relevant Young People (under 20 years) - will normally be entitled to claim Income Support and Housing Benefit if they are on a recognised full-time program of WBL/Training. Where appropriate young people should be assisted in applying for the maximum amount of benefit to which they are entitled.

Former Relevant Young People (aged 20 years and over) - may not be entitled to claim Income Support or Housing Benefit if they are on a training programme. Other forms of assistance through the Welfare Benefits system may be available and these should always be explored with the young person. Specialist advice should be sought where necessary through the Directorate's Welfare Rights Service, Citizens Advice Bureau, etc.

Additional financial support to assist young people with their accommodation and maintenance costs should be considered once other funding streams have been reasonably considered and taken into account. The level of financial support should be based on a thorough assessment of the young person's financial and other needs.

Financial support for Former Relevant young people may continue beyond age 21 years where the young person is continuing an agreed course of education or training or when a thorough assessment of need supports this. Financial support in most circumstances will not continue beyond age 25 years.

If a young person is engaged on a Traineeship / Training opportunity of 16 hours or more, and is not able to claim the 16-18 Bursary, then the local authority will pay £30 per week as an incentive. This will be paid based 90% attendance each week.

4.2 Additional Support for Young People in Training

Additional support for young people might include:

- Help with clothes for interviews, work placements etc.
- Fares to get to interviews, work placements etc.
- Special equipment/clothing not provided by the college/university
- IT equipment
- Help with transport costs
- Help with special needs or health issues

The list is not exhaustive and Pathway Plans should take account of individual circumstances when detailing support to be provided.

Part 5 – Assistance and Support for Young People in, beginning, or seeking Employment

Relevant young people - will normally have their housing costs met in full by the local authority whilst they are in employment.

Where young people are receiving living allowance through the local authority prior to commencing employment, these payments shall continue for up to 5 weeks to ensure that young people are in receipt of their wages or salaries. (see 3.3 Living Allowance Deductions)

Former Relevant Young People (under 20 years) - may be entitled to assistance with their housing costs via Universal Credit. Where appropriate young people should be assisted in applying for the maximum amount of benefit to which they are entitled. When a young person's income is not sufficient to ensure that they have, no less than the equivalent of Universal Credit Standard allowance to live on. If after other reasonable sources of income have been obtained, then the local authority will ensure that any shortfall is met.

5.1 Young People Doing Recognised Voluntary Work

If a young person, otherwise unemployed is engaged in recognised voluntary work for at least 4 hours per week an additional incentive may be paid. The level of the payment should reflect the level of the commitment undertaken by the young person and agreed by the Team Manager.

5.2 Additional Support for Young People in Employment and seeking Employment

Additional support for young people might include:

- Help with clothes for interviews, work placements etc.

- Fares to get to interviews, work placements etc.
- Special equipment/clothing not provided by the college/university
- IT equipment
- Help with transport costs
- Help with special needs or health issues

The list is not exhaustive and Pathway Plans should take account of individual circumstances when detailing support to be provided.

Financial assistance available for young people in, beginning or seeking employment (Table 11)

For Young People in, entering, or seeking employment.	Depending on an assessment of need, South Tyneside will purchase equipment and/or clothing to assist the young person with their chosen employment e.g. interview clothes, overalls, protective clothing (see Clothing Allowance section). Additionally, Children’s Services may assist with the cost of travel to interviews. Alternative options should be considered prior to financial arrangements being made. I.e. – some providers offer this support as part of their package.
	Maximum Commencing Work Grant/Allowance £100.00 – One-off.

5.3 Financial Support for Young People undertaking Apprenticeships

The majority of apprenticeships are classed as employment with a study component. These types of apprenticeships are generally secured by young people gaining employment with a company or organisation that is a registered apprenticeship provider. The young person is employed and also undertakes a study component towards a:

- National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)
- Technical Certificate
- Functional Skills (Mathematics, English)
- Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS)
- ERR (Employment Rights and Responsibilities) Workbook

From the 1st April 2023, the minimum wage rate is £5.28 per hour for apprentices aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 or over (7.49 rising to £10.42). All other apprentices are entitled to the National Minimum Wage for their age and can be found on

www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates

As the apprenticeship is deemed employment, young people will be eligible for a range of benefits, including housing benefit and tax credits (Universal Credit) depending on their circumstances. If the apprenticeship is deemed employment, the young person would not be covered by the age 21-25 Education and Training - Care Experienced Young Person’s entitlements.

Apprenticeship Financial Support (Table 12)

<p>The PA will make an assessment with the young person and support will be documented within the Pathway Plan.</p>	<p>The amount of financial support considered will be subject to an individual's assessed needs. This will consider any additional costs linked to living arrangements and essential needs to complete the apprenticeship. The service will seek to reduce levels of identified disadvantage.</p>
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Part 6 – Setting Up Home Allowance

6.1 Setting Up Home Allowance

The local authority will support young people to set up their own home through the provision of information, advice, practical help and support. This will be planned and discussed with the young person, and written into the Pathway Plan.

Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant are entitled to a Setting Up Home Allowance. Qualifying Young People may be entitled to support under this provision following assessment and agreement by the responsible Manager.

The Setting Up Home Allowance is provided to ensure that the accommodation the young person is living in is homely and furnished and should always be used to purchase household items. The Setting Up Home Allowance is based on an assessment of need, taking account of any items provided with the accommodation.

The young person's Setting up Home Allowance should only be spent on goods relating to setting up (and in exceptional circumstances, maintaining) their home. Young people can 'draw down' against their Setting up Home Allowance throughout the period of them receiving a leaving care service. Monies from a young person's Setting up Home Allowance can be used to set up home and move between different accommodation settings throughout the period that a young person receives a service.

The entitlement to the Setting Up Home Allowance extends to the age of 25. The entitlement is to household items/furnishings not to a cash payment. The purpose of the Setting Up Home Allowance is to ensure that young people have the household items that they need to furnish their home rather than an entitlement to a cash amount.

Some young people may be entitled to other assistance through the Welfare Benefits system. Young people should be assisted in maximising their uptake of Welfare Benefits where appropriate.

Young people should be given reasonable choice about how, and from where they purchase goods and services when setting up home. Advice should be given to young people about value for money, quality and safety in respect to the goods and services they wish to purchase. Personal Advisors should apply 'good parenting' principles when finalising decisions about the purchase of goods and services via young people's Setting up Home Allowance.

A member of staff will supervise all items purchased from the Setting Up Home Allowance.(See Appendix 2 for further guidance)

Setting Up Home Allowance (Table 13)

£159.00	<p>For TV licence. (First licence paid for by The Leaving Care Team and subsequent ones paid for by young person).</p> <p>To be spent on items for equipping the accommodation including a setting up home starter pack, i.e., coffee, tea, washing-up liquid, light bulbs, laundry and cleaning equipment, utility key/card top-up, etc.</p> <p>This allowance should always be spent in stages; initially on semi-independent accommodation needs and subsequently, on independent accommodation needs. The allowance will always be spent collaboratively between the social worker/personal adviser and young person. Original receipts should be retained by the social worker/personal adviser for audit purposes in case faulty items need to be returned. Any health & safety and household security items should be provided by the landlord.</p>
Up to £110.00 Not Transferable	Fitting of a gas/electric cooker by an approved fitter-Provided once
Up to £110.00 Not Transferable	Contents insurance- Provided once for the first year living independently
Up to £100.00 Not Transferable	Removal costs-Provided once for a move to independent accommodation
Up to £50 Not Transferrable	New Home Starter Pack consisting of food and cleaning materials
Up to £50 Not Transferrable	Energy (Gas/Electricity)
Up to £3000 Setting Up Home Equipment Accommodation Items	<p>This Allowance should be spent in stages; initially on semi-independent setting needs and subsequently, on independent accommodation needs. The Allowance will always be spent collaboratively between the personal advisor (or foster carer / staying put carer / residential keyworker / supported accommodation support worker) and young person. Original receipts should be retained by social worker/personal adviser for audit purposes, reclaiming VAT and in case faulty items need to be returned.</p> <p>(See appendix 1) for essential items guide price list – this is not an exhaustive list. Young people may have acquired some items already, had others gifted to them and/or obtained some through savings etc. and therefore should be able to spend more on individual items if in agreement with their social worker/personal adviser. Young People may be able to put additional money towards items above the guide price.</p>
Total	£3600
<p>As a general principle up to £300.00 can be used prior to the young person's 18th birthday whilst they are living in semi-independent accommodation (furnished) and the remainder can be used after the age of 18 when they move to independent accommodation (unfurnished).</p> <p>Where young people have No Recourse to Public Funds, a temporary asylum status, or are 'All Rights Exhausted', they are likely to be living in temporary and/or semi-independent accommodation and therefore will only need to use part of their Setting Up Home Allowance until they obtain permanent status as the accommodation provided will usually contain the majority of household items.</p>	

Where young people have had several moves and may have lost, misplaced or had items damaged, additional resources/items may be made available subject to an assessment of need.

Where young people are living in unsettled or temporary accommodation, the Setting Up Home Allowance should be used to purchase essential items, with the majority of the Allowance being held back until more settled/permanent accommodation is available.

Young people are entitled to one set of removal costs, cooker fitting costs, insurance costs, health and safety equipment costs and one setting up home starter pack. Where a young person requires a second set of one-off costs, these will only be provided subject to an assessment of need and approval by a Team Manager

Where young people have additional needs and are being supported by an Adult Service under the Care Act 2014, the Setting Up Home Allowance will continue to be available if it is required. Where a young person is placed into residential care and all items are provided through the adult service home, the Setting Up Home Allowance will not be needed. Where young people move to supported living, an assessment of need will be undertaken, and the Setting Up Home Allowance will be provided if the accommodation requires additional furnishings.

Part 7 – Other Financial Support

7.1 Birthday Allowances

Young people will receive a card, birthday gift, voucher, cash, or combination from the local authority on their birthday up the following amounts (Table 15)

The birthday allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in touch with their social worker/personal advisor up their 25th Birthday.

In addition to this, the Personal Advisor may take the young person out for a meal when the young person is 18 or 21 years old or choose to do so for those young people whom otherwise may be isolated and or lacking support, as any 'good parent' would do. Alcohol cannot be purchased with public money.

Birthday Allowances (Table 14)

Birthday Allowance for Young People Living in Semi-independent or Independent Accommodation 17 th & 18 th Birthday	£100
19 th 20 th 22 nd 23 rd 24 th 25 th Birthday	£20
21 st Birthday	£50

7.2 Festival Allowance

All young people will who are living semi or fully independently will receive a festival allowance annually.

Festival Allowance (Table 15)

<p>Christmas Festivals Age 16 and 17.</p> <p>Young People Living in Semi-independent or Independent Accommodation Christmas/ Festivals</p>	<p>A gift or gifts and/or a contribution towards the cost of celebrations to the total value of an additional weeks living allowance. Responsibility for the purchase of the gift/gift's rests with the social worker/personal advisor.</p> <p>Young people who are non-Christians will be given a choice as to when their festival allowance is to be provided. If they do not have a preference, the allowance should be made available at Christmas to ensure that they receive their entitlement. Additionally, they should also be offered the choice of having a proportion of their allowance at their festival of choice and a proportion at Christmas.</p> <p>Only in exceptional circumstances can the £100.00 be provided as a gift voucher or gift card. The Christmas/festival allowance should not be provided in cash.</p> <p>The Christmas/festival allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in touch with their social worker/personal adviser and who are actively engaged in the care planning/pathway planning process. Where young people are deemed to have withdrawn from active engagement with the Next Steps Team and their social worker/personal adviser, the Christmas/festival allowance will be suspended.</p>
<p>Christmas/ Festivals Age 18 - 24</p> <p>Who are living semi or fully independently will receive a festival allowance annually</p>	<p>Young people will be provided with a Christmas/Festival allowance of £25.00. The allowance can be provided as a gift, as a gift card or voucher.</p> <p>Young people who are non-Christians will be given a choice as to when their festival allowance is to be provided. If they do not have a preference, the allowance should be made available at Christmas to ensure that they receive their entitlement. Additionally, they should also be offered the choice of having a proportion of their allowance at their festival of choice and a proportion at Christmas.</p> <p>The Christmas/Festival allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in touch with their social worker/personal adviser.</p>

7.3 Clothing Allowances

Eligible and Relevant young people living independently do not have clothing provision built into their accommodation costs and although they receive Living Allowance, this is not sufficient to adequately provide for clothing needs. For those young people, they will receive an annual allowance towards clothing.

The method of payment of this grant will be at the Social Workers discretion i.e., it may be viewed that the young person would be better clothed if the payment was in two halves.

Having received a clothing grant, young people on 'Living Allowance' will be expected to maintain their clothing and would only receive additional assistance in exceptional circumstances.

Once a young person is no longer looked after, they cease to receive a clothing allowance from the local authority. From this point onwards, young people will be in receipt of their own income and encouraged to budget their money in order to purchase clothing and shoes/footwear.

In terms of budgeting, young people may need some help with clothing/footwear as they make the transition from being looked after to adulthood and managing their money. It is at the discretion of the local authority to agree payments for young people in these situations. Decisions should be made on a case by case basis.

Young people who have experienced a crisis and have no change of clothes may request assistance from the local Authority and their request may be considered as a way of covering shortfalls from insurance cover payouts.

Clothing Allowance (Table 16)

<p>The Initial Clothing Allowance is paid in situations where young people become looked after with insufficient clothing for everyday needs. When a young person is first looked after their social worker/leaving care personal adviser/support worker should make a list of the clothing that the young person has and another list setting out what clothing is required and the cost.</p>	<p>Up-to £200.00</p>
<p>16 & 17 year olds where clothing provision is not built into accommodation costs, typically in Semi- or independent living arrangements.</p>	<p>£150 per quarter</p> <p>The arrangements for providing and spending the clothing allowance should be set out in the young person's pathway plan and placement plan and should be dependent on an assessment of need.</p>

7.4 Holidays and Events

An allowance up to the amount of a weekly Living Allowance may be payable to Relevant young people who are going on holiday. Where it is not appropriate for a young person to go on holiday (or where they choose not to) the provision of funding for alternative arrangements, such as a special event or activity should be considered.

The local authority will not fund the holiday, but may help towards the cost of the holiday, and is at the discretion of the local authority Team Manager as to whether a contribution can be made and the amount.

Details regarding arrangements for assistance with holiday finances, or events should be recorded in young people's pathway plans.

7.5 Social, Leisure cultural and Religious Needs

Young people should have access to at least one leisure/hobby/sports activity per week to ensure social inclusion.

Where appropriate and dependent on an assessment of need South Tyneside council will pay for the membership of a hobby or leisure club and contribute towards the cost of equipment or special clothing/fees or contribute towards the cost of a social activity. This will be assessment based and in line with the talents and interests of the young person.

Where appropriate and dependent on an assessment of need South Tyneside council will pay for the membership of a hobby or leisure club and contribute towards the cost of equipment or special clothing/fees or contribute towards the cost of a social activity. This will be assessment based and in line with the talents and interests of the young person.

Children’s Services will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their cultural needs. Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Children’s Services will fund services aimed at meeting identified needs i.e. skin and hair care needs, dietary needs and requirements.

South Tyneside council will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their religious needs. Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, South Tyneside council will fund services aimed at meeting identified religious needs i.e. travel to religious venues.

South Tyneside will provide up to £130.00 for a major cultural or social activity once per year. The activity should be undertaken with a leaving care personal adviser, ex foster care or other key individual. The activity could range from a visit to the theatre, sporting event, art gallery or a day trip to a city to visit several museums etc.

The allowance is dependent on an assessment of need and an assessment of the suitability of the activity.

Depending on an assessment of need and an assessment of the suitability of the activities the allowance could be provided as two payments of up to £65.00 each.

The allowance should be used to fund the activity and refreshments for the young person and social worker/personal adviser/foster carer and the travel costs for the young person. Travel costs for the social worker/personal adviser/foster carer should be claimed via the staff travel budget.

Financial Support for Social, Leisure, cultural and religious needs 16-17 year olds Living independently/semi independently (Table 17)

Young people should have access to at least one leisure/hobby/sports activity per week to ensure social inclusion.	Maximum of £10.00 per Week. Up to £520.00 per Year
Cultural Needs	Maximum of £100.00 per Year
Religious Needs	Maximum of £100.00 per Year
Major Cultural or social Activity once per year	Maximum of £130.00 per year

7.5 Support with Contingencies and Emergencies

Pathway Plans should always contain arrangements for contingencies and emergencies that may arise. Generally, it is the responsibility of the young person’s Personal Adviser, to act as the first point of contact should the unexpected happen or things go wrong. It is a guiding principle that the Local Authority should act as a good parent in these situations and that there is an understanding that young people do make mistakes and these should be treated with sensitivity.

In its role as a good corporate parent the Local Authority will be available for help, advice and information. Where a young person is requesting exceptional financial help, which is not included in the procedures above, the Local Authority must consider the following questions before making a decision:

- Has the young person had emergency payments before? If yes, then what were they for and how long ago?
- Can the young person apply for a welfare payment?
- What kind of risks might the young person face if the request is not agreed?

Financial support for contingencies may be made in kind with the approval of the Team Manager.

When young people receive one – off financial assistance, an agreed person will supervise the spending of cash.

Where young people repeatedly abuse contingency provisions staff should carefully consider other means to ensure that their basic needs are met.

7.6 Health

Where it is agreed that the young person has a particular health need that cannot be met through existing funding arrangements, the local authority will consider funding.

This would, for instance, include the funding of eyesight tests and new glasses and in some cases dental care for some young people.

Any additional health needs that young people aged 18 and over have as a result of a disability/special need will need to be funded through health or Community Care services. All health needs and requirements need to be evident in the young person's pathway plan.

7.7 Support with Family Time

The local authority recognises the high importance that family members can play in young people's lives and will encourage where appropriate; young people to maintain regular contact with family members

Pathway plans should identify significant people who the young person needs to keep in contact with, and how contact will happen.

Suitable arrangements should be made to ensure that the young person has the means to facilitate a reasonable level of contact with family members and significant others.

7.8 Access to Leisure

Young people should be encouraged to make use of leisure facilities, and to pursue sports, hobbies and pastimes.

South Tyneside Council have a Leisure Offer for Care Experienced people, which allows them to access free leisure activities in South Tyneside Council Leisure

Some young people may have talents or abilities, which should be encouraged and nurtured. Financial support through a pathway plan might include:

- Help with sports equipment
- Help with musical instruments, tuition costs, exam fees, sheet music etc.
- Help with membership fees of clubs, leisure centres, gyms etc.
- Special training or coaching fees
- Music or singing lessons
- Payments for sports clubs or facilities

Assistance may be available through other sources e.g. sporting or arts based organisations, or through education or youth work initiatives. In some circumstances it may be possible to fund part of the cost of activities by 'match funding' with another organisation, or for the young person to make a contribution himself or herself.

This list is not exhaustive and Pathway Plans should take account of individual circumstances when detailing support to be provided. As a general principle any activity, which encourages the young person to use their time constructively, promotes a healthy lifestyle, and/or helps the young person develop and maintain positive relationships should be considered within the planning process.

Items or activities funded under this section will be in line with needs identified in the Pathway Plan, and at the discretion of the Practice Manager.

7.9 Specialist Services

Some young people may have special needs or require specialist help or counselling and these requirements should be set out in the pathway plan. Financial support through a pathway plan might include:

- Specialist counselling fees
- Specialist equipment costs
- Transport to access support services
- Access to special cultural or religious facilities
- Access to community support facilities
- Help with accessing health advice and medical facilities

This list is not exhaustive and pathway plans should take account of individual circumstances when detailing support to be provided. Financial assistance may be available from other sources. Where appropriate these should be explored and utilised.

7.10 Energy Support Payments

Energy Support payments are available Former Relevant young people living in independent accommodation where they are on a low Income (net income of £147 per week or less), and responsible for the payment of heating costs for the accommodation.

To support with the rising energy costs, Energy Support Payments will be available monthly.

Before agreeing this additional financial support, workers should ensure that;

- Young people are assisted and encouraged to take normal measures to make their homes energy efficient (i.e. draught excluders, curtains, and use of timers on boilers and electric storage heaters, low energy light-bulbs etc.);
- Where applicable, young people are assisted and encouraged to raise any structural deficiencies (i.e. cracked windows, excessively draughty doors or windows, faulty or inefficient heating systems) with their landlords and request that they are rectified as quickly as possible.

Wherever possible, the winter fuel payment should be paid direct to the utility provider on behalf of the young person.

Energy Support Payment (Table 18)

The level of payment should be based upon a current assessment of the young person and their accommodation.	A maximum payment of £20 per month can be made.
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7.11 Travel Costs

All Eligible and Relevant 16 & 17 year old young people who live independently and are actively in touch with the Leaving Care Team will be provided with an all Zone Travel Pass (Network One pass per 4 weeks £73.20).

The pass is conditional on young people being in regular contact with their social worker/personal adviser and actively engaged in the care planning/ pathway planning process.

The travel card/pass will assist young people to access education, training and employment opportunities, facilitate family time and contact with the Leaving Care Service, their social worker/personal adviser and enable access to leisure and cultural activities.

Young people undertaking education or training courses may be provided with a travel allowance by the education/training provider (16 to 19 bursary). Travel may also be funded by an education/training provider subject to compliance with any requirements in the young person's Learner Agreement. Such circumstances should be taken into account when making decisions regarding the provision of travel passes by the Leaving Care Service.

Where young people live outside of the South Tyneside area, they will be provided with a local area travel card.

All expired passes must be returned to the Leaving Care Service for audit purposes. In circumstances where a travel card/pass is misused the provision of a travel card/pass will be temporarily withdrawn.

In normal circumstances young people will be expected to pay for usual travel costs, but there are particular circumstances where a young person can request help with travel.

Young people can get help with travel costs to and from college. If young people are in further education or training and are getting incentive payments, they will usually be expected to buy a travel pass or pay for travel costs from their own income. However, a young person who has significant travel can make a request to the Local Authority for additional help with travel to and from college or a training placement.

Young people in employment can request help with travel to and from work until they are paid. If a young person needs financial help with travel costs, these payments will be at the discretion of the Personal Advisor, and authorised by the Team Manager.

Eligible and relevant young people who are placed outside of the local authority and residing in transitional or emergency accommodation may be provided with travel expenses if appropriate.

7.12 Identification/Document Replacement Costs

There is provision for young people to have one copy of their birth certificate, should the original be lost.

If a young person has the opportunity to go abroad, whether for a holiday, educational visit, exchange or to work, or to use as valid identification (in the absence of no other form of identification); the Local Authority will offer to fund a passport, should the young person not have one.

The Local Authority will support the young people leaving care to have a form of photo ID.

Young people leaving care who are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children will need documentation that evidences their identity; the local authority will finance the identification documentation.

Children's Services will purchase a passport (including the check and send facility) and 1 birth certificate for each young person.

One passport, or passport renewal age 16 to 25, one birth certificate only if the young person does not have the original.

7.13 Provisional Driving Licences

The local authority recognises that young peoples' employability is likely to increase if they are able to drive.

A provisional driving licence may be purchased for all Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant young people if it assists with the aims identified in their Pathway Plan in respect of education, training and employment. Applications will be authorised by the Team Manager

Licence, 1 Theory Test, 5 (1 hour) Lessons and 1 Practical Test.

South Tyneside will provide the funding for one provisional driving licence, one theory test, one practical test and the cost of 5 (1 hour) motor car driving lessons to introduce young people to driving.

This is available to 17-25 year olds and is conditional on the young person matching the cost of the 5 car driving lessons provided by the South Tyneside Council. This will enable the young person to have 10 trial lessons.

This is only available to young people who have been engaged in education, training or employment for 3 months and do not have any driving convictions. Young people must pay the cost of the 5 lessons to their social worker/personal adviser who will then book the 10 lessons. In general, by paying for 10 lessons in a block, driving schools provide an extra lesson free.

Young people must provide their contribution before the overall package is provided. Young people can use their birthday or Christmas/festival allowance to pay for their five lessons. No other allowances are transferable for this purpose.

Depending on an assessment of need, which must be linked to the need to travel to an education, training or employment opportunity the driving package can be used to fund a moped/motor bike training programme. Young people must attend a CBT programme prior to driving on public roads.

7.14 Personal Luggage

All young people moving to independence or between placements must have at least two items of appropriate personal luggage. This will be dependent on amount of belongings and financial support will be provided pending assessment of individual need.

7.15 Young People Representing the Local Authority

Care experienced people who represent the service e.g. being on the panel at a job interview or attending an event, will receive an agreed amount as recognition of their contribution to the service.

7.16 Young People Remanded or Subject to Custodial Sentence

A weekly payment will be made to the young person up to the maximum amount allowed by the custody establishment, via a postal order made payable to 'HMPS'. It is important that the young person's name and prison number are written on the reverse.

Young people who are eligible for leaving care payments will continue to receive financial support for birthdays and cultural festivals as set out in the leaving care procedures. These payments will be given in accordance with a young person's pathway plan, and maybe held on their behalf until their release from custody.

Young People Remanded in Custody or Subject to a Custodial Sentence (Table 19)

Eligible	£10 per week, providing that the young person is engaging with educational and training opportunities in the establishment. The social worker would coordinate payments. The service retains the discretion to offer financial assistance as an interim measure, dependent on an assessment of need.
Relevant	£10 per week, providing that the young person is engaging with educational and training opportunities in the establishment. The social worker would co-ordinate payments. The service retains the discretion to offer financial assistance as an interim measure, dependent on an assessment of need.
Former Relevant	£10 per month

Qualifying	The service retains the discretion to offer financial assistance as an interim measure, dependent on an assessment of need.
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Appendix 1

Eligible & Relevant

Young People who are living in semi-Independent or fully Independent Accommodation.

Accommodation costs	Home and accommodation costs to be met in full for young people up to the age of 18. Where young people are living in a semi-independent home, they are expected to pay the service charge directly to the accommodation provider.
Utilities and Heating Allowance £10.00 per Week April-September. £15 per week October till March.	Young people who are responsible for and pay variable utility/service and heating costs will be provided with a £10/£15 per week utilities and heating allowance during their 1st year of independent living. (until 18 th birthday) This payment should be made directly to energy accounts. Young people should be in receipt of the government energy grant (£400, per year which is paid direct to accounts in monthly instalments https://www.gov.uk/government/news/400-energy-bills-discount-to-support-households-this-winter).
Living Allowance £65 Per week	Where identified in the young person's pathway plan, the young person will receive a Living Allowance. £65.00 per week (see 3.2 & 3.3 Living Allowance Reductions and Adjustments where young people are earning)
(Network One pass per 4 weeks £73.20)	All Eligible and Relevant 16 & 17 year old young people who live independently and are actively in touch with the Leaving Care Service will be provided with an all Zone Travel Pass. (See 7.11)
Incentive Payments	Eligible and Former Relevant young people who have financial responsibility for costs associated with their accommodation such as utilities/service charges. (See 3.7 7 table 11 for guidance on criteria and amounts based on hours engaged in work and learning)
Clothing Allowance Initial Clothing Allowance Up-to £200.00 Where clothing provision is not built into accommodation costs £150 per quarter.	The Initial Clothing Allowance is paid in situations where young people become looked after with insufficient clothing for everyday needs. When a young person is first looked after their social worker/leaving care personal adviser should make a list of the clothing that the young person has and another list setting out what clothing is required and the cost. The arrangements for providing and spending the clothing allowance should be set out in the young person's pathway plan and placement plan and should be dependent on an assessment of need.

Financial support for Leisure, Cultural and Religious needs.	See 7.5 for further guidance
Maximum of £10.00 per Week. Up to £520.00 per Year	Young people should have access to at least one leisure/hobby/sports activity per week to ensure social inclusion.
Maximum of £100.00 per Year	Cultural needs
Maximum of £100.00 per Year	Religious Needs
Maximum of £130.00 per year	Major Cultural or social Activity once per year

Appendix 2- Setting Up Home Allowance Guide

Kitchen Items		Bedroom	
Cooker	£180.00	Bed & Headboard	£250.00
Fridge	£140.00	Drawers & Wardrobe	£150.00
Washing Machine	£180.00	Laundry Basket	£8.00
Kettle	£10.00	Duvet & Cover, Pillows, Pillowcases Sheets	£50.00
Iron	£15.00	Sub Total	£458.00
Ironing Board	£18.00		
Crockery	£18.00	Bathroom	
Cutlery	£8.00	Towels	£25.00
Pan Set	£40.00	Bath-Matts/ Accessories	£15.00
Kitchen Utensils	£25.00	Sub Total	£40.00
Hoover	£40.00		
Glasses/Mugs	£15.00	Living Room	
Toaster	£15.00	Seating/Sofa	£350.00
Microwave	£60.00	Television	£200.00
Mop/Bucket/Brush/Tea Towels/ Bin/Airer	£38.00	Mirror	£20.00
Sub Total	£802.00	Soft Furnishings	£30.00
		Sub Total	£600.00
Additional Items			
Curtains and Tracks/Blinds	£150.00		
Carpets and Flooring	£750.00		
Lamp Shades	£30.00		
Decorating Materials	£170.00		
Sub Total	£1100.00	TOTAL	£3000.00