

## **Appendix 1**

# **Leicester City Council Council Tax Discretionary Discount Policy (Care Leavers)**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides councils with discretion to grant a discount in individual cases or to a prescribed classification of cases. The discount can be anything up to 100% of the council tax bill and is met from Council resources.
- 1.2 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 abolished the national council tax benefit scheme and councils were given powers to develop their own schemes for council tax reduction from 01 April 2013.
- 1.3 Leicester's Council Tax Support Scheme does not award full support to cover the council tax liability of anyone of working age. As a consequence some households in Leicester may be experiencing extra difficulty in meeting their new or increased liability.
- 1.4 In the event of any future revisions that make the scheme less generous, the council has a duty to consider transitional protection. Individuals who are identified as in need of transitional protection will be considered for a discount under this policy.
- 1.5 This document sets out the Council's framework for granting a discount to care leavers up to 25 years of age.

## **2 Purpose and Principles of the Policy**

- 2.1 The council's Corporate Parenting Strategy articulates a commitment to improving outcomes for looked after children and to narrowing the gap between them and their peers.
- 2.2 The purpose of this policy is to assist those care leavers up to the age of 25 whose only support is the council by reducing the barriers of living in the community, providing them with increased support and lifting them from poverty.
- 2.3 This policy aims to support these care leavers to meet their council tax liability.

## **3. Awarding a Discount**

- 3.1 This policy is effective from 1 April 2018; discounts cannot be backdated prior to this date.
- 3.2 A discount will be applied to 100% of the council tax liability after any other discounts have been applied for any care leaver living in Leicester up to the date they reach 25 years of age.
- 3.3 In order for the discount to apply, Leicester City Council must have been the Corporate Parent and held responsibility for the care leaver at the point the young person left care.

- 3.4 Discounts can be backdated to the 1 April of the financial year in which either an application for a discount is received or the council identifies that the conditions for the discount are met. Where the liability started after the 1 April of that financial year, then the discount will be awarded from the date the liability started.
- 3.5 Where other people are resident, the 100% discount will still be granted, even where there are others that are jointly and severally liable.
- 3.6 If the person leaves Leicester and returns, they will be entitled to the discount for any period they are liable for council tax in Leicester provided the other conditions are satisfied.

#### **4. Application Process**

- 4.1 Leicester City Council will apply the discount where records show that the care leaver meets the conditions shown in 3.2 above.
- 4.2 The Council will accept applications made in writing or verbally.

#### **Section 5: Review Process**

- 5.1 Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, there is no right of appeal against the Council's use of discretionary powers. The Council will however accept a written request for a review of its decision. The request should include the reasons for requesting a review and any supporting information.
- 5.2 Reviews will be considered by an officer independent of the original decision maker.
- 5.3 If an application is refused the Council will provide the reason for refusal and instructions on how to request a review and the address where any request may be sent.
- 5.4 The applicant will be notified of the outcome of the review in writing.