

## What Makes The Difference? TOOLS and RESOURCES

**NAME OF TOOL/RESOURCE:** Wigan Finance Policy: Support in setting up home

**NAME AND REGION OF AGENCY/ORGANISATION THAT DEVELOPED THIS TOOL/RESOURCE:**

Wigan Young People's Service

**Purpose and Brief Description of Tool/Resource:**

This document outlines the financial entitlement and support provided by the service for young people moving into independent living

**Publication Date:** 2006

**Contact details for further information about this tool/resource**

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**Evidence for the effectiveness/ impact of this tool/resource**

**Positive impact of this tool/resource:**

1. Personal Advisors, staff and young people are clear about entitlement and process of application of funds
- 2.
- 3.

## **11.0 SUPPORT IN SETTING UP HOME**

- 11.1 When young people leave care, they may need assistance in obtaining furniture and equipment to enable them to settle successfully into their new accommodation. It is normal for young people setting up home to turn to their families for support. As the corporate parent, Wigan Council provides a set up home grant for care leavers to assist in purchasing items for their homes, however if they are on Income Support or Income Based JSA., they will be expected to first apply for a Community Care Grant. The set up home grant is currently £1,500, but where a young person receives a Community Care Grant, then the amount that they receive will be topped up to the total amount of £1,500.
- 11.2 There are many types of accommodation which young people may choose, so it may be appropriate to make part payment(s) of the grant i.e. if they move into a Foyer, or a furnished bed-sit for example. The remainder will be paid at the appropriate time.
- 11.3 When a young person moves into accommodation with a partner, the decision over whether to pay the whole grant, or hold back some of it, will need to take into consideration such issues as, how stable the relationship is, how much furniture etc the partner brings to the home. It is advisable sometimes to hold an amount back for contingencies.
- 11.4 There can also be no set age for claiming a Grant, because young people will move on at different times and in different circumstances, however grants will not normally be given to care leavers after they have finished receiving a service from the Aftercare team. In exceptional circumstances this may be agreed at the discretion of the Team Manager Aftercare, but should be written into the Pathway Plan.
- 11.5 Young People on Income Support, will be expected to claim a Community Care Grant. The amount awarded will be topped up to the full set up home grant provided that they have not previously had the grant.
- 11.5.1 Aftercare case workers should assist the young person to apply for a Community Care Grant and where possible supervise the spending of the grant. Offering to do this will increase the young person's chances of being awarded a grant.
- 11.6 A Leaving Care Grant for setting up home may cover the following items:-
- Carpets, floor coverings and curtains
  - "White goods" such as cooker, fridge and washing machine
  - Lounge furniture
  - Dining furniture
  - Bedroom furniture
  - Electrical items, such as TV, toaster, kettle, iron and Hoover
  - Bathroom items
  - Cleaning items & materials
  - Bedding & linen
  - Cooking utensils
  - Cutlery & crockery
  - Decorating materials etc
  - Insurance

- TV Licence

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

**Note however this is public money and is provided for set up a new home and should not be used for items such as Games Consoles.**

Where reasonable, good quality second hand items should be considered for purchase but not electrical goods. Otherwise, most Catalogues offer a helpful guide to affordable new prices, and special offers and sales should be referred to if possible.

- 11.7 In most cases, the Aftercare case worker or a suitably appropriate person designated in their place should supervise the spending of the grant. This is because it should be a learning exercise and the young person should be helped to achieve value for money. (Remember this does not always mean buying the cheapest items).
- 11.7.1 There are occasions when the young person's maturity is such that they may be able to spend their grant themselves. In these cases part payment can be released with the promise of the next payment when the young person returns with receipts for appropriate items.
- 11.7.2 It may also be appropriate on occasion to let a parent or other appropriate member of the family supervise the spending of the grant.
- 11.8 Aftercare case workers will apply for grants on a Grant claim form as at Annex D. The form must clearly state the young person's details, the type of grant and amount being claimed, whether it is part or full payment and the method of payment.
- 11.8.1 When applying for grants, workers should allow at least 14 days for the money to go into the bank before being drawn upon.
- 11.8.2 Aftercare case workers applying for grants will at the completion of the spending provide the Aftercare Finance Officer with a detailed account of how the grant was spent along with the receipts. This will be recorded on a '**Reconciliation**' sheet. The Aftercare Finance Officer will check the sheet and indicate whether or not it is correct, before passing it to the Team Manager for signing. See Annex E
- 11.8.3 The Aftercare Finance Officer will keep a record of grants paid to each young person within each financial year and the Aftercare case worker will keep a record of payments to each young person in the 'Financial' section of the young person's case file.
- 11.9 Set up home grants will not normally be paid to young people returning home to a person with parental responsibility, but a part payment may be made for bedroom items such as bed and wardrobe, if the young person has not lived at home for some time.