

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
16 MARCH 2022	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Nicola Curley, Director of Children's Services	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Lynne Ayres; Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Skills and the University	
Contact Officer(s):	Shalina Chandoo, QA Lead	Tel. 01733 452540

CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL PARTICIPATION REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: <i>Ricky Cooper, Assistant Director Children's Services</i>	Deadline date: <i>N/A</i>
<p>It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Notes the content of the report.</i> 2. <i>Raise any queries they have with the lead officers.</i> 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to each formal and informal Corporate Parenting Committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update from the Children in Care Council and participation services.

2.2 This report is for the Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference:

2.4.4.1 To act as advocates for looked after children and care leavers.

2.4.4.6 To monitor the quality of care delivered by the City Council and review the performance of outcomes for children and young people in care.

(a) Raise the profile of the needs of looked after children and care leavers through a range of actions including through the organising of celebratory events for the recognition of achievement.

(b) Ensure that leisure, cultural, further education and employment opportunities are offered and taken up by our looked after children and care leavers.

(c) Promote the development of participation and ensure that the view of children and young people are regularly heard through the Corporate Parenting Committee to improve educational, health and social outcomes to raise aspiration and attainments.

(d) Hold meetings with children and young people in care, frontline staff and foster carers to inform the committee of the standards of care and improvement outcomes for looked after children.

2.3 This report links to the Children in Care Pledge under:

1. *Respect - We will respect you as individuals, with differing wants, needs and beliefs and tailor the service you get to fit you.*

5. *Listen – We will support you to have a voice in your care plan and make sure you are listened to. We will ensure you know how to make a complaint or compliment about your care. You will have access to advocacy support to do this if wanted.*

3. **TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
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4. **BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Participation Team continues to promote opportunities for children and young people through regular newsletters, as well as creating event-specific publications to encourage engagement. Recent newsletters have encouraged young people to get involved in the Coram Voice Creative Writing Competition and apply to be a member of the Family Justice Young Person's Board to share views on the way in which the services within family justice are run and on the support they provide to children, young people and their families.
- 4.2 The Participation Team worked with Cambridgeshire County Council colleagues to organise two engagement activities in the February half term for Children in Care. Young people attended a bowling activity and a roller-skating activity where they had an opportunity to meet other young people in care from across the county.
- 4.3 A virtual activity for Children in Care who live at a distance or who prefer online activities was also arranged in the February half term. The session was titled February Art Fest and included creating doodle art characters and origami animals.
- 4.4 The Children in Care Council (CiCC) continue to meet in person on a monthly basis to work on their projects and consultation requests, meet professionals and give feedback on services. Recruitment to the CiCC is ongoing and we now have twelve members.
- 4.5 The CiCC continues to be consulted by Children's Social Care and other agencies to improve services for Children in Care. Recent consultations have included reviewing Children's Profiles with the Independent Reviewing Service, providing feedback on the accessibility of young people's health questionnaires from Healthwatch and learning more about the new Cambridge Children's Hospital with a visit from their Engagement Team. The CiCC are considering how they can work with the Children's Hospital to raise awareness about young people's mental health needs and the support that is available to them.
- 4.6 The CiCC invited members of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Team to their January meeting to observe how they conduct their meeting business and get involved in discussions. Members fed back that they like the option of inviting IROs to their meetings, and enjoy the discussions with them, particularly those they have built a relationship with.
- 4.7 The Children in Charge Youth Club continues to meet fortnightly during term time and have recently recruited some new members. The current venue for the Youth Club has a large outdoor space, and children and young people made the most of it by playing games and sports in the space, as well as using the indoor space for art and craft activities.

- 4.8 Attendees at the youth club have been discussing ideas for the 2022 Children in Care Awards Event which has been provisionally planned for July 2022, and have also spent time discussing their ideal Designated Teachers. Recent activities at the youth club have included making a giant patchwork wall art that when put together will represent the children's thoughts on the club. The group have also had fun making windmills, jigsaw puzzles, beaded bracelets and playing team games.
- 4.9 Feedback from the CiCC and youth club has been incorporated into a new draft of the CiC pledge. Children and young people have also told us they would prefer the pledge to be called a promise, so it's clearer to them what its purpose is.
- 4.10 The Young Recruiters Group continue to be actively involved in recruitment and have been asked to take part in interviews of newly qualified social workers for the ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) in March.
- 4.11 The Young Inspectors continue to work on their Supervised Contact Centre inspections across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire, with the next inspection dates planned in March. across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. The group will then meet to write their report, detailing their recommendations on how to ensure the supervised contact centres are meeting the needs of the children and young people that use them.
- 4.12 In January, the Young Trainers group delivered training to prospective Foster Carers as part of the Fostering Team's Skills to Foster course. The young people were supported by the Participation Team to facilitate an activity looking at Foster Carer skills and attributes and went through scenarios with the group on how to help young people settle into new placements. This is the third time the group have facilitated this training. Young people later commented that the carers had asked good questions, showing they had really reflected on the messages from children and young people within the training presentation. The Young Trainers have been invited to facilitate another Skills to Foster training course in March.
- 4.13 Members of the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire CiCCs attended a recording studio afternoon in the February half term to record audio for their ideal worker animated video joint project. The CiCC members also chose the animation style they would like for the videos, settling on digital animation rather than line drawing or a more traditional cartoon style. The audio is now being edited after which the artists will begin storyboarding the videos.
- 4.14 The new PCC Care Leaver Forum (CLF) had their first meeting in January where they were joined by the Cambridgeshire CLF. They brainstormed their group aims and focuses and received advice from their Cambridgeshire counterparts on how to be an effective CLF. The group were also consulted with on Pathway Planning and preparing young people for leaving care by the IRO Service Manager.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 This report was completed in consultation with members of the Children in Care Council.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 6.1 Improved engagement with Children in Care and Care Leavers.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

7.1 N/A

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 There are no changes required.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

9.1 *There are no financial implications.*

Legal Implications

9.2 *There are no legal implications, as the report is for information only.*

Equalities Implications

9.3 Participation is an essential service for Children in Care and Care Leavers and this report demonstrates the level of participation in various events and activities.

Carbon Impact Assessment

9.4 Children in Care Council meetings are held face to face on a monthly basis. As the venue for Children in Care Council meetings is centrally located, young people have been able to use public transport to travel to meetings.

9.5 Impacts on Children in Care and Care Leavers

Participation is an essential service for Children in Care and Care Leavers, offering activities and opportunities to provide feedback on Children's Services.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 N/A

11. APPENDICES

11.1 N/A