

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
19 JULY 2023	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	John Gregg Executive Director Children and Young People's Service	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Lynne Ayres Cabinet Member for Education, Skills, and Children's Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Alison Bennett, Service Director, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	Tel. 01733 452540

CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL PARTICIPATION REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Shalina Chandoo, QA Lead	Deadline date: N/A
<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 the Participation Service.

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 Promise under:

Respecting You: We will do everything we can to make you feel cared about, valued and respected as an individual.

Making Decisions Together: We will involve you in decision making so your views are listened to, and will explain when we make a decision you may not like or agree with.

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 under the care of Peterborough City Council (PCC) through regular newsletters, as well as creating event-specific publications to encourage engagement. Recent newsletters have updated young people on the work of the Children in Care Council (CiCC), Peterborough Care Leaders (PCL), 'Children in Charge' Youth Cub and other participation groups including the Young Inspectors, Young Recruiters and Young Trainers. Newsletters have also promoted relevant opportunities with external organisations such as IMO (the Children's Commissioner's digital offering for teenagers in care and care leavers) and Become (the national charity for children in care and care leavers).
- 4.2 The Participation Team promotes the voice of children and young people in care. All feedback, including suggestions and ideas from children and young people is communicated to services on a regular basis, and responses on action taken is shared with the CiCC for final review.
- 4.3 The Participation Team has organised a programme of fun face-to-face and virtual engagement activities in the Summer holidays for children and young people in care. These engagement activities enable children and young people to meet members of the CiCC and Participation Team, and learn about different participation opportunities.
- 4.4 Children and young people told the Participation Team that they would like additional opportunities to work on art and to create pieces for a face-to-face art exhibition this year. As a result, dates have been confirmed for three art sessions in the Summer holidays, with a view to arranging an art exhibition in the October half term.
- 4.5 After working on a Mental Health Awareness project for the last year, the CiCC was pleased to premiere their video to destigmatise mental health issues and signpost young people to available support, at the informal Corporate Parenting Committee meeting in June. To create the video, the group wrote and recorded a spoken word poem and worked with animation professionals on the design. The CiCC also worked with the Designated Nurse for Children in Care to collate information about what mental health support is available to children and young people. The CiCC has shared the [final video](#) with social care, health and education professionals across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire, as well as on social media, and would like as many children and young people to see it as possible.
- 4.6 The CiCC has been working on co-producing the Children in Care Awards and Celebration Day, and the date and venue have been sent to all Children in Care, carers, staff and Corporate Parents. The group has been looking at activities, entertainment and refreshments for all age ranges, to make sure the event is fun for everyone.

- 4.7 The 'Children in Charge' Youth Club has been designing feedback boxes and posters that can be placed in Supervised Contact Centres, to encourage children who use them to let the service know what they think of the centres and make their suggestions for improvements.
- 4.8 Peterborough Care Leaders (previously the Care Leaver Forum) met with the Housing Link Officer for Leaving Care to feed back their views and experience and arranged to meet with the Lead Fostering Trainer to offer advice on improving the foster carer training program. Peterborough Care Leaders also discussed how they would like to see those with care experience recognised with protected characteristic status in Peterborough, following in the footsteps of other local authorities, as well as a council tax exemption for care leavers.
- 4.9 The Young Trainers group continues to deliver training for prospective foster carers across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire, as part of the Foster Carer Training programme. Young Trainers also successfully delivered their first training session to the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) Student Social Workers in collaboration with Workforce Development. The Young Trainers will be look at the overall training programmes, to select other areas that they can contribute towards from a young person's perspective, and to explore ways to develop their current training sessions.
- 4.10 The Young Recruiters continued working with the Principal Social Worker to interview Newly Qualified Social Workers for the next ASYE places, and have been involved in interviews for various roles including Head of Service and Principal Social Worker. Having previously worked on collating questions that can be posed to prospective foster carers, the Young Recruiters are now looking at questions that can be used by adoption panels.
- 4.11 Children and Young People across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire continued to work on the 'Every Word Matters' project, looking at the language used around children with social care experience, sharing views and feelings on certain words and suggesting alternatives. Children and young people recorded audio in a podcast format and shared views on what the final animation should look like. This will be used as a key training resource for professionals, as well as informing language used when meeting children and young people and in documents raising from policies to job descriptions.
- 4.12 The Participation Service commissioned two Leadership Training events for Children in Care across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. The training, facilitated by the British Youth Council, was open to children and young people from the CiCCs, CLF, Young Inspectors, Young Trainers and Young Recruiters as part of their ongoing training and development. The sessions were followed by lunch for participants and fun activities. Children and young people gave positive feedback on the sessions which focused on confidence building and problem-solving strategies as well as leadership and decision-making skills. Following the success of these sessions, the Participation Team is working with the CiCC to decide further development sessions for children and young people.

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.1 This report provides an update on activities linked the Council's Corporate Priority:

Prevention, Independence & Resilience

- *Children*

Participation is an essential service for Children in Care and Care Leavers, offering activities and opportunities to provide feedback on Children's Services to improve services for all children and young people who use them,

6. CONSULTATION

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

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

7.1 Improved engagement with Children in Care and Care Leavers and improved services.

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

8.1 *N/A*

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 There are no changes required.

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

10.1 *There are no financial implications.*

Legal Implications

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

Equalities Implications

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

10.4 Other Implications

Participation is an essential service for Children in Care and Care Leavers, offering activities and opportunities to provide feedback on Children's Services. This report demonstrates the level of participation in various events and activities, the feedback received, and action taken as a result

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

11.1 *N/A*

12. APPENDICES

12.1 *N/A*