



**Corporate Parenting Committee
16 April 2019**

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Integrated Commissioning (CYP)
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Officer

ITEM 5

Children in Care Council Update

Purpose

1.1 Children in Care Council Summary

There have been two meetings of the Children in Care Council (CICC) since the last report, February and March.

- I. In February's meeting questions were asked to help develop the Foster Carer's charter, and young people were also asked about the permanent Foster Placement offer. The group had expressed an interest in redesigning the CiCC logo. A new design had been agreed on and the agreed next steps was for the Council's design team to be contacted.
 - II. March's meeting looked at the Corporate Parenting strategy. The group were asked about its design, look and what they would like to see in it. They also looked again at the ground rules for the CICC meeting and added to them.
- 1.2 This report highlights the work the Children in Care Council (CICC) have been doing, what is important to them and how they have had an impact on services. It also explains the challenges they face which the Corporate Parenting Committee may be able to help with.

Recommendation

- 2.1 To consider the content of the report and the feedback from the CICC.

Reason

- 3.1 The Corporate Parenting Committee need to know that the CICC is being run well. It provides information and evidence that the voices of the children and young people in care is being heard and having a direct influence on services. The report also ensures that the voice of young people is heard at the Corporate Parenting Committee.

Supporting information

4.1 At the February meeting the Fostering team attended and asked for feedback in relation to foster carer support.

4.2 They asked: '**What do Foster Carers need from us (the Council)?**'

Responses given were:

- Help with stress
- Need to make children settle in
- Make them smile
- Bringing happiness to children
- More children and young people involved in foster carer training
- 24 hour support line
- Visit the children
- Help with health and safety issues
- Extra availability
- Foster Carer Booklets (information about foster family)
- Need to be told all relevant information including medical information about the child
- Make people happy
- Family events bringing foster carers and children together.

4.3 They also asked '**What should we (the Council) expect from foster carers?**'

Responses given were:

- Not to bully children
- Feed children
- Consider the voice of children
- Good with children
- Pocket money
- Foster carers not to smoke in fostering household
- To be there when they say they will be
- Foster carers should involve children when making decisions about children
- Foster carers to take up opportunities about child/family events
- Foster carers should get more training to help them do their job
- Have regular but not constant feedback from foster carers about child in placement
- Foster carers should listen to children more and find out what interests them
- Foster carers should find out if the child has a religion and support them with this
- Foster carer Charter front page – not a photo/creepy cartoon (involve the CiCC in design of front page)

4.4 The group were also asked for their thoughts around the permanent Foster Placement offer, which means that children in care will be staying with their present foster carers long term (up to 18 or if agreed, 21 years). They asked:

1. What can the Council do to reduce this worry?

- Would be useful for a child that has experienced it to explain the process about what happens (maybe a video),
- Reduce the worry - be told beforehand the full process, what is happening and in plenty of time. Example shared where this didn't happen which made them feel anxious,
- Would they like a certificate/letter confirming that it is expected that they will stay with those carers for the rest of childhood,
- Focused pack that explains everything, gives details of processes, what happened, where to go for help, and about CiCC.

2. What would need to be on this certificate/letter for it to mean something?

- A focused pack for that young person that is suited for the young person (what they can do, what house rules there may be, do they have a space just for them).

4.5 The group talked about changing the CiCC logo, as previously they had said they didn't like the current logo that was developed some time ago. The ideas for the new logo, below, are being taken forward by the Council design team:

- Multi colours that could be incorporated - bright and stand out,
- Would prefer that Children in Care Council was put as 'CiCC' so that it wasn't obvious as Children in Care,
- A thumb;
- Roots coming from the thumb which had suburbs on them to show that the CiCC roots are in Derby,
- Inspirational words on the hand part.

4.6 At the March meeting the young people revisited the ground rules for the CiCC meeting and suggested changes to layout of the rules so that they stand out better. They decided to add these new rules:

- No running in the meeting venue, and
- No hitting.

4.7 The group were asked for their input into developing the new Corporate Parenting strategy. The following questions were asked:

4.8 What needs to be in the document?

- Forward from the Mayor and Youth Mayor,
- Include pictures,
- Include priorities,
- No links.

4.9 ***What do you think about the design of the document?***

- Pictures of staff dealing with CiC,
- Writing too big,
- Bold writing,
- Not so wordy,
- Timeline that CiCC has done,
- Cartoon about Derby,
- Sights of Derby,
- Quad on front cover,
- Pledge at the front,
- Pictures of families or cartoons,
- All cartoon.

4.10 ***What should the policy be called?***

- No Bystanders,
- Our Bright Future Plan,
- Our Fabulous Future,
- Forward Family,
- Why am I here,
- Focus Forward,
- Thinking Forward,
- The Collective Voice,
- Ramming The Future.

4.11 They also discussed whether they thought it might be the right time to look again at the Pledge to see if it needs updating.

4.12 In a day over February half term, the CiCC helped to redesign the Health website for children in care. It was a productive day where the group fully participated with support from the Lead Nurse for Looked After children and other Looked After nursing staff. The website will be renamed and will have a logo that features a silhouette of CiCC members. It will also have age appropriate areas for information.

4.13 The 'Focus on Us' newsletter has been designed into a more 'magazine' style than before and is ready to be sent out, so should be received by all looked after children by the end of April .

- 4.14 The first meeting with Looked After children that cannot attend the CiCC was held in their school in Derby. They looked at the Corporate Parenting strategy document and gave the following feedback about it:
- They would like to see the Pledge at the start of the document,
 - It needs to be colourful,
 - There should be age appropriate documents for young people to have for themselves to read,
 - It needs to be colourful,
 - Does it need links in the document - could links page be a separate page on website,
 - Pledge would look good as cartoons/drawings,
 - Get young people fully involved with design,
 - Have it in language that's easy to understand,
 - Make sure it has Derby landmarks in the document and on the front cover.
- 4.15 The Participation Officer is continuing activity to increase the number of children in care who are able to contribute to CiCC meetings but who may not be able to access the meetings due to having other activities that clash.
- 4.16 This includes:
- Visits to schools to develop partnerships and meet with children in care, with a view that this develops further (see para 4.14),
 - Attending one residential home on a regular basis and working with some of the young people there, and
 - Meeting with a local special school, hopefully so that students there will be coming to CiCC in future and supported by staff to take a full part in meetings.
- 4.17 Additionally, ways to include more young people in care to become involved with CiCC that live out of area is being explored. One method is a virtual meeting where young people can log in and have a virtual meeting each quarter where those out of area are updated and can give feedback on consultations. Ongoing discussions are being held with IT as to the best way to facilitate this that will allow all to be actively involved.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 None noted

Legal implications

- 8.1 None noted

Other significant implications

- 9.1 None noted

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal		
Finance		
Service Director(s)		
Report sponsor	Gurmail Nizzer, Director of Integrated Commissioning (CYP)	21/3/19
Other(s)	Lisa Melrose, Head of Commissioning (CYP)	21/3/19
Background papers:	none	
List of appendices:	none	