



Corporate Parenting Committee
30 July 2019

ITEM 05

Report sponsor: Gurmail Nizzer, Director,
Integrated Commissioning (CYP)
Report author: Patrick Aherne Participation
Officer

Children in Care Council Update

Purpose

1.1 Children in Care Council Summary

There have been three meetings of the Children in Care Council (CICC) since the last report, April, May, June.

- I. April's meeting was attended by Derby City Council's CEO. The CICC members suggested that they could create a residents survey that shows how much work the City council undertakes. The Head of the Virtual School attended to talk about the virtual school and its offer for children in care (CIC). The young people were asked to consider the most important areas of the CIC pledge, which will be used to inform the Corporate Parenting Strategy.
 - II. In May's meeting staff from the Commissioning team attended to talk to the group about how they are working with other councils to ensure children in care are not placed too far away from home. The group helped to develop some questions to ask future fostering agencies and residential homes. There will be a telephone audit during the summer holidays where members of the CICC will be contacting CIC to get their views on the CICC and the services they receive from the LA. .
 - III. In June a drugs and alcohol service called Breakout attended. They gave advice to the CICC and raised awareness around drugs and alcohol and how to get support. A Commissioning Officer came to talk to the group about The KEEP service and asked their views about what should be in the new building and talked about a new location. The Youth Mayor (YM) attended the meeting to talk to the CICC about the YM's role and the Election process. Finally the young people developed a question for D2N2 about residential placements, the question will be asked to organisations who apply to provide good homes for children in care.
- 1.2 This report highlights the work the Children in Care Council (CICC) have been doing, what is important to them and how they impact on services. It also explains the challenges they face which Corporate Parenting Committee may be able to help.
- 1.3 The Participation Officer is working in partnership with the Leaving Care Team, Local Area Co-ordinators and Derby Theatre to improve engagement of young people who

are leaving care.

Recommendation

- 2.1 To consider the content of the report and feedback from 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 The CEO of Derby City Council attended April's meeting and described her role and responsibilities, she explained that her job was to make sure the LA was being run well. The young people were unaware of the services that the council provide. They suggested that they could create a survey to ask the public questions about what the council does. The CICC members asked the CEO if they could host a Regional CICC, the CEO agreed to this.
- 4.2 The Head of the Virtual school also came to the CICC in April and asked the group the following questions:
 - Do you know what the Pupil Premium Plus funding is?
 - Do you get asked what you would like to spend the Pupil Premium Plus funding on?
 - Do you get a £10 book token?
 - Do you like the book token?
 - Should we continue to send out the book tokens?

Most members were unaware of the Pupil Premium Plus funding, however some said they received money when taking exams. The CICC members didn't realise that the book tokens could be spent on things other than books and they are now aware they can be used for items such as stationary.

- 4.3 In April the group were asked to identify their top five priorities within the CIC Pledge to help with the review of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. The top five priorities were:
1. We will provide a safe place to live. We want you to know that you are safe, protected, and valued and can trust those caring for you.
 2. If you need someone to talk to, this includes at evenings and weekends, we will ensure you know who to call.
 3. We will help you access all the services you need to keep you healthy and safe.
 4. We will support you to get the most from your education and encourage you to reach all of your goals and achieve your potential by providing apprenticeships and work experience.
 5. We will ensure your voice is at the heart of all decisions made about you and that you understand why and when meetings are held.
- 4.4 In May's meeting the Senior Brokerage Officer and Commissioning Support Officer came to talk about a new project (D2N2). The project will help to make sure that CIC can remain close to Derby rather than living in cities such as London, Liverpool and Manchester. They asked the young people if they would like to be involved in the process of selecting providers and two members expressed an interest.
- 4.5 During May's meeting the Participation Officer gave feedback to the young people about the Corporate Parenting Strategy and advised the CICC that the top five CIC Pledge priorities, agreed at April's meeting, would inform the strategy. The group will also be involved with the design of the strategy document.
- 4.6 The Youth Mayor attended the CICC meeting in June. He talked about his role and his responsibilities. He explained the election process and gave advice to CICC members who were interested in applying next year.
- 4.7 The NHS funded Breakout Service, a service for young people up to the age of 18 that supports young people with drug, alcohol and sexual health concerns also attended the meeting in June. They talked to the CICC about how to keep safe and how to access the service.
- 4.8 The young people were asked to develop a question for the D2N2 regional network to help to commission good residential care and foster agencies. The CICC agreed on the following question to ask residential care providers:
- ***When you have a young person placed with you what facilities will the young person have access to and how will you be able to help them?***

- 4.9 The CICC said that if a young person lives in residential care that they should have the same opportunities and experiences as those living in foster care. The young people felt that if young people were not treated equally then they may struggle to adapt to foster care after living in residential care. When a young person living in residential care shared their schedule the young people living with a foster carer said it sounded like being at school.
- 4.10 The CICC explained that they would like to see the following facilities in their home:
- Good Wi-Fi: to help with homework young people said that poor/ slow Wi-Fi is a barrier.
 - Double beds: CICC members said that in foster placements all have double beds and would expect the same in residential.
 - Meal times: CICC members would like to be involved in cooking as part of life skills for the future, one young person said having a cooking night once a week would be good.
 - Nice garden: somewhere to play out and have a BBQ when the weather is good.
 - ICT room: for playing games and homework. The young people said they would like normal PC's for homework and gaming PC's for playing games.
 - Bedtime: some young people thought that bedtime routine was important but would like flexibility around weekends/school holidays.
 - TV: CICC members said that they wanted a TV in their bedroom so they can watch their programmes and have time on their own.
 - Games consoles: the CICC members said they would like their own games console.
 - Sky TV/Fire Stick/Chromecast: CICC members living in residential care thought that young people living with foster carers get this and they should get the same. They felt this would give an opportunity for movie nights so the young people could come together, especially those new to being in care.
- 4.11 The Commissioning Project Officer came to update the CICC on The KEEP service, following their previous consultation. They explained that The Keep would be moving to a new location and that there were plans to change the layout of the new building. This was to create a more CYP friendly atmosphere and to make it more practical.
- 4.12 The young people then gave their opinions on the service, including the building and the layout and were asked questions.

- 4.13 **1. What you would like the service to do?**
The young people said they would like to have confidential sessions at The KEEP.
- 2. What would the support be like? Talking, playing etc.**
CICC members suggested that there should be blocks to use whilst talking to the professionals and older young people could have fidget bags.
- 3. Where should support be delivered?**
Support should be delivered in a different venue if it needs to, depending on the needs of the young people.
- 4.14 The CICC were shown some pictures of the building layout and were asked:
- 1. What do you think of the building/plans?**
CICC members said they would like a plaque on the inside of the building and the new plans were nicer than the new building.
- 2. What don't you like about the building/plans?**
The members wanted more rooms in the building and wanted it to look more youth focussed. The young people said it needed to be more community based.
- 4.15 The CICC members said that they would like the youth mayor to open the new KEEP building in August
- 4.16 The Participation Officer has been maintaining relationships with schools and regularly meets with pupils in care at one school to discuss the same topics as the CICC.
- 4.17 The 'Focus on Us' newsletter has been distributed to all CIC.
- 4.18 The Participation Officer is working with Independent Reviewing Officers to engage more CIC who live outside of Derby. A form is being developed by the CICC to help to gain the feedback of CIC during their IRO review.
- 4.19 The annual telephone audit will take place during the school holidays. This audit will be conducted by members of the CICC who will contact CIC to ask them about their experience of LA Social Care services. The young people from the CICC with guidance from the consultation team will be reviewing last year's questions and updating them, CICC will be asking the questions during the audit.
- 4.20 The Participation Officer has developed a process in partnership with the Leaving Care Team, Local Area Co-ordinators and Derby Theatre to improve engagement of young people who are leaving care. The Participation Officer will be a co-ordination point for groups that run currently, advise the groups on topic areas, attend as required and collate participation evidence to help care leavers inform services.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 This report summarises engagement with the Children In Care Council on topics that affect them.

Other options

6.1 None noted

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) | |
| Other(s) | Lisa Melrose, Head of Commissioning (CYP) | |
| Background papers: | | |
| List of appendices: | Appendix 1- Case Study | |

Appendix 1

Case Study Children in Care Council

A young person started attending the CICC in September 2018. The young person has special educational needs and finds working in large groups difficult, especially with people that they are not familiar with. The young person was very shy when they started coming to the CICC did not feel able to contribute.

The young person continued to attend the CICC regularly and over time slowly started to give feedback during sessions. Since January this year the young person has developed increased self-confidence demonstrated by the feedback now given in meetings and taking on the role of meeting chair. The young person has since taken part in a focus group about the Corporate Parenting Strategy and was a representative in the recent SEND Local Area Inspection, where they attended and took part in discussions in a large group of both young people and adults that they had not met before.

The young person's IRO has noted an increase in their confidence and the young person is getting involved in participation outside of the CICC scope.