

SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR

Health & Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 1 October 2014

3.30 pm

Shire Hall, Hereford

	Pages
10. CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL	
To examine and comment on the Council's progress on establishing an effective Children in Care Council.	125 - 148



MEETING:	Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
MEETING DATE:	1 October 2014
TITLE OF REPORT:	Children in Care Council
REPORT BY:	Head of Looked After Children and Young People

Classification

Open

Key Decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

This report will provide evidence of progress made by the council in establishing an effective Children in Care Council.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the council's approach to developing the Children in Care Council and make recommendations for further development.**

Alternative options

- 1 No alternative options listed as this is a report to enable the committee to scrutinize the approach and make recommendations.

Reasons for recommendations

- 2 So that officers can build on the approach already being taken and make improvements that will benefit all children in care. Scrutiny will also enable the council to assure itself that the implementation of the Act is being carried out effectively.

Key considerations

- 3 The priorities for the participation team are to ask our looked after children and young people: what works, what doesn't work and what could work better, and most importantly involve them on an on-going basis, in the design, delivery and evaluation of services in Herefordshire. Alongside Herefordshire's Children and Young Peoples Partnership, the participation team wants to work towards Eileen Munro's vision; to ensure that Herefordshire Council can proudly say "we know our children and young people, we know their journey and we know what they need, because we have listened to them and learnt lessons.

4 Projects that have already started:

- 5 The focus of looked after children's participation has moved from its old home at Centre 18 to No4 – a building in Blackfriars Street. The redesign of the building from an office space to a base where young people can develop life skills and have a safe place to talk with friends was led by a group of young people.
- 6 The Children in Care Council has been re-launched and meets every month. It is working towards becoming a constituted group which will enable them to draw down funding in their own right.
- 7 Children and young people are regularly meeting with elected members to tell them their priorities.
- 8 The 11-18 Fun Club has continued to go from strength to strength and runs every fortnight; holding monthly trips.
- 9 A young person has sent a funding application to Starbucks to kick-start a youth club for 18+ as she identified the lack of activities for 18+. Unfortunately she was unsuccessful, however young people are being trained and DBS checked in preparation for them to participate in the 18+ group.
- 10 The STEPS one-to-one support service has continued to be a valuable resource for looked after children and young people. Furthermore; in response to Herefordshire's staying put initiative, the STEPS age range has extended. It is hoped that our care leavers will train to become STEPS workers.
- 11 The celebration event will occur this year; and plans are being made to make this year the best ever! This will be overseen by the Children in Care Council as this event is one of its priorities.

- 12 A young person has put together a business plan to support looked after children and young people going abroad. This is another priority of the Children in Care Council.
- 13 The Rural Media Company film project ran every Monday and was amazing; we had a group of between 8 to 12 young people who created a great short film targeting an issue that they face in their everyday life. The film premier was on 8 May 2014 and has been cascaded throughout the local authority and promoted to outside agencies in order to tackle the issue dealt with in the film.
- 14 Six looked after children and young people participated in a recent research project run by public health. All children and young people received a piece for their CV as a result of participating.
- 15 Four looked after children and young people participated in a 'shape ur service' discussion with CLD youth counselling, to support them to make their service better for young people. This project developed into the young people having the opportunity to support CLD and CAMHS to apply for a bid to improve access to services in Herefordshire.
- 16 Young people's interview panels are being used within the local authority and have been involved in recruiting staff including an assistant director, head of service and newly qualified social workers.
- 17 The 7-11 youth club has restarted.
- 18 A health and well-being programme- called 'Girls Night In,' has been piloted as a multi-agency initiative (health, education, CLD and participation team) for young people. The follow up sessions, requested by the young people involved took place. A 'Boys Night In' is due to take place in October 2014.
- 19 Four fully funded places were secured with YHA summer camps, one of which was on a future leader summer camp and were taken up by looked after children and care leavers.
- 20 Work experience placements are offered for looked after children, young people and care leavers in conjunction with their aspirations.
- 21 The achievements of some of Herefordshire's most vulnerable young people were celebrated at a recent summer fete. The fete, organised by Herefordshire's Children in Care Council and Herefordshire Council, was organised to give children and young people who are looked after by the council a day of fun activities and celebrations. On the day, Councillor Jeremy Millar and Jo Davidson officially signed the council's pledge to all looked after children in Herefordshire. Monies raised from the fete will go towards children in care priorities.
- 22 The Children in Care Council sit in on 'Voice of the Child' meetings and the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- 23 In development:**
- 24 One of our young people wishes to create a grief programme tailored to the needs of looked after children and young people and is now in touch with Phoenix Bereavement Trust to start her training.
- 25 One to one sessions are occurring to support looked after children and young people

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Joanna King – head of LAC and Debbie Barnett – participation and mentoring officer on Tel (01432) 260936

to gain valuable skills for life. For example; when meeting with the participation team, children and young people have to be on time, reliable and so on.

- 26 No4 website for our children and young people (a Children in Care Council priority) developed for our children and young people by our children and young people. Our young people have met with a member of the council's design team and fed in their ideas and we are due to meet again once our young people have decided what they want to say on the web site (in partnership with professionals).
- 27 Peer mentor programme to be piloted with 16 plus children and young people
- 28 Training programme for our care leavers on how to:
- Manage interviewing social workers and other social care staff,
 - Train social workers and other social care staff to hear the voice of the child, and more importantly
 - Train other Looked After Children and Care Leavers to be competent in the above so that the process can continue into the future.

The following projects will be launched in the next 12 months:

- Pack a Tack initiative re-started (Children in Care Council Priority)
- Care to cook programme to be re-launched in partnership with health
- Leaflets to be developed for our looked after children and young people
- Links to be made between the Children In Care Council (CICC) and the Virtual Shadow Board – in partnership with HVOSS (Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service).
- Internship to be created for care leavers
- Young inspectors programme
- Peer advocacy with NYAS (National Youth Advisory Service)
- 18+ group is due to start late 2014/early 2015 and this will be run by Care Leaver Champions.

Community impact

- 29 The purpose and function of the New Belongings/ Care 2 Work is to implement the access all areas guidance that aims to prevent care leavers having additional barriers put in front of them due to them being care leavers. It is also highlighting the isolation and feeling of not belonging to local communities these sentiments were echoed in the new belonging questionnaire completed in September 2013. The care champions role has been developed as part of this project which has included working alongside the children in care council.
- 30 Whilst Understanding Herefordshire identifies a low number of care leavers who are not in education, employment or training, national and local evidence shows that over the age of 18, care leavers are more likely to be unemployed, in very low wage roles,

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or in poor housing due to the additional barriers they face.

Equality and human rights

- 31 Different aspects of the implementation of the Act will pay due regard to our public sector equality duty as set out below:

Note: Under Section 149, the "General Duty" on public authorities is set out thus:

"A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct ... prohibited by or under this Act;

advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it."

- 32 This report has a really positive impact as it demonstrates that the councils is paying due regard by supporting and providing opportunities through this work to foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity for this cohort.

Financial implications

- 33 The council currently supports the Children in Care Council and resources developments such as Pack a Tack and the celebration event. The council is also encouraging and supporting the Children in Care Council to raise some funding themselves to contribute to the costs of activities such as overseas trips, and to bid for funds from other organisations.

Legal implications

- 34 The role of the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to ensure accountability and transparency of the council's decision making process and to review and scrutinise actions and decisions in relation to children and adult safeguarding; and social care functions in relation to children. The Committee has the power to make reports and recommendations in relation on the matters outlined in this report.

- 35 There are no legal implications.

Risk management

- 36 The main risks which exist are:

- The Children in Care Council fails to get good engagement from children in care and therefore fails to meet its objectives.
- The council and its partners fail to recognise the importance of the Children in Care Council and therefore impact negatively on the achievement of its objectives.

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Consultees

None

Appendices (To Follow)

Appendix 1: Voice of the Child action plan

Appendix 2: Peer Support Plan

Background papers

- None identified.

Children's Wellbeing Directorate Voice of Children & Young People Framework

Our mission

We know our children and young people, we know their journey and we know what they need, because we have listened to them and learnt lessons...

and we've acted on their views

Introduction

We believe that children and young people's voices must be heard to enable their development and to ensure services work effectively with them, their families and carers.

In Herefordshire the voice of the child means seeing, observing and listening, hearing, and then acting to ensure something is done. This means that the voice of the child is heard at all levels of our engagement with them, from individual casework through to reflecting on whole service areas, from responding to an individual suggestion to commissioning new services with the involvement of children and young people.

The action plan sets out how we engage and support the voice of children and young people. It is in keeping with the standards set out in Ofsted inspection framework for services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. A selection of statements describing outstanding or good practice are detailed in Appendix 1.

Key areas:

1. Establish and maintain arrangements for engaging the views of children and young people and equip the children's workforce with the skill and confidence to effectively communicate with children and young people.
2. Take the views of children and young people into account when making decisions about individual services and activities for them.
3. Continuous review of the Advocacy approach and service for children and young people who are looked after and those involved with safeguarding services
4. Use the views of children and young people to inform continuous improvement, actively involving children and young people in service design, delivery and governance.
5. Develop a programme to enable young people to inspect and report on the quality and accessibility of services.
6. Support young people to participate.

We ask for children and young people's views in;

- Individual case work
- In child protection conferences and as a part of looked after children reviews
- Through contracts and contract monitoring
- Through individual projects such as the development of No 4 Blackfriars Street
- Through the work of our looked after children & young people with the Participation Team, including the commissioning and shaping of services, and in the interviewing of staff
- Advocacy Services provided by NYAS
- Care leavers champion role
- Various social media forums including 16+ LAC Team Facebook page and No.4 Facebook page (Children in Care Council)

Areas currently being taken forward are contained in the following action plan

Action Plan

Reference	Objective	Action	Measurable target	Progress	By when	Lead
1	<p>Establish and maintain arrangements for engaging the views of children and young people</p> <p>Equip the children's workforce with the skill and confidence to effectively communicate with children and young people</p>	<p>The development of a toolkit for direct work with children and young people which will provide practical tools, worksheets, ensure all practitioners have electronic access development of a drive</p> <p>Develop a rolling programme of workshops- January 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating with children • Recording the voice of the child <p>Training (CiC to offer training).</p>	<p>Practitioners will build skills and confidence in direct work with children through access to practical tools and strategies. Children are heard and their views are taken into account when making plans for their care and protection</p>	<p>Electronic toolkit established - Communicating with Children Toolbox. Training the trainers (to train care leavers to deliver training to NQSWs) took place in August. Aim will be to deliver training to social work practitioners. To include placement teams.</p> <p>Gaynor is going to start the communication with children workshops but will visit the teams in the first instance. Training to start in January 2015.</p> <p>Care leaver and involved in the social work programme at Birmingham University has agreed to come and spend time with young care leavers in Herefordshire to provide training</p>	<p>Initial training completed now moving to roll out 2014.</p> <p>January 2015</p>	<p>Gaynor Evans/CICC</p>


Reference	Objective	Action	Measurable target	Progress	By when	Lead
2	Take the views of children and young people into account when making decisions about services and activities for them.	Develop set of booklets for social workers and for young people to explain services and expectation of children's social care. Develop and promote knowledge of rights and expectations of children and young people.	Booklets in place Evidence of impact to be developed Website and app development JK to update	<p>which will initially be rolled out to NQSW practitioners.</p> <p>Consultation docs sent to all LAC before reviews IRO speak to child in advance of all reviews. YPs offered opportunity to chair own LACRs. See some difference via audit programme. 16-18 olds agreed to chair reviews.</p> <p>The APs were drafting a suite of information for CPCs and the IRO Service were developing Consultation Documents. Consultation Documents for looked after children and young people have been completed and implemented. CP side needs further development Booklets have not been progressed by AP's. Need to link with development of the</p>	Completed	Jo King

Reference	Objective	Action	Measurable target	Progress	By when	Lead
				<p>website. Website design is currently with Ben Procter and Nick Winwood.</p> <p>Work also being completed between DP and QA around complaints.</p> <p>The IRO service looking to reinstate YP chairing their own LAC review. A couple of co-chairing have taken place.</p> <p>Monthly reporting from FWi.</p> <p>Missing to go onto QA framework to be reviewed periodically.</p> <p>Inspection completed by DB, not currently accessible to some children with disabilities.</p>	TBA	
2		<p>Training for all staff on MISPER protocols.</p> <p>Tracking to be imbedded in services and fed back into child's care plan and service development.</p>	JK to develop	<p>MISPER protocol has been circulated and is on the children's procedure manual and West Mercia protocol is being reviewed.</p> <p>The CSE strategic group has now met and under this will sit an operation al group. This group</p>	TBA	Jo King

Reference	Objective	Action	Measurable target	Progress	By when	Lead
2		Involve young people in the continuous development of No. 4, including the	No4 decorated by children and young people.	will be in a position to progress MISPER given the close links with CSE. This will involve development of the role with the police, joint training to staff and development of the single point of contact role within the police. Where there is a risk of going missing work needs to be completed with the IRO's so that risk management is considered as part of the child's care plan. New Missing form and episode in FWI currently in build. This, together with contact/referral, strategy meetings and s47 investigation processes in FWI, now links with new CSE Risk Management Assessment. This is currently in development.	Both Missing and CSE documents and processes scheduled for go live in FWI in October 2014.	Debbie Barnett

Reference	Objective	Action	Measurable target	Progress	By when	Lead
2		development of building ethos and policies. Develop No 4 in order to meet the needs of children with a disability, involving them in the developments. Embed the care leavers champion role into the local authority.	No4 has disabled access. Building rules agreed and displayed. Care leavers champion established Communication and engagement in place with care leavers and LAC Evaluation of role produced after first year	committee. Emails sent to arrange meeting with Children with Disability Team. Building rules are displayed at No4. Care Leaver champion job description and role has been agreed. Two care leaver champions are in post; with the hope to appoint a further two. Participation event was held on 22nd April. Fete took place, well attended by council staff. Young people present. Pledge signed. They made £300.00.	December 2014 Completed Completed Completed	AR/Debbie Barnett
3	Continuous review of the Advocacy approach and service for children who are looked after and safeguarding services	Advocacy services for LAC and CP to be promoted with young people.	Advocacy service contract monitoring measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people are aware of and exercise their rights and responsibilities • Children and young people make informed choices and identify that they have 	Advocacy service provider (NYAS) representing the voice of the child at CPCs, Frankie Green reviewed current situation confirming position – contract does include provision for support to under 10s	May 2014 Feb 2015	Frankie Green/Reg Marriot

Reference	Objective	Action	Measurable target	Progress	By when	Lead
4	Use the views of children and young people to inform continuous improvement, actively involving children and young people in service design, delivery and governance	System established to enable caseworkers to capture voice of child, what the issues were and how they were addressed. Results of this to be reviewed at every Voice of the Child meeting the 6 month review of themes to produce report for service leads, commissioning and needs assessments.	<p>control over their decision and choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people feel valued and respected <p>Advocacy service provide quarterly reports on how Children's voices heard and used at reviews</p>	<p>Ongoing contract monitoring meetings with the provider; focus is on measuring how this contract is working and how it is improving outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>Develop and sign off tool to capture voice of the child</p> <p>Introduce across the directorate</p> <p>Review feedback at each meeting.</p> <p>June Review highlighted need to change form and lack of response from safeguarding and family support (OFSTED?).</p> <p>Promote again through revised form and CMM.</p> <p>Review at next meeting</p>	<p>April 2014</p> <p>April 2014</p> <p>June 2014 onwards</p> <p>Sept 2014</p>	Chris Baird
4		Quarterly review of feedback on how services have acted on voice of child	Evidence of positive change	This piece of work has slipped – review planned to	First review August 2014	Hilary Jones

Reference	Objective	Action	Measurable target	Progress	By when	Lead
4		Commissioners to produce annual report on how the voice of the child has been gathered and used in commissioning activity. This will cover externally contracted services, individual placements with providers and commissioning exercises.	<p>Analysis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> placement search requests; placement monitoring visits; contract monitoring reports and site visits; involvement of cyp in commissioning and procurement exercises <p>in order to gauge the proportion that include the voice of the child, and where it is present, the key themes children raise, and whether needs are met</p>	<p>start 5th August</p> <p>Agency Placement search checklist asks what the 'young person's expectations of the placement are'. 18 placement monitoring visits have been conducted since 2012. c. 50% of cases the child is seen during the visit, and their feedback is recorded (example attached  Document5 [Compatibility Mode].). Contracted providers are regularly asked for service user feedback,</p>	September 2014	Philippa Granthier
		Review of the Pledge to Looked After Children	<p>Priorities identified for 2014.</p> <p>Art work produced by YP.</p> <p>Publicity materials to be developed and displayed.</p> <p>Web site to be developed.</p>	<p>CICC have aligned their priorities with The Pledge. Achieved. Pledge to be signed at CiCC fete on August 9th</p> <p>Publicity in development, including online access.</p> <p>Web site in</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Oct 2014</p>	Debbie Barnett

Reference	Objective	Action	Measurable target	Progress	By when	Lead
4		System established through the CYP Partnership to engage with range of groups of children and young people.	Evidence of system working to enable services to be quality assured and develop Evidence that CYP Partnership initiatives involve children and young people in design and evaluation CYP Partnership Plan developed with involvement of cyp.	Proposal to CYP Partnership April 2014 and approved Evidence will be provided through successful provider once confirmed	Completed Feb 2015 April 2015	Chris Baird Philippa Granthier Philippa Granthier
4		New Pathway Plans and Review of Pathway Plan documents have been developed in conjunction with young people and are designed to be completed by the young person themselves.		16+ Needs Assessment, Pathway Plan and Review of Pathway Plan currently being revised by 16+ Team. Awaiting sign off in order to go live in FWI		Marcia Gilbert
5	Develop a programme to enable young people to inspect and report on the quality and accessibility of services.	Develop as part of job description for participation officer Establish budget to facilitate this	Young People are actively involved in assessing the quality of service provided to them.	Participation worker now in post – youth inspectors programme in team plan.	TBA	Hilary Jones
6	Support young people to	Training and preparation of young people's interview	Young people are actively involved in the	Young People's Interview Panel in	Completed	Debbie Barnett

Reference	Objective	Action	Measurable target	Progress	By when	Lead
	participate in a variety of activities that will increase confidence and self esteem.	panels	recruitment of staff.	place. Policy has been approved. Training to train to take place on the 13 th /14 th and 15 th August to ensure our young people's panel is embedded in the Authority. Young people have been involved in a range of interviews recently	Completed Ongoing	
6		Ensure an annual event with senior leaders and members, and young people, takes place, rewarding them for their achievements (akin to Lambeth's "extra mile" awards).	Young people's achievements are recognised and rewarded. Celebration event takes place.	CICC priority. Believe 2 Achieve to take place this Autumn.	October 2014	Debbie Barnett
6		Operate two social groups per week	Aim to facilitate peer support and informal education across the age range	11-18 group runs fortnightly. 7-11 group runs fortnightly 7-11 group has been running for 6 weeks 18+ group – young person has applied for funding. Care Leaver Champions to take the lead on this.	From January 14 From June 14 From June 14	Debbie Barnett

Children and young people are listened to, practice is focused on their needs and experiences and influenced by their wishes and feelings or, where they cannot represent their view themselves, those advocated on their behalf.

Practice is informed by feedback from children and their families about the effectiveness of the help, care or support they receive from the time it is first needed until it ends.

Children, young people and families have timely access to, and use the services of, an advocate where appropriate.

Children and young people are helped to understand their rights and the responsibilities that accompany those rights and legal entitlements. They understand how to complain and have access to an advocate and independent visitor.

Children and young people are represented by a Children in Care Council or similar body which is regularly consulted on how to improve the support they receive.

The views and experiences of children, young people and their families are at the centre of service design and influence development and strategic thinking.

The local authority knows itself well, is a learning organisation and can demonstrate evidence of practice that is informed, modified and sustainably improved by feedback, research and intelligence about the quality of services and the experiences of children, young people and families who use them. This may, for example, include feedback from the children in care council, change that arises from complaints that children and families make about their experiences or from successful or disrupted placements or adoption breakdown

Statutory reference

1. **Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being June 2012**

This is statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education under Section 507B of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It relates to local authorities' duty to secure services and activities for young people aged 13 to 19, and those with learning difficulties to age 24, to improve their well-being, as defined in Subsection 13.



Peer Support Plan

By Sophie Barnett and Jake Eggerton



"We will provide advice and support to help make healthy decisions about their lives" – Sophie Barnett

"To help more young people realize their potential" – Jake Eggerton

Peer Support Service:

What the young people can expect from us:

- Full confidentiality and openness to disclosure.
- Advice and support on available services and gaining access to services throughout Herefordshire.
"Make it personal – so ask them what they want. Always make it clear it's to benefit them and they can get what they need."
- Work with us to gain support to build working relationships with workers (advocacy, general support and advice).
"To give young people support when they need one most....develop a more positive attitude...to understand more about kind behaviour and how to act accordingly"
- Access to workshops (ran by Peer Support Service) to learn and gain new skills such as budgeting, confidence building, cooking, sports and fun clubs.
"To help young people achieve something that is special to them."
- Drop in sessions for those who have not been referred.
"To the ones who seem unconfident...show them..."
- Follow up sessions after Pathway Plan meetings.
"When a care leaver is meeting with 16+ about personal issues, talk to them after (make it personal)."

What we expect from the young people:

- Sign up to a contract

What we expect from Hereford Local Authority:

- Consistent support and advice on how to help young people.
- Regular supervision.
- Help us build and promote our service – so get the word out; USE US!
"Getting others more aware of children in care and the care system."
- Use us to help provide young people with a full and better service – one they deserve.
- Help us to fundraise.

What we need to do our job properly:

- Training:
Safeguarding
Dealing with disclosure
Data protection

Noticing exploitation
Mental health awareness
Recording information
Boundaries
Recognise and deal with bullying
Risk and resilience training

- Advertisement
- Referral form
- Contract mobile phones
- Email to be able to accept referrals
- Facebook page so that young people can self-refer

“Me and Jake have a facebook page (but we need to have stuff to put on it and promote – so do in a few months).”

What qualities do you need to become a Peer Support Worker:

- Be on time
- Be friendly and approachable
- Want to make a difference to a young person’s life
- An awareness of the importance of confidentiality
- Be open and honest
- Be able to commit to agreed sessions with young people (so have time for them)
- Be able to work with professionals
- Be able go to supervision with participation worker
- Be willing to go on the required training

Making our service amazing:

- We are going to look at other Local Authorities to see best practice
- We are looking at the following existing schemes and good practice to inform our Service and Policies:

