

Summary Sheet

Council Report: Corporate Parenting Meeting 19th January 2016

Title: Rotherham Looked After Children's Council Update Report and LAC Summit Feedback

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?
No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report:
Linda Harper Interim Strategic Director

Report Author:
Lisa Du-Valle

Ward(s) Affected:
All Wards are affected

Executive Summary:

This is a report prepared on a quarterly basis to provide Corporate Parenting Panel with information and regular updates around what Rotherham Looked After Children's Council are doing. This report gives a brief summary of the work undertaken by the LAC Council in terms of helping shape services, activities and events they have jointly planned and delivered. It also provides information regarding the inaugural LAC Summit.

Recommendations

- That Corporate Parenting Panel note the contents of the report
- That Corporate Parenting Panel note the key role that the Looked After Children's Council play in providing a voice to help shape Services for children and young people in Rotherham
- That the LAC Summit becomes an annual event
- That Corporate Parenting Panel note the recommendations of the report entitled Development of participation and engagement with Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix A – LAC Summit Report
- Appendix B – LAC Summit Guests

- Appendix C – LAC and leaving care promises 2015: As your Corporate Parent we promise
- Appendix D – Feedback from LAC Summit

Background Papers

No

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

ROTHERHAM LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S COUNCIL UPDATE REPORT

1 Recommendations

- 1.1** That Corporate Parenting Panel note the contents of the report
- 1.2** That Corporate Parenting Panel note the key role that the Looked After Children's Council play in providing a voice to help shape Services for children and young people in Rotherham
- 1.3** That the LAC Summit becomes an annual event
- 1.4** That Corporate Parenting Panel note the recommendations of the report entitled Development of participation and engagement with Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

Background

- 2.1** The Early Help Service in Rotherham operates a Looked After Children's Council (LACC) for children and young people aged 11 to 18 years. The LACC is essentially a peer support group for young people living in care and care leavers.
- 2.2** The young people who are involved with LACC are enthusiastic and committed to Voice & Influence by having their say about things that matter to them they help design and shape the services that young people receive in Rotherham. This report highlights the body of work carried out by the LACC over a six month period up until October 2015.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1** Looked After and Leaving Care young people continue to be amongst our most vulnerable young people. The LAC Council is a unique group in Rotherham that is committed to supporting looked after & leaving care young people, their weekly meetings together at the LACC acts not only as a Voice & Influence group but importantly as a peer support group where they can come together talk about their experiences with each other in a safe place, seek comfort, acceptance and friendships in a young person friendly environment.
- 3.2** The LACC has a budget of £3000 and this financial investment is utilised to provide young person friendly activities and opportunities that support their continued engagement in the LAC Council and continuation of their Voice & Influence work.
- 3.3** The LAC Council is open to all Looked After Young People aged 11 to 18 years and continues to actively recruit new members. Currently there are 15 active members at the LACC the optimum number based on the current delivery model is 20 young people and there is therefore a desire

to recruit another 5 members in the near future. The LAC as it currently operates is limited to 20 members due to current staffing ratios, venue and budget considerations.

- 3.4** The LAC Summit was held for key people to hear directly from Rotherham's Looked After Council about their experiences, the work they do and most importantly the promises we as Corporate parents have made our looked after children and young people leaving care in Rotherham.
- 3.5** The summit participants identified how they can keep these promises both as individuals and in how the council and its partners plan and run services.

4 Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1** No Applicable

5 Consultation

- 5.1** The LAC Council has consulted widely with looked after and leaving care young people both in and outside of the authority to have a Voice on issues that are relevant to them. Also, LACC members have consulted with non-looked after young people whilst working on joint projects shared with the Youth Voice Groups including at Rotherham Show, and Voice & Influence Youth Conference, brief details are contained within the report.

6 Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1** Not Applicable

7 Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1** None identified

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1** Not Applicable

9 Human Resources Implications

- 9.1** Not Applicable

10 Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1** To improve outcomes for Looked After Children we need to give them opportunities to:-
 - (a) To come together in an empowering supportive environment where they can speak freely about their experiences of living in care, build confidence and friendships

- (b) To ensure they have genuine opportunities to have their voices heard within Social Care and the wider children's development agenda, by listening and acting upon their suggestions, we move towards co-produced services that genuinely meet the needs of our most vulnerable young people.

11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1** Good quality Voice & Influence opportunities for looked after and leaving care young people to have their say around issues that matter to them has positive outcomes for children and young people and in turn their local authority. This is particularly in accordance with UN Rights of the Child (Article 12)

12 Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1** None

13 Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1** A reduction in funding to deliver the LAC Council would impact upon the nature of the delivery. Planning will need to be in place to identify an agreed budget to mitigate against the risk.

14 Accountable Officer(s): Michelle Whiting

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- Paul Jackson

Director of Legal Services:- Neil Concannon

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):-

Michelle Whiting

Interim Head of Looked After and Leaving Care Services

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