

## Rotherham Looked After Children's Council (LACC) – Corporate Parenting Panel - Update Report July to September 2017

### Summary

Over this period our LAC Council volunteers have been busy as ever, actively and successfully meeting the core 3 aims of their Voice & Influence Project. Young people have engaged in meaningful consultations and co-production work that is helping to shape the services looked after and leaving care young people use. Young people have engaged in a Focus Group to review the LAC & LC Corporate Promises, and actively engaged in consultations at the Different but Equal Event. The LACC also engaged in a full Summer of Activities Programme that they had planned themselves also young people participated in the Rotherham Show and supported the pride of Rotherham Awards. In addition, the LAC Council have started preparations for their 'this is NOT a Suitcase' Campaign.

The numerous experiences and opportunities offered to young people at the LAC Council are specifically designed to increase social capital, self-awareness and self-esteem, to foster resilience and support better outcomes for our vulnerable young people. Here are some of the things we would like to share with you:-

### LAC Council – Shaping Services in Rotherham & beyond

**LAC & Leaving Care Corporate Promises Review** - It was two years ago in Sept 2015 that the LAC Council launched the Looked After Children & Leaving Care Corporate Promises at their Summit in New York Stadium. Therefore, as planned the young people reviewed their original 9 promises in Sept 2017 to see if they were still relevant and meaningful to young people today and make appropriate changes where necessary. The LAC Council engaged in discussions about each promise which generated lots of questions amongst the group. Interestingly, despite much debate the young people voted overwhelmingly to keep the existing promises and agreed they are still meaningful and relevant and continue to be happy with the language used. The LAC Council wish for their Corporate Parents to renew their dedication to the LAC & LC promises again in the near future to ensure commitment continues. In addition, the LAC Council members intend to review the promises again in two years.

### Different But Equal Event - July @ Carlton Park Hotel.

LAC Council members had been involved in the consultation to design the event to which over 100 young people participated from across Rotherham. During the day LACC members took the opportunity to promote the LAC Council and engaged in African Drumming, Sports, and Arts and Crafts workshops and engaged in a number of Voice & Influence activities to give their voices on a range of topics.



## LAC Council - Summer Activities Programme



**Chill & Chat Cooking Session** – During August young people chose to hold a special session to prepare and share a Pakistani meal together cooked during the session by our very own Kira who worked incredibly hard cooking the meal from scratch to feed 10 of her LACC friends. Young people supported the preparations making fruit skewers for desert. The meal was a great

success with empty plates all around, it was also a lovely bonding experience and sharing of Kiran's culture.

**Town Hall Visit** – Our young people spent an amazing morning at the Town Hall as the guests of the Mayor Eve Keenan and her Consort Pat Keenan. The LAC Council were given a tour of the Town Hall and a presentation about the history of the Hall and the Mayors Chain. Young people asked lots of questions about the Mayors duties and some potential future Mayors may be amongst us. The day was finished off with some lovely cream cakes and drinks.



**Park Gate & Nandos** – As part of our continuing promotion for our young people to engage in safe new experiences the group chose to travel to park gate on the bus from the Rotherham Interchange and navigate their way to Nando's to enjoy a chicken meal together.

**Picnic in the Park:** In August the LAC Council joined forces with the Young Inspectors and spent the day together having a picnic at the LACC base Chatham Villas followed by playing games together in Clifton Park, young people enjoyed flying kites, frisbee, badminton and ball games and engaged in a made up game involving strategically placed hoola hoops, a frisbee and mini ball. It was great fun!

## Community Participation

**Rotherham Show 2017** – In September the LAC Council together with other young people from Rotherham Youth Voice Groups actively engaged in the Rotherham Show. Setting up our stalls using a 'Festival' theme to attract children and young people to raise



awareness about the LAC Council and new Lac Club alongside participating in the Arts & Crafts, Chill-Out area, mini Gig Gazebo and selfie-booth. We were also joined by Sharon Kemp, who joined us in festival flower making.



## LACC Visitor

The LAC Council enjoyed a visit from our Strategic Director Ian Thomas this month at our new base 'the Journey' at Chatham Villas. This informal meeting was very low key with young people having fun and teasing Ian over football. Good humoured teasing aside young people raised issues important to them regarding their care experiences including, having too few foster carers, too many placement moves and changing social workers too frequently. Ian talked about the improvements taking place in Social Care which should start to make an impact on the ground so that young people could see the differences in the near future.



## Pride of Rotherham Awards Preparation

The LAC Council have been busy over the past few months supporting decisions for the Pride of Rotherham Awards which will be held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October at New York Stadium. Young people have chosen the Trophy design to be awarded to each nominated young person receiving an award and also have designed the certificates. LAC Council members have also decided to create a Graffiti Wall for the event to capture feedback from young people participating.



## This is NOT a Suitcase Campaign



It has come to the LAC Council's attention that some Looked After and Leaving Care young people in Rotherham have been moved from home to home using black bin liners to carry their belongings instead of a suitcase. Members of the LAC Council have experienced this practice themselves and feel this is simply unacceptable as it is humiliating and degrading and can make them feel worthless. The LAC Council are re-launching '**this is NOT a suitcase**' campaign in Rotherham and want to ask the Corporate Parenting Panel if they will back our campaign to ban the use of bin liners to carry Looked After and Leaving Care young people's belongings. Ian Walker Head of Service (children in care) is fully behind the campaign. The LACC would like to permanently reinstate the practice of using suitcases to move young people and have this placed into RMBC CYPS Policy to secure the practice into the future.

**LAC Council Guests** - Young people from the LAC Council would like to thank all of our guests, friends and supporters who have visited the LAC Council or invited us to visit them over the past few months. These are:-

Ian Walker – Head of Children in Care  
Sharon Kemp – Chief Executive RMBC  
Eve Rose Keenan – Mayor  
Ian Thomas – Strategic Director

**Thank You All ☺**

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