Summary:
The Looked After Children’s Council (LACC) are currently meeting for Voice & Influence training and development sessions weekly at the MyPlace Building Rotherham. In addition, the LACC hold regular meetings on weekends and evenings to prepare presentations, and complete high profile project work. This quarter up to 15 Looked After and Leaving Care young people have attended meetings at any one time.

Over the past five months the LACC have engaged in a rich variety of Voice & Influence Sessions working on team building skills, self awareness and self-esteem. Young people have engaged in peer consultation with 62 looked after and leaving care young people, analysed this feedback and made recommendations from their findings to improve the services for Rotherham young people. The group have delivered a presentation of their peer consultation findings to Jane Parfrement and Cllr Chris Beaumont. Engaged in the Voice & Influence Youth Voice Vehicle Residential alongside UK Youth Parliament and Rotherham Youth Cabinet at Habershon House Filey, Represented Rotherham in the Children in Care Council National Conference in Nottingham. Have actively participated in Voice & Influence training days, Chill & Chat Sessions, and Healthy Eating cookery sessions. Have also discussed their experiences of being in care with OFSTED inspectors engaged in the Remembrance Sunday Parade, church service and wreath laying ceremony at the Clifton Park Cenotaph.

LAC Council Annual Peer Consultation Feedback – Members of the Rotherham LAC Council conducted their annual LAC peer consultation feedback project whereby they asked 62 looked after and leaving care young people what they thought of the service they have been provided with over the past year. LACC members conducted face to face consultations and visited local Residential Accommodation and Semi-Independent Units of Hollowgate and Nelson Street. Social Care managers were also asked to support this process and given the LACC ‘Have Your Say’ form to distribute around young people they work with to encourage their voluntary engagement. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts this had limited success, we will be reviewing this part of the process for next year. The young people’s feedback was collated and analysed by the LAC Council on 23rd July during an overnight residential to Filey. Through careful consideration and discussions the LACC agreed several recommendations which they believe will improve the Looked After and Leaving Care Service for themselves and other Rotherham young people. These recommendations were written into a report and delivered to Joyce Thacker, Cllr Paul Lakin and Clair Pyper beginning August.

Youth Voice Vehicle Overnight Residential– The LAC Council alongside the UK Youth Parliament and Youth Cabinet went together on an overnight residential to Habershon House on 23rd & 24th July. Some of the residential was given over to having fun together including team building activities such as sand sculpting, and engaging in the Tropical Beach Party Theme. The
LACC took their opportunity on the second day to collate and analyse the feedback from looked after and leaving care young people and start to form the basis of their recommendations to improve their service.

**Summer Holidays chill & Chat Activities July & August**

Young people had worked together to create a complete summer activity chill & Chat activity schedule to cover the 6 weeks summer holiday. The aim of these sessions was to give themselves opportunities for continuing support, to keep in touch with each other, and spend positive time together engaging in fun activities. These fun activities included multiple crafts, nail art, bun decorating, movie day, picnic in the park, murder mystery day, and traditional children’s party complete with pass the parcel and musical chairs.

**Healthy Eating on a budget - Life Skills Sessions**

The LAC Council put in a bid to Easy P’s funding and were fortunate enough to purchase 5 Healthy Eating Life Skills Sessions whereby young people are encouraged to work together to create healthy eating on a budget menus and work in kitchens to cook their own creations. The group have engaged in 2 of these sessions so far and have enjoyed being creative and successfully cooking an edible healthy meal that is within reach on a limited budget.

**CSE OFSTED Inspection (September)**

Rotherham LAC Council were visited by two OFSTED inspectors to discuss amongst other things avenues and experiences of support, feelings and perceptions about the recent findings in the Alexis Jay report and media coverage, thoughts about recent changes in RMBC corporate parents. Young people were briefed by myself prior to the visit and asked whether they wanted to volunteer to participate or opt out. Four LACC members chose not to participate and left the room. The inspectors were warm and friendly and created a rapport with the group putting them at ease to speak their minds without fear. The meeting was at times humorous and at times very emotional for those young people talking about their own experiences, so much so that one LACC member had to leave the room part way through as she became so upset.

**Peer Consultation Feedback Presentation 22nd Oct**

The LAC Council invited Cllr Paul Lakin, Jane Parfrement and Cllr Chris Beaumont to a LACC meeting and delivered the Peer Consultation Feedback Report Presentation with recommendations to improve the Looked After and Leaving Care Service for Rotherham young people. This was the first meeting the group had with Jane after their interviewing her earlier this year. LAC Council findings were welcomed and Jane Parfrement gave her verbal response to all recommendations made. In addition it was agreed that these suggestions should contribute to the LAC Pledge when it is updated. The LACC now are waiting written confirmation of Jane Parfrement’s verbal response from the meeting.

**Children in Care Council (CiCC) Conference in Nottingham (October)**

Members from the Rotherham LAC Council visited Nottingham to take part in the CiCC national conference focussing on Health and Wellbeing of Looked After and Leaving Care young people. The annual Conference draws together LAC Councils from across England to meet together, discuss and explore ideas and learn from each other.

**Youth Voice Vehicle Training Day (October)** – Young people from the Looked After Children’s Council alongside the UK Youth Parliament and Youth Cabinet worked together as part of the three strands of youth democracy in Rotherham which make up the Youth Voice Vehicle.
The training day involved planning youth democracy projects over the following year and engaging in fun team building exercises. The group welcomed Anne Berridge and Ruth Fletcher-Brown who delivered a Positive Mental Health Workshop to raise awareness about mental health and explore strategies for developing and maintaining positive mental health.

**Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service – 9th November**
The LAC Council once again received an invitation from the Mayor’s Parlour to join the Mayor at the Remembrance Sunday Service in Rotherham Minster. The LAC Council nominated 4 young people to represent looked after and leaving care young people in Rotherham to participate in the parade, service at the Minster and Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Cenotaph in Clifton Park. The LACC members wrote a special message and lay their poppy wreath of remembrance on behalf of all looked after and leaving care young people. Again this was an emotional morning for most of the young people who took part.

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