

## **Engagement session with CICC and CL forum Action Plan**

### **Executive Summary:**

The Council4Kids, the “Children in Care Council” (CICC) and The Care Leavers forum, are the forums where Walsall’s children and young people in our care and care leavers are able to shape and influence the parenting and support that they receive.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 the Corporate Parenting Board met with 14 young people in our care and care leavers and they set out areas for development that they would like to see progressed. It was agreed at this meeting that an action plan would be developed to address the areas that the young people felt were important to improve the lived experience of children and young people in our care and those who are moving into independence.

### **Reason for bringing to the Corporate Parenting Board:**

To provide the Corporate Parenting Board with an overview of the proposed action plan developed following their meeting with the children in care council and care leavers forum.

### **Recommendations:**

That the board notes the action plan and requests an update at an appropriate juncture so they can ensure progression of the proposed activity.

A child friendly version will be shared with all children and young people in our care and care leavers.

### **Background papers:**

Previous Young People Engagement reports.

### **Corporate Parenting Pledges**

The Walsall Promise for all Children in Care and Care Leavers

### **Resource and legal considerations:**

Walsall is committed to ensuring that children and young people are involved in decision making and processes that directly affect their lives through.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced seven Corporate Parenting Principles and 2 of the principles focus on the involvement and participation of children and young people:

- Encourage children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- Take account of a child or young person's views, wishes and feelings

Article 12 United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child says that children and young people have the human right to have opinions and for these opinions to be heard and taken seriously and taken seriously.

#### **Council Corporate Plan Priorities:**

- Children have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well.
- People have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities.

#### **Citizen impact:**

The services and the improvements play a key role in the quality of life and outcomes for the children, young people and families of Walsall. The Council and its partners as Corporate Parents make critical contributions to improve outcomes.

#### **Environmental impact:**

None.

#### **Performance management:**

The Children's Champion works with children in care and our care experienced young people to ensure that our CICC is a rich and engaging forum. Regular reports are provided to the Director of Children's Services and the Corporate Parenting Board.

#### **Reducing inequalities:**

The children in care council seeks to secure improvements in the equality of services, which, when achieved will have a positive impact on our most vulnerable children, young people and their families.

#### **Consultation:**

The CICC is one of the key forums through which services for children in care and care leavers seek to consult on service delivery and where children and young people are able to shape and influence the parenting they receive at every level.

#### **Contact Officer:**

Full Name – Jenny Cockcroft, Head of Service for Practice Quality and Improvement

Email: [jenny.cockcroft@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:jenny.cockcroft@walsall.gov.uk)

### Action plan following Children in Care council meeting with Corporate Parenting Board – March 2023

Aim	Actions	Lead	By when	Update
Help us to understand what our carers can agree to and what they can't and why.	Sleepover policy and supporting promotional material to be developed in partnership with CICC.	Jo Manning (Group Manager Corporate Parenting and TLC) CICC/David Hughes	June 2023	
	Work with CICC to develop a child friendly form which could be completed by child's social worker so they know who has what responsibility in terms of delegated authority.	Jo Manning or delegated CP manager CICC/David Hughes	June 2023	
	In first instance review with fostering service current offer regarding pets for children living with our own foster carer and consider if policy and promotion required to support the implementation of this.	Mark Burrows (Group Manager Fostering) CICC/David Hughes	June 2023	
Make sure we have a fair offer of support	The ask is a review of birthday, Christmas and pocket money given cost of living increase and whether they can be increased – in first instance seek to understand regional offer from other LAs.	Mark Burrows/ David Hughes via Participation Network	May 2023	
	As part of the regional care leaver offer, review our care leaver offer in line with regional LAs and identify any areas where we may want to improve our offer. Bring report to CPB outlining our offer comparable with the wider regional offer.	Jenny Cockcroft/Jo Manning	Date to be confirmed	
	Meet with leisure services to consider extending offer of free access to plus one for care leavers	Jenny Cockcroft	May 2023	

	<p>Corporate Parenting Board may wish to consider hearing reports annually from Leisure and Housing/WHG around how they meet their corporate parenting responsibilities – help promote sense of accountability.</p> <p>Review the promotion of the care leaver offer to our young people who have left or will be leaving our care so they can understand their entitlement</p> <p>Develop leaflet for care leavers about how they can access their files, their rights in relation to this, the support available to them.</p> <p>Newsletter for care leavers and for children in care to be sent out quarterly which will provide opportunity to promote young people's understanding of the offer of support. Newsletter to be sent out for both cohorts in May 2023 for Expert by Experience month.</p> <p>Building on the success of the care leavers football events – TLC to develop offer regarding other positive activities for young people to share together – suggestions included walking group and cookery class/club.</p> <p>Continued development of the care leavers forum in partnership with TLC to ensure a wide range of young people are involved in</p>	<p>Cllr Elson</p> <p>Andy Caville (Team Manager TLC) Comms team CL forum/David Hughes</p> <p>Andy Caville CL forum/David Hughes Print and Design</p> <p>David Hughes Print and Design Andy Caville</p> <p>Andy Caville/David Hughes</p> <p>Andy Caville David Hughes/CL forum</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>June 2023</p> <p>By Aug 2023</p>	
--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------	--

	<p>the co-production of service including the care leaver offer.</p> <p>Develop a range of videos with young people that talk about the different experiences they have in care –such as PEPs, child in care reviews, advocacy etc.</p>	David Hughes/CICC/CL forum		
<p>Help us to feel more like we fit in, in school.</p> <p>Help us to have more opportunities like work experience and apprenticeships and understand what our options are.</p>	<p>Survey to be developed in partnership with virtual school for all school aged children in care to understand their experience of education. Particularly thinking about experiences of stigma and how we can work with schools/SW to reduce this.</p> <p>Virtual school to develop offer of work experience within council via Endless Possibilities or own bespoke offer.</p>	<p>Lorraine Thompson Participation</p> <p>Lorraine Thompson</p>	<p>April 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p>	
<p>Help us to have better lasting relationships with our family whilst in care.</p>	<p>IRO's to undertake a review of the current family time arrangements for all children subject to a care order.</p> <p>Implement keeping in touch tool as expectation for any child with plan of adoption prior to final review. Consider adapted model for children subject to proceedings with proposed plan of long term fostering or SGO.</p> <p>Pathway regarding how advocacy is promoted to be developed to help support children to be able to speak up if they are not happy about the family time they have</p>	<p>SRS</p> <p>Jade Read</p> <p>Jenny Cockcroft</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>June 2023</p> <p>May 2023</p>	

	by improving the promotion of advocacy service.			
Talk to us in a way that doesn't make us feel different and is respectful	Review the fostering annual review form to consider how this can better reflect commitment to language that cares.  Implementation of language that cares action plan	Charmain Lewis CICC/David Hughes  Jenny Cockcroft	May 2023  Ongoing	