

2 March 2015

Agenda Item: 6

REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND CULTURAL SERVICES

PROVISION, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS OF THE CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL AND PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE LOOKED AFTER 2014/15

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an overview of the work of the Young People Looked After (YPLA) Youth Work team, situated within the Youth Service. The YPLA team is responsible for:
 - the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and ensuring that young people looked after are represented at all levels in the Nottinghamshire system of Youth Participation
 - encouraging and enabling young people, who are looked after, adopted or living in residential care to engage in positive activities provided by the YPLA Youth Work team and to independently access mainstream provision
 - engaging with at least 250 unique individuals (children and young people looked after) in more than 1,200 sessions of activity with youth work staff
 - working in partnership with Children's Social Care and the Group Manager for the Access to Resources section.

Information and Advice

2. As part of a range of budget savings across the Council it was agreed that the Service would continue to offer strong specialist youth work services, including participation work for children and young people and youth work services for Looked After Children.
3. The YPLA team is responsible for the planning and delivery of a range of positive activities outside of the school day for looked after and adopted young people. This is to enable young people to come together to participate and have fun in events throughout the year as well as to have a voice about their life in care through the work of the CiCC. The CiCC structure includes a number of sub-groups, which provide a mechanism for a range of groups of Looked After Young People to be involved in the Nottinghamshire system of Youth Participation. Representatives from each sub group then meet as the formal CiCC board (also known as No Labels). The opportunities on offer for young people to engage are designed to promote and support them to build their confidence and self esteem.

4. Young People Looked After are signposted to universal services across the County, as well as encouraged to participate in group work activities. This assists young people to develop positive relationships with other young people and youth workers to help broaden their horizons, learning new skills and experience. Young People Looked After have participated in a wide range of activities throughout 2014, with more events planned for the remaining financial year.
5. Activities are designed to help support a holistic assessment of children and young people's needs and to help close the gap in educational attainment through joining in activities outside of the school environment. The positive activities young people participate in provide a platform for young people to share their views about life in care, which helps to promote placement stability, as young people are actively engaged. A number of these young people will go on to be members of the sub-groups of the CiCC and attend No Labels meetings where sub-group representatives come together with a range of senior officers and elected Members to design and shape services available to them.
6. The CiCC listens to what children and young people are saying and these views are taken forward and acted upon. There is also an expectation that the membership of the CiCC will be encouraged to have an active role in the Young People Board. The strategic development of the CiCC has direct links to the Looked After Strategy and is set within a vision for Children, Families and Cultural Services.
7. The work of the CiCC has direct links to the PLEDGE which is a set of promises (set within the Looked After Strategy) that Nottinghamshire County Council has made to Young People Looked After and has strategic commitment from senior management and the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee. The PLEDGE and the current Looked After Strategy is in the process of being reviewed with involvement of the CiCC sub-groups and No Labels.
8. The CiCC sub-groups and No Labels have all met five times since April 2014 with further meetings planned in March 2015. To date young people have been actively involved in a number of events or participated in sharing their views and making decisions on a variety of strategic and business agenda items such as:
 - consultation with young people on the Care Leavers leaflet
 - consultation with young people on the Health Leaflet
 - working together on planning and delivering at the Achievement Event in July 2014
 - participation of young people in the Junior and Fostering sub groups to develop and design the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) leaflet for children and young people
 - Care Leavers sub-group has led on the due diligence project which included marking tenders replies and undertaking unannounced inspections of private residential providers, as a part of the block purchase of residential placements more north of the County
 - young people participating in the training of foster carers attending foundation training
 - young people have taken part in interviewing group managers in Children's Social Care in 2015
 - consultation has taken place with young people during September 2014 on the Independent Reviewing Officer's review feedback questionnaire. The questionnaire

was signed off at No Labels in September 2014. A version of the questionnaire is due to be consulted on with children for the age group 3 to 7 years (PLAY) in February 2015

- consultation has taken place with the Junior, Senior and Care Leavers on the missing children's letter and questionnaire in September 2014. The piece of work was signed off by No Labels in September 2014
- consultation with young people on the revised LAC Strategy has started and is due to be completed by the end of February 2015.

9. A recent review and development has taken place of the process in how young people are invited to participate in shaping the services available to them. This is to assist young people in:
 - taking ownership of the agenda and their involvement in the design and delivery of services
 - identifying how requests link to the PLEDGE
 - establishing the information required and the time needed to enable young people to actively participate
 - organising and keeping track of individual projects they are involved in.
10. Services requesting young people's participation will need to complete and send an expression of interest form (devised by young people) six weeks prior to the published date for the sub-group meeting(s).
11. A committee, consisting of the Chair of No Labels, Vice Chair of No Labels, Members of the YPLA Youth Work team and a representative from the Children's Social Care management team will look at all the expression of interest forms and organise when and if it will be possible to participate in the project, based on aims, links to the PLEDGE, and time scales. This process will be in effect from April 2015.

Other Options Considered:

12. As this is a report for noting, it is not necessary to consider other options

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

13. The report is for noting only.

Statutory and Policy Implications

14. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the overview of the work of the Young People Looked After team be noted.

Derek Higon
Temporary Deputy Director, Children, Families and Cultural Services

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Pom Bhogal
Senior Locality Manager, Youth Service:
Youth, Families and Culture Division
T: 0115 993277
E: pom.bhogal@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

15. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (SS 06/02/15)

16. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents:

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

The PLEDGE Booklet – Nottinghamshire County Council's promise to children and young people Looked After
Nottinghamshire County Council Looked After Strategy
Annual Budget 2014/15 – report to Full Council on 27 February 2014

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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