

23rd April 2018

Agenda Item: 9

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL WORK

PROVISION, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS OF THE CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL AND PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE LOOKED AFTER 2017/18

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) structure which ensures 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 team and to independently access mainstream provision
 - engaging with at least 250 unique individuals (children and young people looked after) in more than 1200 sessions of activity with youth work staff
 - working in partnership with Children's Social Care.

Information

2. 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 as well as to develop new experiences.

3. 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 experiences. Young people looked after have participated in a wide range of activities throughout 2017/18, which is detailed in **paragraph 7**.
4. 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.
5. 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 Nottinghamshire's Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2018-2021, and the vision of the Service Director for Youth, Families and Social Work.
6. The work of the CiCC has direct links to the PLEDGE which is a set of promises (set within the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy) that Nottinghamshire County Council has made to young people looked after and has strategic commitment from senior management and the Committee.
7. The CiCC sub-groups and No Labels have all met six times since April 2017. 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 Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2018-2021 review, and influencing the key priorities and action plan
 - a project commissioned by the Leaving Care team to seek views of recent care leavers. Any learning which has been identified will be shared with senior managers so changes can be implemented to improve services for care leavers.
 - a young people's group was created for Future in Mind which will be at the heart of the transformation plan. The aim is for the group to inform change in mental health services across Nottinghamshire and to ensure young people's voices are heard throughout decision making processes
 - young people looked after were involved with the assessment process for potential students to undertake the step up to social work programme

- consultation with young people on the current leaving care health pack and leaflet and using the consultation with young people to make improvements. This is given to young people at their last health assessment to ensure they have their own health information held by the service. This includes birth, early childhood development and significant health event information
 - working with the Coordinator of the Virtual School on planning and delivering the Achievement Event in July 2017 (annually)
 - young people were consulted by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) which is looking at developing self-referral for children, young people, parents and carers to access support and appropriate signposting from CAMHS
 - young people participating in the training of foster carers attending foundation training
 - young people were given training by Salus Training to ensure that they have the information to access mental health services and be given the tools and strategies to manage their own emotional health
 - young people have been asked to create a short film to be presented at an information evening which is attended by people who are interested in becoming foster carers (ongoing)
 - young people have been consulted on developing a child/young person friendly annual report with the focus on services provided by Independent Reviewing Officers to Looked after children
 - young people have had the opportunity to identify two themes from the Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2018-2021, which they will focus on from April 2018. By 2021 young people will have focused on all six themes as part of their ongoing work through the CiCC.
8. Expression of Interest forms (EOI) were introduced by young people following a review of the process in relation to how young people are invited to participate in shaping the services available to them. The CiCC has received 29 Expressions of Interest since April 2017, allowing young people to:
- take ownership of the agenda and their involvement in the design and delivery of services
 - identify how requests link to the PLEDGE
 - establish the information required and the time needed to enable young people to actively participate
 - keep track of individual projects they are involved in.

Other Options Considered

9. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. The report seeks approval to further update the Committee on this work in 12 months.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

12. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That Committee agrees to receive a further update report on the work of the Young People Looked After Youth Work team in 12 months and that this be included in the work programme.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 27/03/18)

13. The Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the contents of the report.

Financial Comments (LCD 27/03/18)

14. 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.

Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2018-2021

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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