

**Notice of a public meeting of
Corporate Parenting Board**

To: Councillors K Myers (Chair), Cuthbertson (Vice-Chair),
Brooks, Crawshaw, Funnell, Rawlings and Runciman

Date: Tuesday, 4 September 2018

Time: 5.00 pm

Venue: The King Richard III Room (GO49) - West Offices

A G E N D A

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests,
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2018.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak regarding an item on the agenda or an issue within the Board's remit can do so. The deadline for registering is **5:00pm on Monday, 3 September 2018.**

Filming or Recording Meetings

Residents are welcome to photograph, film or record Councillors and Officers at all meetings open to the press and public. This includes the use of social media reporting, i.e. tweeting. Anyone wishing to film, record or take photos at any public meeting should contact the Democracy Officers (whose contact details are at the foot of this agenda) in advance of the meeting.

The Council's protocol on Webcasting, Filming & Recording of Meetings ensures that these practices are carried out in a manner both respectful to the conduct of the meeting and all those present. It can be viewed at http://www.york.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11406/protocol_for_webcasting_filming_and_recording_of_council_meetings_20160809.pdf

Strategic Theme - Respect and Involvement

In accordance with the Board's work plan, to consider the following reports and updates and receive any updates from Board Members on their agreed areas of interest in relation to these.

- 4. Concordat on Children in Custody (2017)** (Pages 7 - 16)
This report provides the Board with an overview of the Concordat on Children in Custody, which was published by the Home Office in October 2017.
- 5. Show Me That I Matter Annual Report** (Pages 17 - 30)
The aim of this report is to detail the issues identified by York's Children in Care Council (CiCC), Show Me That I Matter, how they are being addressed and the issues still to be taken forward. The report also details professionals and partner agencies that met with the CiCC, the outcomes of these discussions and different projects that the CiCC is involved in.
- 6. Annual Advocacy Report 2017-18** (Pages 31 - 48)
The aim of this report is to share with the Corporate Parenting Board the 2017-18 Annual Advocacy Report, which provides a review of the statistics on the demographic of young people who have requested advocacy, details advocacy requests/common themes and reviews the outcomes of the service.
- 7. Placement Stability** (Pages 49 - 58)
This paper provides an update on placement stability for City of York Council's children in care.

- 8. Work Plan** (Pages 59 - 62)
To consider the Board's work plan for the 2018-19 municipal year and to receive any updates Members may wish to give on their agreed areas of interest relating to the work of the Board.
- 9. Urgent Business**
Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Board Members Agreed Areas of Interest

- Show Me That I Matter - Councillor Rawlings
- Housing and Pathway Team - Councillor Keith Myers
- Education/Schools - Councillor Brooks
- Virtual Head and School for Children in Care – Councillor Brooks
- Health - Councillor Runciman
- Placement Team, Fostering Service and Short Breaks – Councillor Cuthbertson
- Connexions / Education, Training & Employment - Councillor Funnell

Democracy Officers

Catherine Clarke and Louise Cook (job share)

Contact details:

- Telephone – (01904) 551031
- Email catherine.clarke@york.gov.uk and louise.cook@york.gov.uk

(If contacting by email, please send to both Democracy Officers named above).

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officers responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date	5 June 2018
Present	Councillors K Myers (Chair), Cuthbertson (Vice-Chair), Brooks, Crawshaw, Funnell, Rawlings and Runciman

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting Members were invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in relation to the business on the agenda or any other general interests they might have within the remit of the Board.

Cllr Cuthbertson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in that he was a governor on the Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust.

Cllr Crawshaw declared a personal non prejudicial interest in that his partner was employed by Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group.

Cllr Brooks declared a personal non prejudicial interest in that she was a governor on the Leeds & York Mental Health Trust.

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 16 April 2018 be approved and then signed by the Chair as a correct record.

It was agreed that Cllr K Myers would Chair the meeting and the appointment of a Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2018/19 municipal year would be ratified at the next meeting.

3. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the council's Public Participation scheme.

4. You Are Not Alone Resource

Members considered a report that gave an overview of the 'You Are Not Alone' resource, which was created by York's Children in Care Council.

The Children's Rights Manager was in attendance to present the report along with a representative from York's Children in Care Council. They explained how ten care experienced young people had come together from across three participation groups that formed York's Children in Care Council (Show Me That I Matter (SMTIM) panel, Speak Up Youth and York's Care Leavers Forum) to create a booklet that highlighted some of the issues faced by young people in care, with a particular focus on mental health, in an attempt to raise awareness amongst young people.

Members noted that the young people involved took part in a series of workshops with Speak Up and Inspired Youth to develop their creative writing skills, as well as exploring some of the feelings and emotions that were often experienced by children and young people in care. This allowed them to identify issues they wanted to focus on, which formed the structure of the You Are Not Alone booklet.

Members were given the opportunity to view the booklet that provided advice, inspirational quotes and poems written by young people, as well as signposting young people to support services and online resources.

In answer to Members questions, officers confirmed:

- The booklet would be rolled out to all young people in care aged between 11-17 years and would be included in the information packs that were routinely given out to young people when they first came into care
- A copy of the booklet could be issued to every Councillor.
- The booklet would be shared with and training maybe offered to the relevant professionals and teams.
- The booklet would be uploaded onto the SMTIM website and information about how this resource was created would be shared with other Children in Care Council's across the region.
- SMTIM would consider collaborating with the I Still Matter group to produce a similar resource for care leavers.

- A timetable for the roll out of the booklet could be provided.

Members discussed the best approach to raising awareness of the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities and knowledge among all elected Members. The Director of Children, Education and Communities agreed to investigate this further.¹

Members congratulated all involved on producing an exceptional and informative booklet and they noted that SMTIM would continue to offer advice to young people in care and would also be focusing on positive outcomes.

Resolved:

- i) That the briefing on the You Are Not Alone resource be noted.
- ii) That the suggested action, to engage all Councillors as Corporate Parents, be coordinated.

Reason: In order to keep Members informed on the You Are Not Alone resource.

Action Required

<1> Consider options to engage all Councillors as Corporate Parents <1> JS

5. Emotional and Mental Health Needs of Children in Care - Partnership Update

Members considered a report that provided an update on our multi agency response to emotional and mental health needs of children in care.

The Group Manager of Achieving Performance gave an update and confirmed York had a multifaceted approach to supporting the emotional and mental health needs of children in care. Officers explained how they worked closely with partner agencies to supply a range of services that offered different levels of support to our children in care.

Members noted that the Children and Young People Emotional and Mental Health Strategic Partnership had recently been remodelled and the vision for York's children and young people in care was discussed.

The importance of understanding and supporting emotional/mental health including prevention and early intervention and the barriers to accessing services was discussed and in answer to Members questions, officers confirmed:

- Two multi agency sub groups would focus on prevention and intervention for which terms of reference were being drafted and membership was being agreed.
- The 'You Are Not Alone' booklet would be shared with foster carers.
- A Reflective Fostering pilot project would be delivered in partnership with the NSPCC and would increase foster carers reflective capacities using practical, easily learned techniques.
- Data could be provided at a future meeting to allow Members to observe how York was performing in supporting children in care's emotional needs.
- Delivery of Mental Health First Aid to practitioners in York had taken place at some schools and would continue to be delivered to school staff and foster carers.

Members thanked officers for the update and noted that further information was available on the following links:

<https://www.york.gov.uk/Wellbeing>

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=76>

[3](#)

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: In order that Board Members are kept informed with regard to issues in relation to the emotional and mental health needs of children in care.

6. Pathways for Children and Young People in Care (CYPIC) into Emotional and Mental Health Services

The Group Manager of Achieving Performance was in attendance to present a verbal update to Members on pathways for Children and Young People in Care (CYPIC) into emotional and mental health services.

Members were informed of the various levels of mental health support that were available and the routes children in care take

compared to children not in care. Members noted that the service offered to children in care was good and that the strategic partnerships were working on the options available.

Following discussions around some children in care experiencing instability or disruption due to a number of care placement moves, officers confirmed they monitor and hold key performance data on placement stability and would bring a performance report and case studies to a future meeting.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

7. Work Plan for 2018-19

Members considered the work plan for the 2018/19 municipal year.

Following discussion it was agreed that the work plan would include:

- A Placement Review update.
- Performance indicators and case studies around placement stability
- A report on enhancing our Corporate Parenting offer for Care Leavers
- Base line data on CIC emotional health.

Resolved: That the work plan be approved subject to the above amendments/additions.

Reason: To keep the committee's work plan updated

Cllr K Myers, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00pm and finished at 6.00pm].

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Corporate Parenting Board**4 September 2018**

Report of the Director of Children Education and Communities

Concordat on Children in Custody (2017)**Summary**

1. This report has been prepared with the aim of providing the Corporate Parenting Board with an overview of the '*Concordat on Children in Custody*' which was published by the Home Office in October 2017.
2. The Concordat on Children in Custody aims to clarify the legal and statutory duties of the Police and Local Authorities (LA) and is intended to prevent the unnecessary detention of children in Police cells following charge.

Background

3. The Home Office recognized the high numbers of children being kept in Police custody following charge across the country despite the Police and Local Authorities' legal requirements to transfer children. Section 38 (6) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 requires the transfer of children who have been charged and denied bail to more appropriate Local Authority accommodation, with a related duty in the Children Act 1989 for Local Authorities to accept these transfers. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 requires both police and Local Authorities to have regard to the welfare and protection of children. In 1991 the UK ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, agreeing that custody be used "only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time".
4. The concordat provides guidance for Police forces and local authorities in England on their responsibilities towards children in Police custody and was the Home Office's response to failings being identified by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of the Constabulary (*The welfare of vulnerable people in custody*, March 2015), the All Party Parliamentary Group for

Children (*"It's all about trust": Building good relationships between children and the police*, October 2014), the Criminal Justice Joint Inspection and the Inspection of Youth Offending (*Who's looking out for the children?: A joint inspection of Appropriate Adult provision and children in detention after charge*, December 2011) and the Howard League for Penal Reform (*The overnight detention of children in police cells*, 2011). In many cases, it was found the law was not being followed and children were not receiving the support to which the law entitled them.

5. The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, states that the detention of a child in custody is permissible only in exceptional circumstances (such as extreme weather conditions) or when a child is deemed to pose a 'risk of serious harm' to the public between being charged and appearing at the next available Court and no LA secure accommodation is available. The concordat stresses the importance of the Police and LA's working together to ensure the welfare of children is protected and statutory obligations to some of the most vulnerable children in society are met.

6. The concordat aims to:

- Clarify the legal requirements of Police and Local Authorities.
- Support the Police and Local Authorities across England in complying with their statutory responsibilities with regard to children in custody; and
- Bring about a decrease in the number of children held overnight in police custody.

7. In total, 24 Police forces and 87 Local Authorities are signatories to the concordat that sets out the following principles and practice:

- Whenever possible, charged children will be released on bail
- Children denied bail will be transferred whenever practicable
- Secure accommodation will be requested only when necessary
- Local Authorities will always accept requests for non-secure accommodation
- The power to detain will be transferred to the Local Authority.

- Where a local authority fails to provide accommodation it will reimburse the police.
- Police forces will collect data on transfers.

Consultation

8. This paper provides an update on current practice.

Options

9. This paper provides an update on current practice.

Analysis

10. This paper provides an update on current practice.

Council Plan

11. As an authority, York has been working hard to improve the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) process for several years. This work has continued supported by national Government following the publication of the Concordat on Children in Custody, 2017.
12. To help improve the process in our area, a York and North Yorkshire PACE, Youth Working Group was created. The group, which meets quarterly, includes representatives from York Youth Offending Team, North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service, North Yorkshire Police, the Emergency Duty Team and Children's Social Care.
13. During the quarterly meetings the group will review all PACE transfer requests made during that quarter to make sure everything was done to prevent any child spending the night in Police custody. Unsuccessful PACE Transfers will also be discussed and steps taken to ensure reasons for failed transfers are not repeated. Group representatives will provide feedback to their respective teams.
14. Although PACE Transfers are rare in York (only 4 requests in the last 12 month recording period) York has clear pathways and processes in place to deal with any PACE transfer requests that are made. Since 2016 York has had access to PACE beds at Howe Hill Hostel (1 bed), the Peaseholme Resettlement Centre (1 bed) and a local Foster Care

Placement. The availability of these beds has been key in assisting York as an authority to meet it's PACE responsibilities and reduce the need to detain children in Police custody unnecessarily.

15. No child should be detained in Police custody post charge. However, it is extremely positive that latest figures show that the overnight detention of children in Police custody has reduced in recent years.

Implications

Financial

16. In the event of a 'failed' PACE Transfer which results in a child being detained in Police custody overnight, there is a financial implication for the Local Authority to consider. Where the Police have requested a child be transferred to Local Authority Accommodation and this request is not met by the Local Authority, the Police are able to apply for their costs to be reimbursed by the Local Authority.
17. To date no costs have been applied for to York LA; this is in part due to the joint work of the York and North Yorkshire PACE, Youth Working Group, where the cases are discussed on an individual basis and explanations can be given for the reasons for any failed PACE transfers.

Human Resources (HR)

18. There are no human resource implications to consider.

Equalities

19. There are no issues relating to equalities to consider.

Legal

20. There is a legal requirement for the Local Authority to provide Local Authority Accommodation for children who have been refused bail.

Crime and Disorder

21. Related legislation includes Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984; and the Children's Act 1989.

Information Technology (IT)

22. No IT implications to consider.

Property

23. Currently there are no issues with regards to property; PACE Beds available at Howe Hill Hostel, Peaseholme Resettlement Centre and at a local Foster Care Placement.

Risk Management

24. No risks identified but PACE Transfer decisions will need to be made on a case by case basis.

Recommendations

25. That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

Contact Details

Author:

Nigel Pepper
Youth Offending Team Practice Manager
Tel: 01904 554565
Email: nigel.pepper@york.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Jon Stonehouse
Director of Children Education and Communities

**Report
Approved**



Date 22/08/18

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *List information for all*
None

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

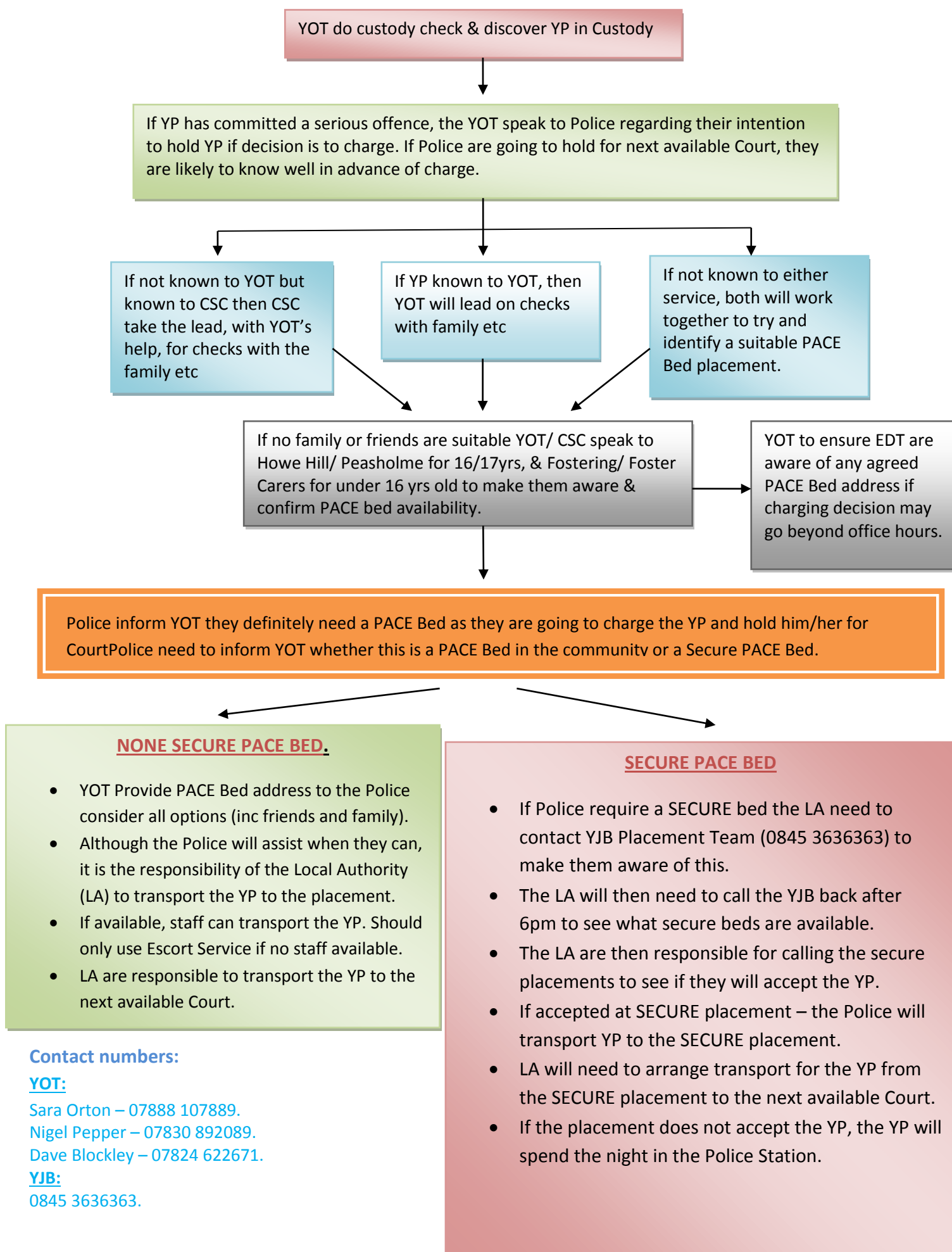
Background Papers: None

Abbreviations

PACE – Police and Criminal Evidence

Annexes

- a. Flowchart for PACE process during working hours.
- b. Flowchart for PACE process out of office hours.

PACE PROCESS DURING WORKING HOURS (MON–FRI BEFORE 5pm).

Transport/Escort (only if required):

Quayside Care – 01302 563826.

Cares – 01388 – 458888.

OUT OF HOURS PACE BED REQUEST PROCESS

Police/AA ring EDT at earliest opportunity to inform a PACE Bed may be required and gives details of the YP.

Contacts details:

YOT:

Sara Orton – 07888 107889.
Nigel Pepper – 07830 892089.
Dave Blockley – 07824 622671.

YJB:

0845 3636363.

Transport/Escort (only if required):

Quayside Care – 01302 563826.
Cares – 01388 458888.

- EDT check the YP on Mosaic and do checks for any available PACE Bed placements. The starting point for this is assessing the suitability of family or friends.
- If family or friends are not suitable EDT are emailed every Friday with a list of available Local Authority (LA) non-secure PACE Beds for the weekend and the following week (Howe Hill, Peasholme and/or Foster Carers).
- EDT to call YJB out of hours and inform there may be a SECURE Pace request.

The Police will confirm with EDT as soon as they know a PACE Bed is required and will state whether this is a request for a SECURE or NONE-SECURE Pace Bed.

NONE SECURE PACE BED

- If none secure PACE Bed - EDT to confirm placement and provide the Police with the address of PACE Bed placement.
- AA to text YOT Managers SO, NP & DB with details of the PACE Bed.
- Although the Police will assist when they can, it is the responsibility of EDT to transport the YP to a none secure PACE placement.
- LA are responsible for transporting the YP to the next available Court. If available, staff can transport the YO if suitable to do so.
- EDT email YOT Secure Email addresses x 2 with details of YP and the PACE Bed address.

d.uty@york.cjism.net and ad.min@york.cjism.net

SECURE PACE BED

- If SECURE bed is required EDT need to contact YJB Out of Hours Placement Team (0845 3636363).
- The YJB Out of Hours Team will provide details of where a Bed is available.
- EDT will then be responsible for calling the placements to see if they will accept the YP.
- If the YP is accepted by the secure establishment, the Police will transport the YP to the SECURE PACE Bed placement.
- If the YP is not accepted by the placement, the YP will spend the night at the Police Station.
- The LA are responsible for transporting the YP from a SECURE placement to the next available Court.
- EDT to arrange transport through Quayside (01302563826) or Cares (01388458888).
- EDT email YOT Secure Email addresses x 2 with details of YP and the PACE Bed address.

d.uty@york.cjism.net and ad.min@york.cjism.net

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Corporate Parenting Board**4 September 2018**

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Show Me That I Matter Annual Report 2017-18**Summary**

1. The aim of this report is to detail the issues identified by the Children in Care Council, how these issues are being addressed and what issues are still to be taken forward. The report also details professionals and partner agencies that met with the CiCC, the outcomes of these discussions and different projects that the CiCC is involved in.

Background

2. Show Me That I Matter (SMTIM) is the name of York's Children in Care Council (CiCC). Monthly panel meetings are held for young people to raise and discuss issues that are important to them, with the aim of shaping and improving services for children and young people in care in York. Panel meetings are attended by Elected Members and Council Officers to listen to the views of young people and respond to issues raised.

Consultation

3. See Annex A.

Options

4. See Annex A.

Analysis

5. See Annex A.

Council Plan

6. See Annex A.

7. Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications to consider.

Human Resources (HR)

There are no HR implications to consider.

Equalities

There are no issues relating to equalities to consider.

Legal

There are no legal implications to consider.

Crime and Disorder

There are no issues relating to crime and disorder.

Information Technology (IT)

There are no IT implications.

Property

There are no issues relating to property.

Other

No other known implications.

Risk Management

8. There are no risks to consider.

Recommendations

- 9. Members are not being asked to endorse any recommendations but to be briefed on the work of the Children in Care Council.

Reason: To keep Members updated.

Contact Details

Author:

Nikki Wilson

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Director of Children, Education and Communities

Children's Rights Manager

Dept Name: Children, Education & Communities

Tel No. 07769725174

Report Approved

Date

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Annex A – Show Me That I Matter Annual Report, 2017-18

Abbreviations

CiCC - Children in Care Council

SMTIM - Show Me That I Matter

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SHOW ME THAT I MATTER YORK'S CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2017- MARCH 2018

CHARLOTTE BELL

INTRODUCTION

Show Me That I Matter (SMTIM) is the name of York's Children in Care Council (CiCC). The CiCC is made up of three groups: the Show Me That I Matter panel, Speak Up Youth and the I Still Matter Care Leavers Forum. Young people meet at the different groups to raise and discuss issues that are important to them. Their overall aim of the CiCC is to provide an opportunity for care experiencing children and young people to help shape and improve services. SMTIM and ISM members are financially rewarded for their time and effort with a stamp system in operation, enabling young people to receive a £20 cash reward for attending 3 sessions.

The aim of this report is to detail the activity of the CiCC and issues identified by the members of these groups, who represent children and young people in care in York. The report will look in depth at each of the three groups that make up the CiCC and focus on how issues are being addressed; detailing discussions had with professionals and partner agencies, highlighting any issues still to be taken forward and providing information on the range of different projects that the CiCC has been involved in.

SHOW ME THAT I MATTER

SMTIM currently consists of 10 young people in care, aged between 13-17years. The panel meets on a monthly basis at West Offices to discuss issues that are important to children and young people in care in York. Any issues raised are fed back to senior managers in the quarterly meetings, with the aim to help change and shape services for children and young people in or leaving care. Young people regularly invite professionals and other agencies to attend their meetings to discuss a range of issues and to provide feedback on service provision.

SMTIM have recently changed the structure of their meetings. They continue to hold meetings monthly but now invite key decision makers (elected members and senior council officers) to every 3rd meeting to feedback to them on the work they have been doing. This way of working allows SMTIM to fully explore the issues, gain a better understanding and take part in more focused work before they feed this back to key decision makers.

WORK CARRIED OUT

SMTIM have worked with a number of different professionals both in panel meetings and focus groups, either to address specific issues raised by young people or after receiving a request to attend from a professional or service. Three identified elected members attend every quarter, along with a senior manager, to ensure that decision makers hear direct from young people.

Contact with Professionals	
April 2017	Tony Woodcock and Chez Adamson (YAFCA) and Cllr Runciman
June 2017	Cllr Rawlings and Cllr Mason
July 2017	Sophie Keeble, Cllr Rawlings, Cllr Barnes and Cllr Runciman
Sept 2017	Cllr Rawlings and Cllr Runciman
Oct 2017	Cllr Runciman and Cllr Barnes

Nov 2017	Sarah Wild – Fostering and Cllr Rawlings Matt Stroud – IT Focus Group
Dec 2017	Jon Stonehouse, Maxine Squires, Sophie Keeble and Cllr Runciman
Jan2018	Maxine Squires and Niall McVicar
Feb2018	Karron Young, Gill Clapham, Phil Taylor, Julia Massey and Melody Hardcastle.
March 2018	Claire Mo, Cath Short and Emily Wood – Permanence Team

Princes Trust - Young Researchers event

Two young people were supported to attend a Prince’s Trust event in Manchester in April 2017, to hear about the findings from the five year research project “From Care to Independence”. The two young people had previously been interviewed for the project and so were invited back to hear directly from the Young Researchers.

SCIE Working Group event

The Social Care Institute of Excellence established an ‘Expert Working Group’ to focus on the mental health and wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers. A group of young people attended the event in London in April 2017 to contribute in their views.

Children’s Media Conference

SMTIM were invited to present at the Children’s Media Conference in Sheffield in July 2017. Two young people delivered a closing presentation about how the CiCC has used media in its projects to inform young people and challenged the audience to portray more positive role models for young people in care within the media.

Education presentation at York St John University

SMTIM co-presented with members of the Permanence Team to a group of first year students studying education at York St John University. Two young people from SMTIM attended to share with the students what had made a difference to them within their education provision.

Regional Children in Care Council Residential

In February 2018, 5 young people from SMTIM and Speak Up Youth attended the Yorkshire and Humber Children in Care Council’s residential at Kingswood, Dearne Valley. The purpose of the event was for the different authorities to discuss the role and the importance of a CiCC. They were consulted on the different issues identified by each authority, to shape future regional work, and worked with representatives from the Childrens Commissioner’s Office on the design and content of a national website for young people in care.

KEY ISSUES

Supervision of young people

One issue raised by young people was that some thought that the levels of supervision that young people received in some placements were excessive, and as a group they decided that they would like to explore this further. A subsequent group discussion took place and young people reported mixed experiences, with some young people having what they viewed as excessive or unfair restrictions around being able to attend or host sleepovers or parties. Some

young people felt the level of information foster carers wanted to know about what they were doing on a day to day basis was unnecessary and fed-back that this could feel intrusive. This was shared with the fostering team and clarification was sought regarding what guidance was provided to foster carers.

Fostering assessments

Young people raised the question of what checks and assessment are carried out when recruiting foster carers, to ensure that only the right people were approved. A member of the Assessing Permanent Carers Team was invited to a subsequent meeting and shared detailed information about the assessment process. Young people highlighted the importance of eliciting children and young people's views on placements and quality of care and said that as a group they would like to be more involved in the training of foster carers. Links with the fostering team are ongoing and young people's views are being fed into the Fostering Review that is currently being carried out.

Communication with Social Workers

Relationships with social workers and difficulties in getting in contact with allocated workers were issues raised by young people. Some young people reported that they could not always contact their social worker when needed, other fed-back that they didn't always have a positive relationship with their workers. Possible reasons why were explored with young people, who were reminded that 'buddying' arrangements were in place for part time workers and that young people could access the team duty number if their social worker was unavailable. Anecdotal feedback from the young people present highlighted that not all had been given a Social Work Contact Card containing contact numbers. Young people were also reminded of their right to access advocacy if they wanted support in raising and resolving any issues with their social worker.

In response to issues raised, members of the Permanence Team were invited to attend a meeting with young people to look further at relationships and communication, with a particular focus on the first meeting the social worker has with a young person. They worked in small groups to discuss how communication could be improved between young people and their social workers and it was agreed that young people would continue to be involved in ongoing work with Permanence Team to create a team profile that could be shared with children and young people and an All About Me resource that could be used to help form relationships between children and young people and their social workers.

Working with Corporate Parents

A representative from SMTIM attended the Corporate Parenting Board meeting in September 2017 to share with elected members the 2016-17 Annual Report. Elected members had an opportunity to ask questions and thanked SMTIM for their ongoing work and commitment. Young people have identified that they would like to create a Corporate Parenting Pack for all elected members to ensure that they were all aware of their role as corporate parents and fully informed about the work of the CiCC. Initial discussions have taken place with the Group Manager for Permanence with a view to this piece of work being revisited later in the year.

Personal Education Plans (PEP) and Pupil Premium

The Virtual School Head teacher attended a meeting to share with young people information about recent and proposed changes within the Virtual School. Discussions took place around Pupil Premium Plus and the use of Personal Education Plans, and young people were invited to

share directly some of their experiences. Individual issues were taken forward by the Virtual School in relation to two young people present and representative from the Virtual School attended a subsequent meeting to discuss further how PEP reviews are conducted and what the young people's experiences of them were. Young people shared their experiences and highlighted the importance of allowing young people to decide what involvement they had in the meetings.

IT Provision

Young people raised the issue of internet access and IT provision, as some people reported that they had difficulties accessing these. It was agreed that a focus group would be held to further explore young people's views and experiences, and in November 2017 young people met with council officers to explore this further. After consideration by senior managers, they were satisfied that current provision was adequate and that there would be no change to the current IT offer to children and young people in care.

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Young people spoke to council officers about what apprenticeships and traineeship opportunities were offered to young people in care and care leavers currently, and some of the difficulties young people face in accessing these. Young people gave feedback on what could be done to make young people more aware of the Council's apprenticeship offer and suggested improvements that could be made to further support young people to access these opportunities.

SPEAK UP YOUTH

Speak Up Youth was formed in September 2017 after All Together Active (ATA) and I Matter 2 merged together. The group is jointly delivered by members of staff from Speak Up, the Assessment and Contact Team and the Learning and Work Advisors. Speak Up Youth meets fortnightly at Moor Lane Youth Centre and is aimed at children and young people aged 10-16 years (19 years for those with additional needs). The group is currently made up of 13 young people aged 11-19 and has a more informal, activity based approach to participation. This allows children and young people to share their views and raise any issues in a relaxed environment.

The group often gets involved in consultation work that has been brought to the CiCC. Any issues that are raised at Speak Up Youth are shared with the SMTIM panel to take forward with senior managers and elected members.

WORK CARRIED OUT

Involving children and young people in their reviews

In November 2017 representative from the Permanence Team and Independent Reviewing Officers attended Speak Up Youth to discuss with young people their experiences of being involved in their reviews. This included speaking with young people to find out how they would prefer to be consulted in terms of their review and looking at the barriers that prevent young people from attending. This piece of work is ongoing and focusing on reviewing existing consultation forms and identifying possible tools that could be created to help promote young people's participation within the review process.

Health Assessment leaflet

Speak Up Youth took part in a consultation on the design of a new leaflet providing information for children and young people in care about their Health Assessments. Two versions of this leaflet have now been produced (one for younger children and one for young people) and will be rolled out by health and Children's Social Care.

I STILL MATTER

I Still Matter is the name of York's Care Leavers Forum, which is part of the wider Children in Care Council. It is aimed at care leavers and young people who are approaching the transition to leaving care, aged 17- 24 years. It is jointly delivered by Speak Up and the Pathway Team and currently consists of 7 members aged 18-22 years. The panel meets on a monthly basis at West Office and enables young people to raise any issues and identify and discuss key issues that are of significance to care leavers in the city. Elected members and senior council officers are invited to meet with the group on a quarterly basis, in line with the SMTIM meeting structure. Any issues raised are fed back to senior managers in the quarterly meetings, with the aim of helping to change and shape services for care leavers in York.

WORK CARRIED OUT

ISM have met with a number of different professionals, either to address specific issues raised by young people or after receiving a request to attend from a professional or service.

Contact with Professionals	
Aug 2017	Cllr Rawlings and David Purcell
Nov 2017	Mark Riddell (Adviser for care leavers for the DfE)
Feb 2018	Cllr Rawlings and David Purcell

NLCBF Workshop

Members of ISM attended a National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum Workshop in Sheffield in September 2017. The purpose of this event was for different authorities to share best practice in regards to the support they have for care leavers and celebrate care leavers and their success.

NNECL Conference

A member of ISM attended the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers Conference at the University of York in December 2017 and delivered a presentation on raising the aspirations of care leavers and the importance of role models. The aim of the NNECL is to 'transform the progression of young people in or leaving care into and through further and higher education, by championing the continuous improvement of local practice, multi-agency partnerships and national collaboration.'

Inspection of Clarence Street with Youth Council

A member of ISM took part in the inspection of the Young People's Services at 30 Clarence Street. The service offers specialist information; advice and guidance for young people aged 16-19 including: face to face support, telephone support, drop in sessions and counselling services. Young people were supported to conduct an inspection of 30 Clarence Street to ensure that it worked and was the right environment for young people, exploring whether or not it would be a service they would use.

CSWM Webinar

Two members of ISM took part in a Children's Social Work Matters Webinar which focused on the importance of role models for children and young people in care. They shared the journey of the Aspire to More Project and discussed the importance of role models for children and young people in care, reflecting on how negative stereotypes and image can impact on the aspirations of children and young people in care.

Netherlands Care Leavers Conference

In association with University of York, a member of ISM attended an international care leaver conference in the Netherlands. With the University they created and co – facilitated a workshop around the theme of education and independent living.

KEY ISSUES

Education and support available

Young people identified that they would like to hear more about what support is available for young people wanting to go on to further and higher education and so subsequent discussions have taken place with members of the Pathway Team.

Council Tax

Young people raised concerns relating to council tax and the financial impact this could have on care leavers, raising the question of whether the Council could introduce an exemption for care leavers, in line with a number of other authorities. Young people met with senior managers and elected members to discuss and asked that consideration be given to this. This was taken away and after careful consideration it was decided that care leavers would be able to apply to a discretionary fund which would be means tested and it was agreed that the Pathway Team would work with and support young people who are eligible. This approach would also mean that young people who are in need but who are not care leavers would also be able to benefit from the fund.

Mental health support

Young people were asked to provide their views on a literature review and proposal regarding mental health support for young people in care and care leavers. The group reviewed the documents and provided their feedback.

Newsletters

Young people have been actively involved in shaping the design and content of the quarterly newsletters that go out to all care leavers up to the age of 21, sharing information about the work of the Care Leavers Forum and providing updates on rights and entitlements.

Advocacy for care leavers

Young people had previously identified that in their view, care leavers should have the same access to advocacy from Speak Up as children and young people in care. Historically requests for advocacy from care leavers had been signposted to York Advocacy, who provide advocacy for vulnerable adults. However, young people were of the view that for young people leaving care, being able to access this service from people already known to them could be crucial and without it some young people may feel isolated and unsupported. In January 2018, it was agreed that this could take place and as a result, the remit of the advocacy offer provided by Speak Up was extended to include care leavers up to the age of 21. Young people were pleased with this decision and wanted this to be promoted to care leavers via social media and quarterly newsletters.

Care leaver entitlements

Young people have worked with the Pathway Team to help redesign the existing information booklet about the Pathway service and leaving care entitlements. They will continue to work with the Pathway Team to help shape the final version of the new Leaving Care Offer that is in the process of being devised by Children's Social Care.

ADDITIONAL CiCC ACTIVITY

INTERVIEW PANELS

Young person's interviews have been in high demand again throughout 2017-2018, with CiCC members sitting on 10 interview panels for various roles within Children's Services, including Social Workers, Senior Social Workers, Advanced Practitioner, Advocacy and Participation Worker and Child in Need Manager.

TRAINING

The Speak Up and Hear My Voice training was developed in a direct response to SMTIM's views on the importance of reducing the stigma faced by children and young people in care. It was agreed that young people would co-design and deliver a training programme which would feature the Arts4Care film, "Listen to Me" that was produced in 2014. The training, whilst providing professionals with the opportunity to hear directly from children and young people in care about their experiences, also offers practical tools and resources as to how practice and service development could be adapted to embed participation.

During this 12 month period 4 training requests were received. Young people were supported to deliver a training session for CYC Volunteers, two training sessions for prospective foster carers and a full days training for an external organisation providing mental health provision for young people; Care in Mind (the latter of which were charged delivery costs).

PRESS INTERVIEW

Members of SMTIM and ISM were invited to take part in an interview with York Press, who featured a two page spread about young people's views on the difference that foster care had

made to their lives. This also included a discussion about SMTIM and the effect that their involvement with the CiCC has had on them, at the same time as supporting a recent foster carer recruitment campaign.

A CARE STORY PROJECT

Mental health had been identified by young people as a priority for York's CiCC, as was documented in the last SMTIM Annual Report (2016-17). SMTIM were aware that a great deal of work was taking place in the city to address the issue of mental health and emotional wellbeing, but felt that young people in care needed to be more aware of mental health issues and the services available. Young people decided that they would like to create a resource to highlight some of the issues faced by young people in care, with a particular focus on mental health, in an attempt to raise awareness amongst young people. Therefore, in March 2017, ten care experienced young people came together from across the three participation groups to begin this work.

Young people took part in a series of workshops with Speak Up and Inspired Youth and had the opportunity to develop their creative writing skills, at the same time as exploring some of the feelings and emotions that are often experienced by children and young people in care. As part of the project young people were able to help to shape a fictional story that what subsequently published online by Inspired Youth.

Young people were able to articulate that without the right support and help some of these difficult feelings can impact upon placements and future relationships. They told us that through participating in the sessions they could see the benefits of talking about mental health; that early experiences stayed with them but that with the right support young people could be better equipped to manage these difficult feelings and emotions. The group identified key messages that they wanted to share with other young people and went on to design a booklet which they named 'You Are Not Alone'.

It is proposed that the You Are Not Alone booklet will be rolled out to all young people in care, aged 11-17 years, and the booklet will be included in the Information Packs that are routinely given out to young people when they first come into care. Young people went on to share information about how this resource was created with other Children in Care Council's across the region, via the Yorkshire and Humber Children in Care Council, and received a request from the Children's Commissioners Office for consent to include the resource on their new website for children and young people in care.

AWARDS CEREMONIES

Kids Count Award

A Care Story Project won a national Kids Count Award in December 2017, under the category of 'Most Inspirational Campaign on Youth Issues'. SMTIM attended the awards ceremony which took place at the House of Commons alongside MPs, peers and other inspirational youth groups.

York Culture Awards

SMTIM were nominated and won an award for excellence in cultural equality and diversity at the 2017 York Culture Awards. Representatives of SMTIM attended the ceremony which took place at York Minster in November 2017.

SUMMARY

Between April 2017 and March 2018, a total of 28 children and young people, aged between 10-21 years, have been involved in the CiCC across the three different groups. Out of these 28 young people, 7 were male and 21 were female, 7 had an Education and Health Care Plan and a further 5 were in receipt of other SEN services.

The 3 groups together have taken part in the great deal of activity over the 12 month period, having conducted 22 formal panel meetings, 14 youth group sessions, 13 project sessions or focus groups and 2 social events. In addition to this a number of CiCC members have presented at conferences and training sessions, taken part in interview panels and an inspection, attended awards ceremonies and a regional residential. There have been a total of 12 keys issues raised between the groups, including education and employment, placement issues, working and communication with professionals and the rights and entitlements of children and young people in care.

To conclude, York's Children in Care Council as a whole has achieved a huge amount within the last 12 months. They have done this through their continuous hard work and dedication to improving services for children and young people in care and care leavers in York. The work they have been involved in throughout 2017-18 demonstrates the value of the CiCC and how much they continue to grow. Their awards and recognitions as well as their invites to attend other events highlights how much the work they does is valued and recognised locally, regionally and nationally.



Corporate Parenting Board**4 September 2018**

Report of the Assistant Director of Children's Services

Annual Advocacy Report 2017-18**Summary**

1. The aim of this report is to share with the Corporate Parenting Board the 2017-18 Annual Advocacy Report, which provides a review of the statistics on the demographic of young people who have requested advocacy, details advocacy requests /common themes and reviews the outcomes of the service.

Background

2. The Children's Rights and Advocacy Services (known as Speak Up) provides advocacy for children and young people who are in or leaving care, on a child protection plan or wanting to make a complaint against the council, in line with the Local Authority's statutory duty.

Consultation

3. See Annex A.

Options

4. See Annex A.

Analysis

5. See Annex A.

Council Plan

6. See Annex A.

Implications

7. Financial

There are no financial implications to consider.

- **Human Resources (HR)**

There are no HR implications to consider.

- **Equalities**

There are no issues relating to equalities to consider.

- **Legal**

There are no legal implications to consider.

- **Crime and Disorder**

There are no issues relating to crime and disorder.

- **Information Technology (IT)**

There are no IT implications.

- **Property**

There are no issues relating to property.

- **Other**

No other known implications.

Risk Management

8. There are no risks to consider.

Recommendations

9. Members are not being asked to endorse any recommendations but to be briefed on the advocacy casework that is carried out with children and young people.

Reason: To keep Members updated.

Contact Details

Author:

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Nikki Wilson

Dot Evans

Title: Children's Rights
Manager
Dept Name: CEC
Tel No. 07769725174

Title: Assistant Director of Children's
Services

**Report
Approved**

Date 23/08/18

Specialist Implications Officer(s) : None

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Annex A – 2017-18 Annual Advocacy Report

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ANNUAL ADVOCACY REPORT

April 2017 – March 2018



York's Children's Rights and Advocacy Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Children's Rights and Advocacy Service (known as Speak Up) promotes children's rights entitlements and provides advocacy for children and young people who are in care, going through the child protection process or wanting to make a complaint against the council, in line with the Local Authority's statutory duty. Provision has recently been extended to include advocacy for care leavers up to the age of 21, as a result of feedback from young people and in line with the National Standards for the provision of Children's Advocacy Services (2002). A Service Statement has recently been put in place outlining details regarding service provision, independence governance, performance and monitoring, and practice in relation to resolution and escalation.

Between April 2017 and March 2018 the Children's Rights and Advocacy Service received 53 referrals in total from children and young people; three quarters of which were in relation to children and young people in care. Referrals received were from children and young people ranging from 5-19 years, however three quarters of these were young people aged 13+. Improvements have been made in capturing information relating to the SEND profile of children and young people accessing the service and for the first time we are able to report on these.

Referral reasons vary with the most common theme being to support young people to have their voice heard during a decision making process (34%). In comparison to the previous year we have seen a slight increase in referrals in relation to placements, unhappiness with social work service and access to support services, and a decline in contact issues as a reason for referral. For the first time, this report has captured secondary issues raised by young people, 9 of which have been reported, spanning across a number of different themes.

For evaluation purposes, based on the feedback we have to date, young people speak highly of the service and their experience of having an advocate, with all young people reporting that they are happy with their advocate and the service they provided. Whilst existing professional feedback is limited, initial feedback has been positive, including comments such as, "I value this service in helping marginalised young people develop the confidence they need to navigate difficult and stressful situations".

Moving forward it is important that next year's annual report looks at the progress that has been made in raising awareness of the service amongst professionals within the education sector and fostering community, as these are areas that have been identified in further need of development.

INTRODUCTION

Advocacy is about providing individuals with support to help them express their own views, have their voice heard, access information and services and understand their rights and entitlements. Advocacy is based on the belief that all individuals are equal with the same rights and responsibilities.

Every Local Authority is required to provide advocacy for children and young people who are in care, leaving care or wanting to make a complaint. The Children and Young People's Act (2008) placed additional duties on local authorities to ensure that the views of children and young people in care are represented throughout the care planning and review process. This act requires local authorities to provide advocacy support to any child or young person in care that may require it.

AIM OF THE REPORT

The aim of this report is to explore and review the advocacy provided by the Children's Rights and Advocacy Service to see if it functions effectively and to outline any areas of the service in need of further development.

This will be done by:

- Looking at an overview of the advocacy service
- Reviewing statistics on the demographic of children and young people who have requested advocacy
- Analysing advocacy requests and outlining any common themes
- Reviewing the outcomes of the service, evaluating its effectiveness and looking at areas for development

All advocacy requests from the financial year 2017/18 will be used in the analysis of the service.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND ADVOCACY SERVICE

The Children's Rights and Advocacy Service (known as Speak Up) promotes children's rights entitlements and provides advocacy for children and young people who are in care, on a child protection plan or wanting to make a complaint against the council, in line with the Local Authority's statutory duty. More recently the service has been opened up to care leavers up to the age of 21, in line with the National Standards for the provision of Children's Advocacy Services (2002) which state that 'The standards... cover advocacy for children and young people (including those leaving care) up to the age of 21'.

The service provides issue-based advocacy and only exists for the time it takes to resolve the specific issue. It should be noted however that children and young people often raise numerous issues, sometimes requiring advocacy for a significant length of time. It is a confidential service and is independent from Children's Social Care. The service sits within the Early Help and Local Area Teams structure to ensure that it can function independently from Children's Social Care, in line with statutory requirements.

The role of an advocate:

- ✓ Advocates should work for children and young people and no one else.
- ✓ Advocates should value and respect children and young people as individuals and challenge all types of unlawful discrimination.
- ✓ Advocates should work to make sure children and young people in care can understand what is happening to them, can make their views known and, where possible, exercise their choice when decisions about them are being made.
- ✓ Advocates should help children and young people to raise issues and concerns about things they are unhappy about, including making informal and formal complaints.

National Standards for the provision of Children's Advocacy Services (2002)

THE SPEAK UP TEAM

The Speak Up team are made up of a Children's Rights Manager (0.7PTE), Project Officer Apprentice (1 FTE) and three part-time Advocacy and Participation Workers (totalling 1.7 FTE). Speak Up also has a small group of trained volunteer advocates who undertake advocacy with children and young people.

There is a service statement in place outlining details regarding service provision, independence governance, performance and monitoring, and practice in relation to resolution and escalation. Within the team there is a distinction between practitioners carrying out advocacy casework and those facilitating participation opportunities, thus when allocating advocacy casework the service does, wherever possible, seek to appoint a worker that is not delivering participation activities with the child or young person, to avoid the potential for any conflict of interest or confusion for young people about the two functions of the service.

Advocacy referrals can be made directly by children and young people or professionals on their behalf, via telephone, email, Facebook or through the website <http://www.showmethatimatter.com>.

AWARENESS OF THE CHILDRENS RIGHTS AND ADVOCACY SERVICE

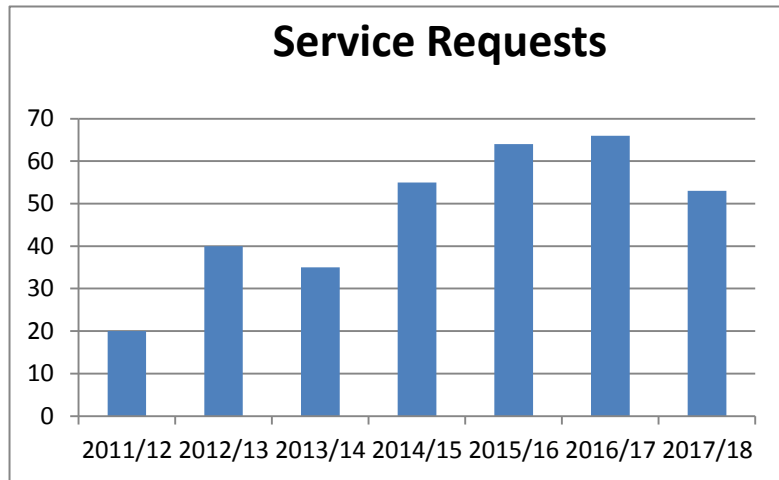
For Speak Up to function effectively children, young people and professionals need to be aware of, and have an understanding of, the service. When a child or young person first comes into care, they are issued with an information pack which includes information about their rights and entitlements and the Speak Up service. Speak Up also send quarterly newsletters to all children and young people in care aged 5+ and care leavers aged 18-21 which include details of the service, with specific reference to advocacy and how to access this.

Children and young people are also made aware of the service through professionals. It is important that all professionals working with children and young people in care are aware of the

service so they can signpost and refer young people who may benefit from the support of an advocate. The Children’s Rights Manager regularly liaises with social work teams, the Virtual School and teaching staff to promote the service to professionals.

ADVOCACY REQUESTS- STATISTICS

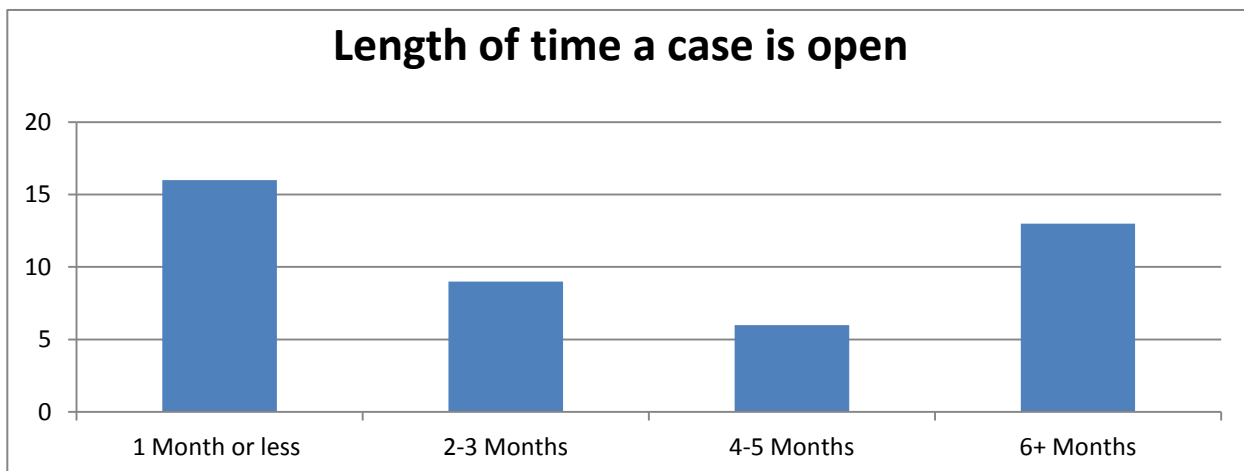
In 2017/18 there has been a slight dip in numbers (a decrease of 20%) which may, in part, be as a result of the decrease in overall number of children and young people in care. Although there has been some fluctuation in referrals over recent years, over the past four years the service has on average received 59 referrals per year, which is useful information to help predict



numbers going forward. However it should be noted that there is no comparable data for the advocacy referrals for care leavers as this is currently a new area of the service and will be an area for the service to compare in next years report

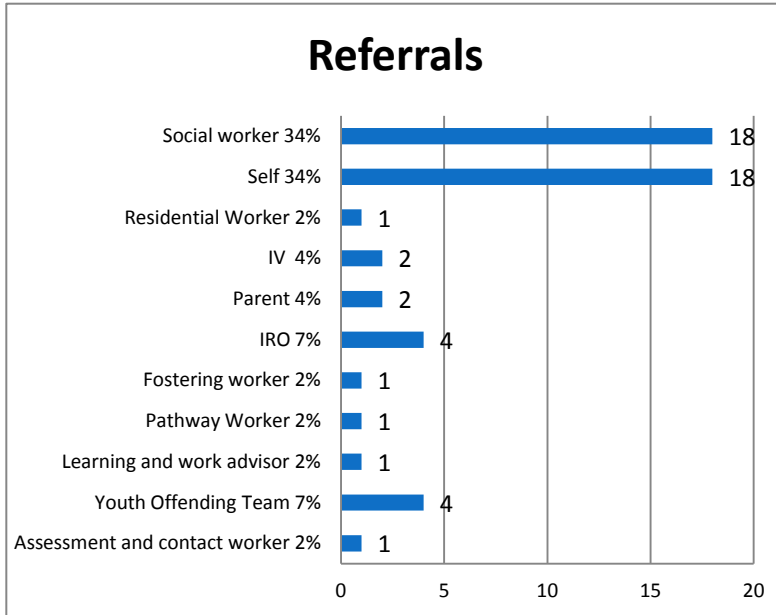
During 2017/18, 26 of the new advocacy cases were closed, 6 resulted in ‘no further action’ and 21 remained open with ongoing advocacy still being provided. The service has also continued to work with an additional 18 cases that carried over from the previous year.

Reviewing the length of time in which cases have been open provides Speak Up with valuable information. The following data is based on the 26 new advocacy cases that were closed as well as the 18 cases carried over and closed in the year 2017/18. It does not include the cases that resulted in no further action or those which are still ongoing.



The data shown is similar to last years data in that the majority of cases were either open less than three months (53%) or in excess of six months, either as a result of the complexity of the situation or the young person raising a number of subsequent issues.

REFERRER



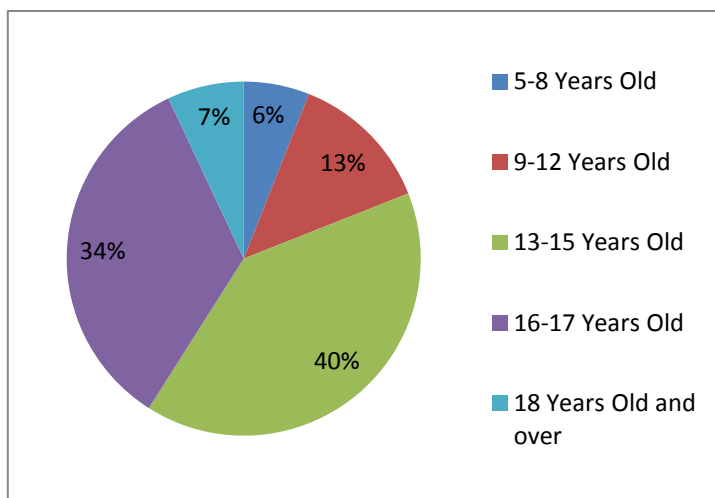
The majority of referrals this year came from social workers and young people equally (34% each) which is similar to previous year's findings. Awareness of the service amongst several new areas such as the Youth Offending Team, fostering and the Pathway Team is a real positive. Although we have received a referral from a Learning and Work Advisor which suggests that the message is slowing spreading to people in relation to education settings, more work

needs to be done to address the lack of referrals from this sector. This year we haven't received any referrals from foster carers; this could be due to a number of reasons and should therefore be an area for development.

PROFILE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ACCESS ADVOCACY

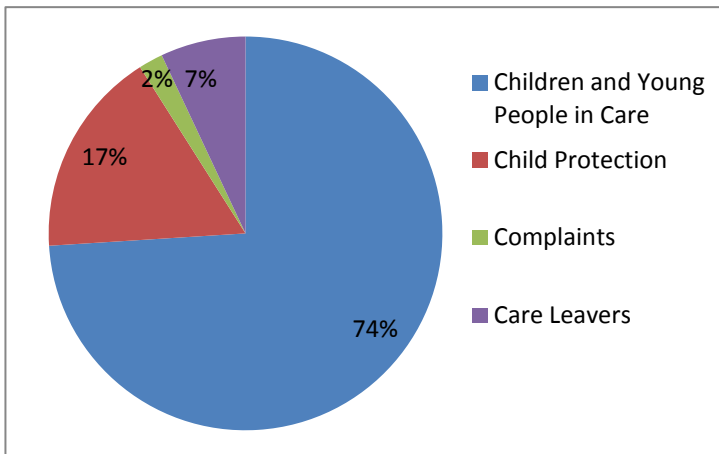
The following information is in relation to 53 referrals that were received by Speak Up.

AGE



In relation to age there have been no significant differences compared to last years report. The only difference is the addition of the over 18 category as a result of advocacy being opened up to care leavers which is currently at 7%. Advocacy for care leavers was introduced part way through the year in January; therefore this number is likely to increase.

LEGAL STATUS



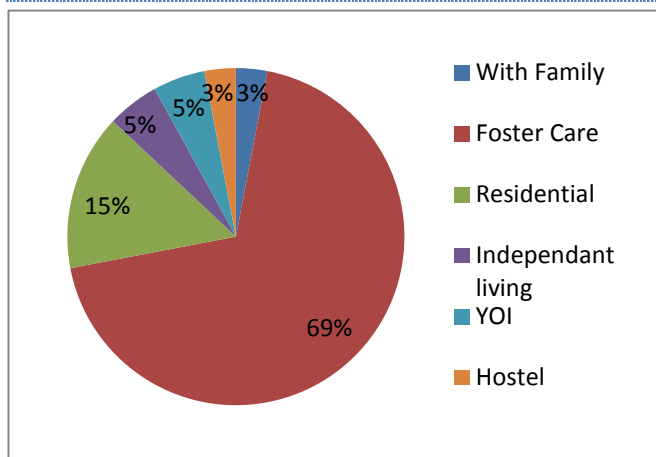
74% of those accessing the advocacy service were children and young people in care (39 referrals), 17% were going through the child protection process (9 referrals) 7% were care leavers (4 referrals) and 2% of requests were to support children or young people who wanted to make a complaint (1 referrals). It is worth noting that in addition to this there were a further 2 young people who were in care that went on to make a

complaint, therefore the service supported 3 young people in total through the complaints process.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS SPECIFICALLY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

The following information is in relation to the 39 referrals from children and young people in care.

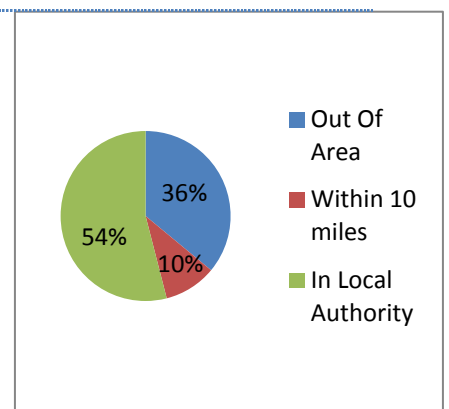
LIVING ARRANGMENTS



The reporting of living arrangements of the children and young people accessing advocacy has changed this year as we now shows the living arrangements of children and young people in care only. 69% of young people were reported to be living in foster care, 15% living in a residential setting, 8% living independently or in hostel accommodation and the remainder 8% living either with family or in a Youth Offenders Institute.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The reporting of geographical location of the children and young people accessing advocacy has also changed this year as we now only provide this information for children and young people in care. This is broken down into 3 areas: within the local authority, within 10 miles of the city boundary and residing out of this area. Figures show that a significant number of children and young people in care



accessing advocacy are living out of area. Whilst this demonstrates that we are ensuring that those out of area have equal access to advocacy provision (some of whom being our most vulnerable and hard to reach young people) it should be noted that this brings with it operational pressures as a result of the amount of time needed to carry out this casework.

ADVOCACY REQUESTS

For reporting purposes advocacy requests are categorized into the following themes at the point of referral to the service: placement issues, unhappiness with social work service, contact, education, access to support services, support to have voice heard in decision making process and 'other' (to reflect referral reasons that do not fall within these categories). It should be noted that children and young people often raise subsequent issues during a piece of advocacy so this does not reflect all advocacy issues raised but the presenting themes at the point of referral. In addition to the initial issues raised at point of referral, we will be reporting on any secondary issues raised by young people during the piece of advocacy, to ensure that all issues that have been raised are captured to provide a more thorough overview of emerging themes.

All the information described below relates to issues raised directly by children and young people. As outlined in our Service Statement, advocates must act exclusively on the behalf of children and young people and have no potential or apparent conflicting interests. On no occasion will the work be influenced by the views or opinions of the advocate but solely driven by the voice of the child, as one of the key, underlying principles of effective advocacy.

It should also be noted that NFA cases haven't been included in these results.

Theme	No. of Requests raised	Percentage 2017/2018	Percentage 2016/2017
Support in Decision Making	17	37%	43%
Placement Issue	8	17%	12%
Unhappy with Social Work Services	7	15%	7%
Other	6	12%	12%
Contact	5	11%	16%
Education	2	4%	3%
Access to Support Services	2	4%	0%
Disagreement with Care Plan	0	0%	7%

SUPPORT IN DECISION MAKING

The number of advocacy requests for this theme has dropped from 42% in 2016/17 to 37% this year; however it continues to be the theme with the highest number of requests. Support in decision making as a theme includes assisting children and young people to attend reviews or other decision making meetings, or attending on behalf on a child or young person and feeding in their views. It has also included helping young people have their voice heard during particular periods of transition or to help them ensure they have an understanding of current situations.

Of the 17 referrals, 8 were in relation to child protection (4 were from children subject to child protection plans and 4 were to support young parents with children going through the child

protection process) and 9 were to support young people in care. Out of the 17 referrals, 8 were to support children and young people to attend meetings (5 of these required the advocate to support the young person to attend and 3 asked their advocate to attend on their behalf). 2 referrals were of Primary school age, 11 were secondary school age and 4 were school leavers. 7 were placed out of area either in a foster placement, residential setting or young offender's institute and the other 10 were living in foster placements, with family or living independently.

In addition to the 17 referrals, this theme was raised as a secondary issue for 2 other young people already engaging with the service who wanted the support of an advocate during their reviews.

PLACEMENT ISSUE

There has been a 5% increase this year in the number of advocacy requests relating to issues with placement (from 12% to 17%) all of which were in relation to children and young people in care. Issues with placements included requests to change placement, unhappiness with decision making around change of placement and general unhappiness in placement. Out of the 8 referrals regarding placement 5 young people were placed in foster care, 2 young people were living in a residential setting and the other was living in hostel accommodation.

This theme was raised as a secondary issue by 2 other young people, the first being a young person who wished to express their unhappiness with being placed out of area (who has subsequently moved back to York) and the second was a young person who had conflicts within placement and wanted the help of an advocate to resolve these.

UNHAPPY WITH SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

There has been a significant increase in the number of cases relating to unhappiness with social work service going from 7% to 15%. There were 7 referrals that were received relating to young people reporting a general unhappiness with the social work service. Out of the 7 referrals, 2 resulted in complaints which were dealt with at a stage 1. 3 young people requested a change of worker; this was the outcome for 2 young people but the third reported that they were satisfied that their issues had resolved through discussions. This theme was not raised as a secondary issue by any young person.

OTHER

Requests falling under the category of 'Other' have stayed at 12% from last year. These were 6 requests that didn't fit any of the common themes. The referrals under the category of 'Other' were in relation to:

- Support to input into police investigations and a criminal trial.
- Understanding their rights and entitlements including their right to make a complaint.

There were 3 secondary issues that were raised that fell into the category of other which were in relation to access to provision, including IT provision.

CONTACT

The number of contact issues has dropped slightly this year from 15% to 11%. Contact issues refer to any issues that arise relating to the young person's contact arrangements with either relatives or friends. Out of these 5 referrals, 3 were in relation to siblings on child protection plans who wanted to discuss their feeling around seeing one of their parents, 2 were in relation to children and young people in care, one of which was a young person in care who wasn't happy with contact arrangements and the other was a young person who wanted to start contact with a younger sibling who had remained with family.

Contact was raised as a secondary issue for 2 other young people; one was in relation to a young person in custody who wanted to challenge a decision to restrict his contact with a particular young person and the second was a young person who had issues regarding contact with her mother.

ACCESS TO SUPPORT SERVICES

This year there have been 2 referrals for young people who came to the advocacy service in relation to accessing support and services. 1 young person wanted the help of an advocate to access mental health services and the other wanted the help to explore their options accessing support after frequent episodes of going missing. This still remains to be the theme that is least referred as for the previous 2 year no referrals were received. This theme was not raised as a secondary issue by any of the advocacy cases this year.

EVALUATION OF THE SERVICE

Direct feedback is obtained from children and young people who have accessed advocacy, in an attempt to evaluate and improve the service. Towards the end of 2017/2018 we reviewed our evaluation process with young people and as a result revised our evaluation forms, introducing two separate forms for younger and older children, and created an online survey, giving young people the option of providing feedback online. All evaluations have the same questions which have been adapted from previous forms, making them easier for young people to answer, in an attempt to improve the number of responses received. In an addition to this a professional's evaluation has been created, to capture the views of professional.

We have this year seen an increase in response rates as the service has received 16 evaluations from young people and 4 from professionals, compared to 11 the previous year. Overall, feedback has been very positive, both in terms of quality of service provision and outcomes for children and young people.

FEEDBACK FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

This year there were 16 evaluation forms completed by children and young people; a 10% increase from the previous year. The responses received were from a mixture of both the old and new evaluation forms and so we have combined the responses from across the two forms.

Feedback on service provision was very positive with all young people reporting that their advocates treated them with respect, 94% stating that their advocates were easy to talk to and 83% stating that their advocates listened to them. All young people reported that they were happy with the support they had received and all who were asked indicated that they would use the service again or would recommend the service to another young person. When asked the question young people did not identify anything that the service could or should do differently. One young person commented, "...all the support and help I received was a great standard. I am pleased at how well it went with this support," and another went on to say..."she was always very helpful in helping me plan what to say at my conferences".

67% of young people who were asked agreed that they felt more listened to by other professionals and that they had been more involved in the decision making process, 75% felt more confident to communicate their views or raise any concerns they may have in the future. When asked the question 'what has changed as a direct result of the advocacy' 44% were able to identify positive outcomes, which included:

- *I feel more confident with sharing my views with people and knowing that they listen.*
- *I knew what my rights were.*
- *I got the math's tutor I wanted.*
- *I felt better.*
- *I've been able to speak to people.*
- *I have moved placements twice 😊*
- *I have got more on my CV as they have introduced me to SMTIM.*

It should however be noted that a significant number of young people failed to answer this question and 2 young people reported that in their view nothing had changed. These young people did not however go on to identify anything that their advocate could have done differently. Despite this it is encouraging to hear directly from young people about the positive impact the service has had for many of them.

FEEDBACK FROM PROFESSIONALS

From January to March 2018 the service piloted the use of professional feedback forms and received 4 responses in total. When asked the question 'were young people more involved in decision making as a result of the advocacy' there was a 50/50 split in responses, however 75% reported that young people were more confident to express their views as a result of the advocacy. When asked what difference the advocacy had made, and for general feedback on the service, the following comments were made:

"...the service provided them with confidence to become an active participant. The young person is now very confident in voicing his opinions and accessing support".

"Just knowing that there was an adult, independent of other services, available to the young person made a difference."

“From a professional’s perspective, the advocacy service is invaluable in supporting children and young people who are often experiencing difficult and stressful situations”.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

AWARENESS OF THE SERVICE

This continues to be an area that needs to be developed as there are very few referrals being received from those in the education sector or fostering community, despite these two groups spending the most amount of time with children and young people. We have however received a high number of referrals directly from young people so it may be that foster carers are contributing by ensuring that young people have the information to self refer. Nevertheless, further attempts should be made to engage foster carers by forging further links with the Commissioning and Supporting Placement Team and York Area Foster Cares Association. Moving forward, the service aims to reach out to schools, in particular designated teachers and pastoral leads who will work directly with children and young people in care.

EVALUATION OF THE SERVICE

Although the number of evaluations compared to the number of referrals is better than last year, it is still relatively low. This makes it difficult to gain a true representation of the efficiency of the service and also the views of children and young people. Historically, it is known that gaining feedback from children and young people after the event is difficult, as they often don’t return forms or attend final meetings where an evaluation could be completed. This may be a result of the child or young person having no interest in taking part in the evaluation or not wanting to complete the form knowing it would be returned to their advocate directly.

The service has recently changed the way in which young people can provide their evaluation by working with young people to change the questions being asked to make them more straight forward. In doing this, the service has tailored how they receive feedback to suit how young people would prefer to respond. As this was done towards the end of the year, it is difficult to say if this will have an impact on the number of responses the service will receive with the new evaluation forms. This will however be evident in next years report.

Continuing to gather feedback from professionals will be a priority for the service going forward. Although only a small amount of feedback has been received from professionals to date, the messages from professionals working directly with children and young person regarding their views on how effective the advocacy has been has been invaluable.

CONCLUSION

This report has provided an overview of the advocacy service and the casework that has taken place during 2017/18. It has compared different statistics from 2017/18 and 2016/17 and highlighted and explored common advocacy themes, before identifying areas for further development.

REFERENCES

Department of Health (2002) *National Standards for the Provision of Children's Advocacy Services*. Department of Health Publications.

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Corporate Parenting Board**4 September 2018**

Report of the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Communities

Placement Stability**Summary**

1. This paper provides an update on placement stability for City of York Council's children in care.

Background

2. It is known that repeated placement moves can affect children in care's wellbeing and outcomes. Placement stability is measured by two indicators – 3 or more moves in one year; looked after for 2.5 years or more and stability for 2 years of those years.
3. This report highlights that there has been a reduction in placement stability over the past 3 years and places this in the context of our children in care numbers and demographic; our placement sufficiency. The report will offer vignette examples of reason for placement moves and impact.
4. City of York Council children's services department has identified placement sufficiency as a priority area and is conducting a Placement Review with a view to providing robust and flexible future proof placement options for our children in care. Progress on this review will be shared with Corporate Parenting Board in November.

Council Plan

5. This report links to the Council Plan priority - a focus on frontline services - to ensure all residents, particularly the least advantaged, can access reliable services and community facilities. Improving placement sufficiency will have a direct impact on improving frontline services for children in care.

Implications

- Financial - None
- Human Resources (HR) - None
- Equalities - None
- Legal - None
- Crime and Disorder - None
- Information Technology (IT) - None
- Property - None
- Other - None

Risk Management

6. There are risks to individual children of worsened outcomes by multiple placement moves.
7. The Placement Review is the mechanism by which the Local Authority will mitigate risk by meeting our sufficiency needs through flexible and responsive foster care provision, good quality emergency provision and residential provision.

Recommendations

8. The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to note the contents of this paper.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

Contact Details

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**Chief Officer Responsible for the
report:**

Jon Stonehouse
Corporate Director of Children,
Education and Communities

**Report
Approved**



Date
20.08.18

Specialist Implications Officer(s) - None

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annex

Annex A – Placement Stability

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Placement Stability

National Context

Nationally, regionally and locally there are challenges around Local Authority's ability to meet their placement sufficiency demands.

At a national level Government led reports have been commissioned around this area including the National Fostering Stocktake and Foster Care in England Report. Most recently the Government published Better Outcomes, in July 2018, which identifies 5 overriding themes to move forward quality and sufficiency of placement options for children in care.

Children are listened to and involved in decisions about their lives	Foster parents receive the support and respect they need and deserve to care for children	There are enough high quality fostering placements, in the right place, at the right time	LAs commission placements according to the needs of the child	Children experience stability regardless of permanence plan
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Regionally within the North East Children's Services Directors are leading a project on Placement Quality and Sufficiency.

Locally in York, we are working hard and collaboratively to seek robust future proof solutions through our Placement Review. This review is looking at fostering recruitment and retention, foster carer support and training, expectations linked to different fostering roles and levels of payment and external sufficiency provisions such as residential options.

An update on the Placement Review will be provided to Corporate Parenting Board in November 2018.

City of York Placement Context

Our children in care figures have remained relatively stable at around 200 young people since 2014/15. This is against a national and regional picture of increasing numbers over the past 5 years.

At December 2017 there were 196 children in care – 111 boys and 85 girls. For the entire care population (including Short Breaks which are

not included in the children in care statistics), there were 117 fostering households.

67 of the fostering households (57%) were listed as Mainstream carers, 27 (23%) were Connected Carer households, 14 (12%) were listed solely as Short Breaks, 8 (7%) were “on hold” and 1 had temporary approval for unknown type.

73% of the 196 young people in care were in our own mainstream fostering provision, 11% placed with parents, 8% in residential provision, the remaining children were living in a variety of placements, such as adoption placements, independent living and other residential provision.

City of York’s Placement Stability

There are two placement stability indicators – 3 or more moves in one year; continuously looked after for 2.5 years or more and in the same placement for at least the past 2 years.

Year	CYC % who experienced 3+ moves in 12 months	National
2017/18	12%	
2016/17	9%* Figures unreliable due to recording errors.	10%
2015/16	8%	
Year	Long term stability indicator Looked after for 2.5 years or longer OR placed for adoption and of 2.5 years same placement for 2 years	National
2017/18	59%	
2016/17	65%	70%
2015/16	68%	

Analysis

It is important to consider the figures in our unique context of small numbers of fostering households; most fostering households offering multiple placements and an increase in over 10's being in care.

We know that we have fewer fostering households than we have children in care, purely mathematically this indicates a level of sufficiency challenge. It also means that we have a high number of fostering households looking after more than 1 child. This in turn means we are more likely to impact on more than 1 child when we introduce a new child into a placement. This landscape is disadvantageous when it comes to options for emergency, short and longer term placement and impacts on our placement stability.

We know more than 60% of our care population is aged 10+ and that number of 10-15 year olds in our care is increasing. When a teenager becomes looked after in York, they are more likely to remain care until they are 18 than if they were a younger child, when other permanence options are more likely to be successfully explored. We know that having lived the majority of your childhood at home the transition to care is more challenging and the feelings and resultant behaviours for the young person may be more pronounced.

Equally a teenager will often come into care in a crisis situation. It is unlikely that they will move straight to their long term placement either because it is not viable or because we are actively working a plan of rehabilitation. Only when this is not successful do we search for a longer term placement option. Both these circumstances result in placement move and therefore impact on our stability figures in the context of the second indicator.

Vignettes

Although we know that stability for our children in care is of the utmost importance often a placement move is linked to positive change, such as bringing children back to York. It is also important to note that there are many different reasons for placement moves. To help illustrate this there are 3 vignettes based on real circumstances.

Emergency move

AB is a 14 year old female on a full care order. She had been with her foster carers for 7 years in a long term placement. This was her first placement and it was intended that she would remain in this placement until adulthood.

The placement was disrupted over a small issue, following an argument with her foster carers due to her social media/phone use, AB was frustrated and did not return home after school that night. Her foster carers endeavoured to locate her through contacting her friends and AB was located by her adult sibling and encouraged to return to sister's property to keep safe. The police visited AB at her family member's residence and agreed that she could remain there as an emergency measure with support from EDT. Over the course of the following weekend, attempts were made by her foster carers to encourage her to return AB to placement. On the Monday morning, AB was seen by her Social Worker. She advocated clearly that she did not want to return to carers and so a short term placement was found in the fostering household where AB's older sister lives. It was felt this would lessen the impact of AB's placement disruption. AB later moved to a long term placement.

Child who requested to move placement

EF is 15 year old girl. EF advocated clearly and eloquently that she was unhappy in her foster placement and that she wanted to move. EF was seeking a greater level of independence than she felt that the foster carers were promoting. The care afforded by the foster carers was appropriate and acceptable but for EF she did not feel comfortable within the household. EF is a very bright young person and as part of her coping strategies, she aims to please and does not want to disappoint people. As such she wore a cheery mask at home in placement despite struggling. Quite understandably, her foster carers were baffled when EF shared her unhappiness as her demeanour did not indicate that she was struggling.

Following EF's request, there were determined efforts to work with both EF and her foster carers to rectify the situation and offer ways to meet her needs within the placement. However, EF remained in her view and

it was clear by her presentation that her emotional welfare was being affected. Due to the lack of appropriate matches at that time EF was supported in remaining in her placement whilst we continued the search. This caused EF's anxieties to elevate and she was becoming more despondent and frustrated and it was having an impact on the other young people in placement. As such a short term placement was arranged with a foster carer for a fixed period of time to offer her respite from the stressful situation whilst we continued the search for the right long term carer.

Within days of this placement being made it was clear that EF's worry diminished and her demeanour began to improve. The temporary placement proved to be a resounding success with both EF and the foster carer building a fantastic bond very quickly. This is now EF's long term placement and she is making huge progress in all areas of her life. She has formed a strong and supportive relationship with the foster carer and is highly motivated to achieve good educational outcomes.

Planned Move

GH is a 17 year old young person. He has been looked after since he was 11 years old. He experienced a number of foster placements in the York area before moving into a residential unit at 13 years old. His behaviour was impulsive, challenging and he showed little concern for his own welfare. He struggled to settle and continued to put himself and others at risk to a point where unit staff did not feel that they could meet his needs.

GH was moved to a specialist residential unit outside of York where he found some stability and made positive progress. GH remained in the unit for 18 months and experienced success but felt a strong desire to leave as he had felt that he had outgrown his life in residential care. With support, he moved into a semi independent provision in the same area when he was 16 years old.

Whilst he enjoyed his new found independence it was becoming clear that GH wanted to return to his home town of York and be closer to his family. Over the next few months GH was supported in identifying options. A foster placement was requested for him to see him through to adulthood, support him with his emerging independence skills and

provide additional emotional support. An appropriate foster carer was identified who has experience in working in this area and introductions were arranged. GH travelled over to York to meet with the foster carer to introduce himself, GH then travelled over on 2 other separate occasions to have meetings with housing workers, E2E offices and his Social Worker to familiarise himself with the area prior to his placement move.

Corporate Parenting Board – Workplan 2017-18 and 2018-19

Meeting Date	Strategic Themes	Reports Supporting Strategic Theme	Other Reports
2017-2018			
26 June 2017	Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health; Wellbeing; Relationships & Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people in care, on the edge of care and care leavers 	
25 Sept 2017	Respect & Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Advocacy Report Annual SMTIM Report U Matter Survey 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Review of Placement Services
20 Nov 2017	Moving to Adulthood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on Pathway Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report Update
12 Feb 2018	Any other matters arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and Social Work Act - Update Update on Placement Review Update on IRO Annual Report 	
16 April 2018	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual School Update Primary Education data – children in care / Education: Secondary school 	<p>Verbal Update from Principle Social Worker (Childrens)</p> <p>Verbal update regarding Junior ISA for CYPIC</p>

Meeting Date	Strategic Themes	Reports Supporting Strategic Theme	Other Reports
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data children in care. 	
2018 - 2019			
5 June 2018	Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health; Wellbeing; Relationships & Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on EMH Partnership • You Are Not Alone Booklet 	
4 Sept 2018	Respect & Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Advocacy Report • Annual SMTIM Report • U Matter Survey 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concordat • Stability of Placements
22 Nov 2018	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant performance data • Update on emotional health including sdq and other data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Care Leaver Offer • Placement Review Update
5 Feb 2019	Good Safe Placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report • Update on Placement Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scorecard • Update on Regional Approach to Adoption •

Meeting Date	Strategic Themes	Reports Supporting Strategic Theme	Other Reports
20 March 2019	Any other matters arising		

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