

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

**To:** Councillors Looker (Chair), Brooks, Cuthbertson, Funnell, Potter, Runciman (Vice-Chair), Scott and Wiseman

**Date:** Monday, 3 December 2012

**Time:** 5.30 pm

**Venue:** The Guildhall, York

**AGENDA**

**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 3 - 8)

To approve and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Board held on 1 October 2012.

**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 5pm the working day before the meeting, in this case **5pm on Friday 30 November.**

To register, or for further information, please contact the Democracy Officer for this meeting using the details at the foot of the agenda.

**4. Looked After Children's Strategy - (Pages 9 - 16)**

**The Health of Looked After Children**

The Looked After Children's Strategy 2012-15 sets out the expected outcomes for looked after children and young people in relation to their health needs. It states "The health needs of children and young people are assessed and planned for, and they have appropriate access to all the health services they require. They are well and happy, and choosing healthy and active lifestyles." This report describes the action planning which is being undertaken to achieve the stated outcome for York's looked after children.

**5. Looked After Children's Strategy - Respect (Pages 17 - 24) and Involvement**

The Looked After Children's Strategy 2012-15 also sets out the expected outcomes for looked after children and young people in relation to respect for them and their involvement in service planning and development. This report identifies the areas for development and will provide the basis for a discussion with Children's Rights' Officers, who work with the Show Me That I Matter Panel (Children in care council) to ensure that the voice of looked after children is heard and acted upon by council officers, partners in related fields and elected members.

**6. Urgent Business**

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officers

Name: Catherine Clarke and Louise Cook (job-share)

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For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting Catherine Clarke and Louise Cook Democracy Officers

- Registering to speak
- Written Representations
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

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- ensure that what you want to say speak relates to an item of business on the agenda or an issue which the committee has power to consider (speak to the Democracy Officer for advice on this);
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### Further information about what's being discussed at this meeting

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### **Holding the Cabinet to Account**

The majority of councillors are not appointed to the Cabinet (39 out of 47). Any 3 non-Cabinet councillors can 'call-in' an item of business following a Cabinet meeting or publication of a Cabinet Member decision. A specially convened Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee (CSMC) will then make its recommendations to the next scheduled Cabinet meeting, where a final decision on the 'called-in' business will be made.

### **Scrutiny Committees**

The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:

- Monitor the performance and effectiveness of services;
- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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MEETING	CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
DATE	1 OCTOBER 2012
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS LOOKER (CHAIR), SCOTT, WISEMAN, BROOKS AND RUNCIMAN (VICE-CHAIR)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS FUNNELL, POTTER AND CUTHBERTSON

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## 8. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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

Cllr Scott expressed a non prejudicial personal interest that he had attended a meeting about becoming a potential Foster Parent with his wife.

## 9. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 10 July 2012 be approved and signed by the chair as a correct record.

## 10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Paul Kind spoke on matters within the remit of the Committee. Firstly he informed Members that he was a Foster Carer and the Chair of the Foster Association. He expressed his concerns with the YorOK Board's new Terms of Reference and that they were no longer meeting in public. He expressed concerns that decisions on Looked After Children (LAC) would be made in

private with no public scrutiny or press involvement. He felt this was a backwards step and urged the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) to raise these issues with the YorOk Board. He also suggested that the Foster Association attends a future CPB meeting

Members thanked Mr Kind for his comments and it was suggested that the YorOk Board should be invited to a future meeting to allow the CPB to understand which Strategic Partnership they feed into.

**11. ADOPTION, FOSTERING, EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVING SERVICES**

Members considered a report that focussed on a series of specific areas of interest relating to the Looked After Children's Strategy.

Officers gave an update on the annual report on the Adoption Service in York and informed Members that York had always been a high performing adoption agency that performed well in respect of placing a high percentage of children with a prospective adoptive family, usually within 12 months of the plan for adoption being agreed. Officers stated that due to York's geographical size they could not usually place York children with York adopters.

In answer to Members' questions, officers confirmed that:

- sibling group adoption was considered carefully because for some it could reawaken trauma. If siblings were separated then the adoptive families would be encouraged to have direct contact with each other.
- children who had been legally adopted were no longer the authorities responsibility.
- Any legally adopted children would become the Local Authorities responsibility where they were currently living if the adoption broke down but if they were not legally adopted they would return to our Local Authority.
- Children that were not adopted continue to live with long term foster parents.

Members thanked officers for their update and requested they receive a more detailed report at a future meeting which explains all the adoption statistics.<sup>3</sup>

Officers gave an update on the Fostering Service and stated that:

- They were inspected by Ofsted.
- Some foster carers in York offer homes to children right through to 18 years and beyond.
- they had a wide range of foster carers across the City.
- high volumes of training was given to potential foster carers and a child was always matched with a suitable carer.
- Management Teams received 3 monthly reports.
- The assessment progress for all potential foster carers was recommended via the Foster Panel.
- All foster carers had social workers to support them.

It was reported that the Service Manager for Fostering was a key member of the Council's Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children (LAC) and had led on achieving good safe placements and worked collaboratively with other key partners to promote best practice. The Strategic Partnership for LAC Committee would be reporting to the newly established Corporate Parenting Board (CPB).

In answer to some of Members questions it was confirmed that:

- A review would always take place when Foster Carers resign.
- Their resignation would go forward to the Foster Panel where questions would be asked as to why they had chosen to no longer foster.
- Any complaints made about a foster carer were taken seriously and a decision would be made by the Foster Panel as to whether they could continue to foster.

Members thanked officers for their update and agreed to invite the Foster Association to a future meeting and to maintain regular dialogue with them.<sup>1</sup> Members also felt it would be beneficial to invite the Chair and some young people from the 'Show Me that I Matter' panel.<sup>2</sup>

The new virtual team were present at the meeting and the virtual Headteacher confirmed they were in the very early

stages of developing an action plan to support all Looked After Children (LAC) in education. She informed Members of their current plans and development priorities, such as:

- Revising the structure and constitution of the senior leadership team to ensure that it had capacity to impact on learner outcomes.
- Developing data analysis and tracking systems to ensure that they were more robust.
- Reviewing the deployment of the specialist teacher for LAC so that schools were supported to implement targeted interventions.
- Developing and introducing learner profiles for LAC children and young people.
- Using the School Improvement partner visits to probe end of Key Stage 1 (KS1) attainment for LAC.
- Adding further data to show the performance of LAC in English and maths combined at the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2) and the percentage of LAC pupils who made 2 levels progress between KS1 and KS2.
- Collecting and analysing data about the progress of Year 3 and Year 4 LAC pupils.
- Develop analysis performance in Key Stage 4 to include a broader range of indicators to more accurately track the progress and future progression of LAC pupils.

Members thanked officers for their update and were pleased that each individual child would be tracked throughout their school years and be supported to progress and achieve.

The Pathway Team updated Members on the support they offer Looked after Children (LAC) who were moving into adulthood. Officers confirmed they were:

- creating more supported accommodation options.
- developing a more consistent approach to preparing young people for independent living by creating a programme that builds up their skills which can be used in a variety of settings.



- ensuring the sustainability of the Staying Put scheme by recruiting enough foster carers to replace those whose young people stay put.
- adopting a more structured approach to the identification of young people's skills and learning needs when they are moving to independent living, and include this in the planning process.
- ensuring there was easy access to mental health and counselling services for care leavers and young adults up to the age of 25.
- putting in place a system of exit interviews for care leavers approaching 21 years, and use this information to improve the service.
- jointly, with other agencies, create more accessible social, leisure, sport and cultural opportunities for care leavers, to equip them to enjoy living independently.
- putting in place better arrangements for the provision of health care to young people and care leavers who are no longer at school, and offer them choices in how they access health care and information.
- using the new provision at Howe Hill to build on and develop existing links with colleagues in housing, education and the voluntary sector, to increase the Education, Training and Employment options available to care leavers.

In answer to Members questions officers confirmed that the dentist situation had improved as more LAC were now registered with a dentist before they turned 18.

Members were pleased that Howe Hill Hostel and trainer flats were available to offer support to LAC moving into their own accommodation as it can be an isolated and lonely time.

Members thanked all officers for their updates and were delighted with the work that was being achieved.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the quarterly updates be noted.
- (ii) That a more detailed report explaining all the Adoption statistics be brought to a future meeting.

- (iii) That the Foster Association be invited to a future meeting.
- (iv) That the Chair and young people from the 'Show Me That I Matter' Panel be invited to attend a future meeting.

REASON:

The Board will be able to ensure that all partners in the Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children are making good progress to address the areas for development identified in the Looked After Children's strategy 2012-15 and the Pledge to Looked After Children.

Action Required

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| Invite the Foster Carers Association to a future CPB meeting                                       | HL |
| Invite the Chair and some young people from the 'Show me that I Matter' Panel                      | HL |
| Ensure a more detailed report explaining all the Adoption statistics be available a future meeting | HL |

**12. 2012/13 WORK PLAN AND DATES FOR 2013 MEETINGS**

Members consider the Board's 2012/13 work plan.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Chair and Head of Services Resources meet to consider the agenda for future meetings.
- (ii) That the YorOk Board be invited to a future meeting.
- (iii) That LAC in Education be considered at the meeting in April 2013.

REASON:

To progress the work of the Board.

Cllr Looker, Chair  
[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.35 pm].



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## Corporate Parenting Board

3 December 2012

Report of the Assistant Director, Children's Specialist Services

### **Looked After Children's Strategy - The Health of Looked After Children**

#### **Summary**

1. Our Looked after Children and young people have similar health risks and issues to their peers. Unfortunately for many they enter care with a poorer level of health as a consequence of their earlier care experiences. Research demonstrates that for many Looked After Children their health outcomes are likely to be significantly poorer than all children. Recognising these risks and issues our local strategy prioritises this aspect of Looked After childrens lives to ensure:

“The health needs of children and young people are assessed and planned for, and they have appropriate access to all the health services they require. They are well and happy, and choosing healthy and active lifestyles”

2. To underpin this commitment the Council and its partners have pledged:
  - We will support you to lead a healthy and happy life.

#### **Background**

3. There are important messages from both national and local research which must also influence our arrangements to support the best possible outcomes for our Looked After Children.

4. Nationally, Looked After Children and Young People said that the greatest threats to their safety and welfare were drugs (25% of respondents) and alcohol (17%). Smoking was mentioned by 5%.

(Ofsted Children's Care Monitor 2010)

5. Consultation with our Looked after Children in York tells us that our Looked After Children and Young People:
- agree that they sometimes have particular health needs, and are not opposed in principle to health assessments.
  - want to keep their own GP after coming into care, and want their health information to be kept private at reviews and other meetings.
  - want more information and more choice about where and how health assessments were done.

6. What we have done so far:

- We have put in place an effective system for health assessments of children and young people when they become looked after, so that their health needs can be addressed promptly.
- Action is being taken to ensure that this is effectively re-commissioned as health services are restructured.
- Health commissioners have carried out research into children and young people's experiences of initial health assessments, but the results were affected by a low response rate, and more feedback is planned.
- Through the Cultural Offer to Looked After Children and Care Leavers, we prioritise and support access for Looked After Children and Young People to council-run sport and leisure activities.

## 7. Consultation

- Staying in regular close contact with all of our Looked After Children and finding proactive and dynamic opportunities for them to express their views and to be involved is at the heart of our consultation approach.
- The designated doctor and nurse have attended the Show Me That I matter Panel to consult young people in relation to their experience of health provision while in care.
- In addition there is valuable information gleaned from the individual consultations undertaken by the child's social worker and the independent reviewing officer at each child care review.
- Through this consultation approach we are able to continue to gather the important messages from our Looked After Children and with them identify what the Council and its health partners should be doing to improve their outcomes and their overall experience of care.

## 8. Current Progress

- We have increased the percentage of Initial Health Assessments (IHA) for Looked After Children that are undertaken within statutory timescales (i.e. within 20 working days of the child or young person becoming Looked After) but are still working with colleagues in Children's Social Care to further increase this; it is an expectation of Commissioners that 90% of IHAs will be completed within 20 working days of a child becoming Looked After.
- Quality audits of initial & review health assessments, as well as the recent Ofsted Inspection, have shown the quality of assessments to be good.
- Ongoing quality audits will ensure that this high standard is maintained.

- A recent development has been that when children are medically examined due to concerns about abuse or neglect, the opportunity is taken to include information that would inform a Looked After Children Initial Health Assessment (where appropriate), thus avoiding two health assessments needing to be undertaken on the same child within a short period of time.

9. What we are going to do next:

- Appoint a designated Looked After Children's nurse to work with a wide range of professionals and agencies to ensure that Looked After Children and Young People receive appropriate health services.
- Develop and commission an integrated service for holistic initial and review health assessments for children and young people ages 0-18, through the planned Initial and Review Health Assessment projects, due to start in Autumn 2011.
- These services will be provided in accordance with the You're Welcome initiative, which aims to make health provision more accessible and user friendly, and Looked After Children and Young People will be involved in their design.
- Find out why some young people don't wish to take part in health assessments, and how the delivery of the service could be improved for them.
- Put in place better arrangements for the provision of health care to young people and care leavers who are no longer at school, and offer them choices in how they access health care and information.

'Health Passports' for Care Leavers. This would provide Care Leavers with the sort of information that is generally held by parents of non-Care Leavers, which is frequently needed for further education & job applications, as well as to enable the young person to continue to effectively address any health needs that they have and have a complete as possible record of their health & development during their growing years.

- Ensure that the timeliness and quality of health assessments is monitored and the results used to continuously improve the service.

10. Delivering These Changes

- Dr Barbara Stewart, designated doctor and Sue Roughton, designated nurse are attending the Board today to describe the work underway to deliver the changes described above and to report on progress.

11. **Options**

The Board is asked to consider the information about the progress that is being made in the health provision for looked after children

12. **Analysis**

Dr Barbara Stewart, designated doctor for looked after children and Sue Roughton, the designated nurse will attend the Board to advise upon progress with this plan.

13. **Council Plan**

The Corporate Parenting Board will be ensuring that the work of partners for looked after children contributes to the aims of

- The Children and Young People's Plan
- Building strong communities
- Protecting vulnerable people

Through the positive outcomes for looked after children , the aim is for them to be able to benefit from and contribute to

- Get York moving
- Create jobs and grow the economy
- Protect the environment

14. **Implications**

Implications noted

- **Financial** Not applicable
- **Human Resources (HR)** Not applicable
- **Equalities** Not applicable
- **Legal** Not applicable
- **Crime and Disorder** Not applicable
- **Information Technology (IT)** Not applicable
- **Property** Not applicable
- **Other** None

15. **Risk Management**

There is no major risk in accepting this option. Good progress is being made in ensuring that looked after young people are receiving good health care provision.

16. **Recommendations**

Members are asked to consider the progress that has been made in relation to plans to meet with health needs of looked after children and young people to ensure that all those involved with children and young people are collaborating to consolidate the arrangements for children's health provision and to improve in accordance with the strategy.

Reason: So that the Board is keep up to date with progress that is being made in the health provision for looked after children.



**Contact Details**

Author:  
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Head of Service  
Children's Social Care  
Adult Children and Education  
Ext 5357

Report  Date 22/11/12  
Approved

Eoin Rush  
Assistant Director  
Children' Specialist Services  
Ext 4212

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

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

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## Corporate Parenting Board

3 December 2012

Report of the Assistant Director, Children's Specialist Services

### Looked After Children's Strategy – Respect and Involvement

#### Summary

1. One of the clearest and loudest messages from our Looked After Children is that they be treated with respect and included in all the decision making that effects their lives. Our Looked After Children strategy captures this commitment stating:  
  
“All those involved with children and young people treat them with respect, listen to their views and are reliable and trustworthy. Children and young people are involved in, and understand, the decisions made about their lives. They know how to get the information, advice and support they need, and how to complain”
2. An undertaking has been made by the officers and members of the council and its partners to children and young people
  - You will have your own social worker who is reliable, trustworthy and who will listen and treat you with respect.
  - You will be made aware of your rights, choices and the things you are entitled to, including your right to complain if you are unhappy.
  - We will arrange your child care reviews in a way that best suits you and covers the things that are important to you.

#### Background

What we know about children and young people's experience:

Nationally (Ofsted Children's Care Monitor 2010)

3. Items noted

- 53% of children and young people said their opinion was usually/always sought on things that mattered to them.
- 15% said that their opinion is not usually/never sought.
- 51% thought their opinions make a difference to the decisions about their lives.

Nationally (Children on Independent Reviewing Officers 2011)

4. Items noted

- 71% who had an IRO said they knew how to contact their IRO, and 29% said they didn't know how to contact them.

5. What we have done so far:

- We have two active groups, Show Me That I Matter (SMTIM) aged 11 and over, and I Matter Too (IM2) aged 8-11, of children and young people in which they can talk about their experiences and wishes to responsible people, including councillors, and influence decision-making.
- Children and young people have taken part in a research consultation exercise with York University to inform the City of York Council's Pledge, and participated in the making of 2 DVD to promote this.
- Reviewing officers are improving participation in reviews by encouraging children and young people to chair and/or evaluate their reviews.
- All newly Looked After Children receive an introductory visit from their IRO to explain the role.
- The Children's Rights and Advocacy Service provides volunteer advocates when requested, and provides advice and support, including at reviews.
- It has also set up a Facebook page and is developing a children and young people's website.

## Consultation

6. Staying in regular close contact with all of our Looked After Children and finding proactive and dynamic opportunities for them to express their views and to be involved is at the heart of our consultation approach.
7. The Children's Rights and Advocacy Service have run sessions with young people to enable the greater engagement of a wider group of looked after children. Two key events were the Celebration Event at the Global Centre and the Picnic in Rowntrees Park.
8. Through this consultation approach we are able to gather the important messages from our Looked After Children and with them identify what the Council and its partners should be doing to improve their outcomes and their overall experience of care.
9. Our work with our Looked After Children over the past two years has highlighted some new issues and reinforced some familiar ones. Overall it is clear our Looked After Children are unanimous in their wish for inclusion in all of the decision making about their specific care and more broadly in any service developments that may impact on their peers.
10. The young people's work to develop a Council pledge for all Looked After Children highlighted some very specific issues to be addressed and improved.
11. Children and young people are involved in, and understand, the decisions made about their lives. They know how to get the information, advice and support they need, and how to complain.
  - Children and Young People will have their own social worker who is reliable, trustworthy and who will listen and treat them with respect.
  - Children and Young People will be made aware of their rights, choices and the things they are entitled to, including their right to complain if they are unhappy.

- We will arrange children and young people's child care reviews in a way that best suits them and covers the things that are important to them.

Locally (CYC Pledge Consultation 2011)

12. Items noted

- Children and young people want social workers who care, are reliable and will listen and treat them with respect.
- They want more information about what is going to happen to them and where they are going to live.
- They think their reviews can be long, boring and repetitive, and their views don't make much difference.
- They liked the experience of being consulted as a group, and want to do more of it.

Locally (CYC Quality Assurance data)

13. Items noted

- Too few children and young people are directly consulted by the reviewing officer before their review
- 98% of over 5s communicate their views to reviews, mostly by indirect means.

What we are going to do next:

14. Our strategy describes the steps we will take as:

- Extend our current consultation and involvement of children and young people to a wider, more representative group, so that it fulfils the function of a Children in Care Council.

- Ensure all Looked After Children receive a 'Rate My Review' postcard from their IRO to get feedback about their experience of the care planning process.
- Increase the number of children and young people actively participating in their reviews, year on year, and ensure that children and young people feel that their involvement in their reviews has made a difference.
- Find ways of ensuring that care planning decisions, such as change of placement, are not made outside the review process, and that children and young people are involved in these decisions.
- Provide children and young people who are old enough to have them with a copy of their placement plan.

## Options

15. Elected members are invited to receive feedback on the delivery these changes. Nikki Wilson, Children's Right's officer and Michelle Howlett will be attending the Board today to describe the work underway to deliver the changes described above and to report on progress. They have invited young people from Show Me That I matter Panel to join them and meet the Corporate Parenting Board.

## Analysis

### Our Response

16. Acting promptly and transparently on the views and requests of our Looked After Children is critical to their ongoing confidence in the people and organisations that contribute to their care. Feeding back to our young people describing any changes that are proposed as a result of their views and, perhaps more importantly, explaining clearly why some changes cannot be made has to be at the heart of our respect and involvement approach.
17. We have described clearly in our strategy and through a variety of supporting tools, DVD's, handbooks and word of mouth how we will

respond to the respect and involvement challenges raised by our Looked After Children.

## **Council Plan**

18. The Corporate Parenting Board will be ensuring that the work of partners for looked after children contributes to the aims of
  - The Children and Young People's Plan
  - Building strong communities
  - Protecting vulnerable people
  
19. Through the positive outcomes for looked after children , the aim is for them to be able to benefit from and contribute to
  - Get York moving
  - Create jobs and grow the economy
  - Protect the environment

## **20 Implications**

- **Financial** Not applicable
- **Human Resources (HR)** Not applicable
- **Equalities** Not applicable
- **Legal** Not applicable
- **Crime and Disorder** Not applicable
- **Information Technology (IT)** Not applicable
- **Property** Not applicable
- **Other** None

## **Risk Management**

20. There is no major risk in accepting this option. Good progress is being made in ensuring that looked after young people are accorded respect and involved in their decision making.



## Recommendations

21. Members are asked to consider the progress that has been made since the establishment of the Show Me That I Matter Panel (Children In Care Council) and agree a timetable for the report from the Children's Right's Officer and the Panel to the Corporate Parenting Board to monitor the effectiveness of the Looked After Children's Strategy 2012-15.

Reason: This will ensure that all those involved with children and young people treat them with respect, listen to their views and are reliable and trustworthy.

## Contact Details

### **Author:**

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01904 555357

### **Chief Officer Responsible**

Eoin Rush  
Assistant Director  
Children's Specialist  
Services  
01905 554200

### **Report Approved**

**Date** 22/11/12

## Specialist Implications Officer(s)

**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:** None

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