

Agenda item:

**[No.]**

**Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee On 11 November, 2010**

<b>Briefing for:</b>	<b>Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee</b>
<b>Title:</b>	The Formation of Haringey's Children in Care Council
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<b>Date:</b>	11 November, 2010

1. Following on from the 6 June 2010 'Stocktake' meeting with children and young people in care, a specific council has been set up to provide a regular forum for children and young people in care and care leavers to express their views about all issues which affect them.
2. The aims of the council will be to:
  - promote the views of children and young people by creating regular opportunities for them to come together to share their collective experiences, so that they can be listened to and be supported to help effect positive change for those in care;
  - provide opportunities for children and young people in care to be consulted on matters that affect them;
  - provide all children and young people in care with information about the council and to raise awareness in adults of their needs;
  - reflect the diversity of children and young people in care;
  - strengthen the resilience of children and young people in care.

3. Children and young people were invited to attend two meetings to discuss the purpose of the council, how it will work and to agree their priorities for the first year. No children in care turned up for the first meeting, which was scheduled to take place on Saturday, 16 October. Twelve young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-three attended the second meeting which took place on Tuesday 19 October, 2010. Six of these young people were in care before they were sixteen. The others entered care after sixteen. A care leaver also brought her four month old baby to the meeting.
4. The meeting was lively and informative. The young people's experiences of being in care are varied and they were very willing to share their views on how services could be improved for all those in care.
5. The group have proposed a name, "Young in Care Council" (YCC) and intend to work towards establishing two sub groups; one for children who are twelve and under, the other for those who are thirteen and older. The young people would like membership of the YCC to be open to all children in Haringey's care and to include representatives for disabled children, fostered children, those in residential units, unaccompanied asylum seeking children and ex-care leavers. They also wish to create a logo.
6. The overriding aim of the council will be to make things better for children and young people in care.
7. The council wish to explore the possibility of inviting members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee to future meetings and welcome the opportunity to send reports to or attend CPAC.
8. A member of this group has agreed to represent the Young in Care Council at national forums and will be attending a meeting with the Children's Minister, Tim Loughton, in November. The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity for representatives from London's CiC Councils to talk to the minister about how to make improvements happen.
9. To find out how other local authorities are meeting the requirement to provide CiCC officers have attended meetings with other London based participation workers.
10. To encourage the engagement of more children and young people in care, participation officers will plan another event, in consultation with the young people.

## **Background information**

On 12 June, 2010, Haringey Council asked children and young people in their care to evaluate the services provided to them. Copies of the reports based on the responses from both the junior and senior groups are attached.

### **Options for consideration**

There is not an agreed model for children in care councils. The ideas and proposals within this report are still being developed by young people. We are at the early stages of establishing the council and it is imperative that our children and young people in care play a meaningful role in developing the council. To encourage their participation, they must feel that they have some ownership of the whole process.

### **Legal Implications**

DCSF White Paper, **Care Matters: Time for Change**, 2007 sets out the framework for Children in Care Councils.

*“Whatever structures exist in a children’s services authority, children’s participation is an essential part of the process. We expect every local authority to establish a Children in Care Council to ensure that every child has the opportunity to air their views. In making these arrangements the local authority should consider in particular the needs of disabled children and very young children. Through the CiCC, children and young people would be able to put their experiences of the care system directly to those responsible for corporate parenting including the DCS and Lead member, who should demonstrate how they will maintain contact with children and young people in care.”*

The main legislation in respect of the CiCC is the Children and Young Persons Act 2008, which is underpinned by the white paper.

### **Policy Implications**

Policy and procedures related to hearing the voice of children and young people will be reviewed to ensure compliance with the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and Care Matters.

The Children in Care Council will enable the views of looked after children and young people, including those from Black and minority ethnic communities and those with disabilities to be sought and taken into account.