

Date of Panel	7 April 2014	Agenda Item	6
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Children in Care Council: Today's Children Tomorrow's Future

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Division: Children and Families Integrated Support and Social Care

Report Summary

Purpose of report:

To update Corporate Parenting Panel about the activities of Milton Keynes Council Today's Children Tomorrows Future (TCTF) since the last report.

Background:

Local Authorities are required to establish mechanisms which empower young people to act positively and effect change in their own lives. A Children in Care Council (TCTF) is established in Milton Keynes to enable regular, good quality dialogue and involvement in the planning and delivering of services, and to ensure that the Children In Care Council has direct links to the Director of Children's Services and Elected Members.

The existence, quality and effectiveness of this arrangement is monitored by Ofsted through inspection.

Corporate Priorities:

TCTF represent a central plank in the council's participation agenda through which we seek to provide responsive and effective services. Through active engagement with and listening to service users we aim to ensure that those services meet the expressed needs and improve outcomes for children in care and those leaving care, in line with the Council's Children & Families 2013/14 priority to deliver effective services to children and young people in and moving on from the council's care.

Performance Information:

N/A

Equality and Diversity Impact:

The Corporate Parenting service is provided for children from across the Milton Keynes community. It therefore needs to provide interventions that can meet the diverse needs of the children and young people in the Council's care.

Recommendations /Proposals:

That the report be noted.

That it be noted that officers are actively looking at ways to engage a wider representation of Children in Care in the range of TCTF meetings, activities and events.

Full Report

Since the last report the following activities have been undertaken with either TCTF involvement or as a result of their suggestions and requests:

- i. **TCTF quarterly meeting with councillors:** The agenda items discussed at this meeting were: Corporate Parenting Panel, support for looked after young people, TCTF delivering training.

TCTF found out more information about what the Corporate Parenting Panel is and discussed their attendance at Panels in future.

TCTF felt that looked after children and young people would benefit from a 24/7 helpline that they would be able to use if they had a problem which would not be recognised as an ESWT issue, but that they needed some support with (emotional or otherwise).

TCTF currently deliver training to potential foster carers, which they are proud of and enjoy. In future they would like to deliver training to new councillors and to social workers within Milton Keynes.

- ii. **Children in Care Youth Group:** The pilot for the children in care group is underway. The group is an opportunity for children in care to get together, take part in activities, complete their homework and eat a meal together. The response to the group has been very positive. Approximately 25 children have signed up to the group so far and the children and carers are keen for the group to continue.

- iii. **Plans for True Triumph 2014:** TCTF members have continued working on this year's True Triumph. The group have visited the venue, agreed the activities, selected invitation and award design, agreed the evening menu and also had input into the selection of the speaker. TCTF have also asked if they can help support on the day and so we are looking at potential roles and what they would like to do.

- iv. **Potential Foster Carer Training:** TCTF members have taken part in the training of potential foster carers. Young people attend the training to address fears and concerns of potential carers, discussing with them what it is like to be a looked after child.

- v. **Interview Training:** This took place in February 2014. The purpose was to help children and young people to gain an understanding of recruitment process, expectations of interviews, the process of interviewing for a role, creating questions and expected behaviours within an interview. From this session young people are now eligible to sit on future interview panels for

staff members. This was run jointly with YCab (Youth Cabinet) members.

- vi. **Interview Panel:** Following the training, young people one young person has been involved with an interview as a member on an adult panel. This was their first experience which both they and the professionals found very positive.
- vii. **E-safety Session:** This event was aimed at Foster Carers and Young People. The purpose of the session was for them to learn about internet safety and raise awareness of both the benefits and the challenges of young people using the internet. This time the event coincided with Internet Safety day. After a previous lack of uptake, a big push was given to encourage carers and young people along: we had 6 young people and 6 carers attend the session. Feedback from the session was positive.
- viii. **BrightSpots consultation:** TCTF plus other CIC took part in a national consultation about the journey of being in care. The consultation was run by CORAM Voice. The staff who ran the session were very complimentary about the group and said in future they would be keen to consult them on other national agendas.
- ix. **TCTF meeting with Interim Head of Delivery: Corporate Parenting:** TCTF met with Graham Reiter, the new Interim Head of Delivery For Corporate Parenting. TCTF and Graham exchanged conversation about their roles. TCTF discussed the benefits of the diaries pilot they completed and the work they have done so far for True Triumph. Graham asked TCTF to consider if they would like to attend the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- x. **Health Assessment leaflet review:** The LAC Health Nurses are producing a leaflet about health assessments which they have asked TCTF to look over. The group analysed the leaflet and gave useful feedback to the team.