

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – APRIL 2017

Title of paper:	Children in Care Council – Have Your Say Survey Results 2016		
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Helen Blackman – Director, Children’s Integrated Services	Wards affected:	All
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Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)			
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:			
Strategic Regeneration and Development			<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools			<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing			<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services			<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer			<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport			<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector			<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture			<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration			<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):			
<p>a. The findings from the 2016 Have Your Say survey of Children in Care and Care Leavers have been analysed by the Children in Care (CiC) Council who have assessed performance against the results of previous years using a traffic light rating system.</p> <p>b. The findings provide insight into how Children in Care and Care Leavers perceive the quality and value of services they receive. It is recommended that these findings are used to inform and guide relevant action plans.</p> <p>c. Based on this year’s results, four priority areas have been identified for attention and/or action, these area linked to following Children in Care and Care Leavers Charter Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will make sure they know about the advocacy and complaints services in case they want help to have their views heard or are unhappy with us. - We will keep our children and young people safe and well by: Seeing that they have the right place to live as quickly as possible - We know that a change of home, carer, social worker or school can easily cause problems for a child or young person so we promise to do all we can to prevent such changes unless they are absolutely necessary to keep the child or young person safe and well. - We will help our children and young people to plan for and achieve a successful journey into independent adulthood. 			

Recommendation(s):	
1	The findings from the survey results are used to inform relevant service and corporate action and business plans.
2	The Board recognises the hard work done by the Children in Care Council in the planning, delivery and analysis of the Have Your Say survey, and acknowledges their vital role in the co-production of services across children's social care.
3	To implement the findings of the 2016 Have Your Say survey as appropriate.

1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Ensuring that the views of service users are used to inform service improvement is a cross-cutting theme of both the Children and Young People's Plan and the Corporate Parenting Action Plan. It is one of the primary means by which the Corporate Parenting Board demonstrates the active participation of corporately parented children and young people in decision-making at strategic and operational level.
- 1.2 Other significant drivers include the various safeguarding related inspection criteria that require the Board to evidence service user participation; Munro Report recommendations on developing a child centred approach to service design and delivery; Nottingham City Participation Strategy commitment to Article 12 on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 1.3 Previous iterations of the survey have provided significant insight into the views and experiences of Children in Care and Care Leavers which in turn has been used to shape improvement plans for a number of service areas.

2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 The pledges contained in the Nottingham City Children in Care and Care Leavers' Charter commit the Board and its constituent partners to work towards the highest standard of service delivery to Children in Care and Care Leavers corporately parented by the Board.
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- 2.3 The principal means of performance assessment against the pledges is through the annual Have Your Say (HYS) Survey, which is sent out to all Children in Care and those Care Leavers in contact with services.

- 2.4 730 surveys were sent out to children aged 3 and over this year. There were 135 usable returns, thus we achieved an 18.5% response rate. This is a very slight decrease when compared to our response rate in 2015 of 19%. Our response rate compares to an approximately 4.3% response rate nationally for the most recent Care Monitor survey in 2015.
- 2.5 In addition to the standard HYS survey, an optional easy read version for children under 10 years and those with learning difficulties was sent out as an alternative form of feedback. The questions were not linked to the overall survey and as result the findings have not been incorporated into the RAG assessments, however findings will form part of our evidence base. The primary purpose of the survey is to encourage participation our younger cohort of children and to cultivate a culture of participation.
- 2.6 As in previous years, the survey was accompanied by the 'You Said, We Did' feedback statement. The statement identifies actions that were undertaken to address the priorities highlighted as a result of the 2016 Have Your Say survey.
- 2.7 In analysing the survey results, the Children in Care Council used a RAG rating system to indicate how well they thought services are performing compared to the pledges made in the Children in Care and Care Leavers Charter. RAG rating colours – red, amber and green – identify the degree to which services are perceived to be doing well or improving, or require some form of attention and/or improvement.

In comparison with results from last year, performance in all but two charter commitments has either remained static with the same RAG rating, or has improved. 95% of respondents felt that their Social Worker had time for them, which is the highest figure since the inception of the survey in 2011, likewise 99% of respondents felt their opinions were heard and made a difference to decisions made in their lives, which is also the highest figure since the launch of the survey in 2011. Another example of improvement can be found in the results for our commitment on change. Of those young people who have experienced a change in placement, Social Worker or school, 70% were satisfied that they had received help to cope which was 'good' or 'very good'. This represents a 9 percentage point increase on the 2015 survey, and a 12 percentage point increase on the 2014 survey showing consistent and strong improvement. The areas that the Children in Care Council found worthy of further analysis and scrutiny are explored below (2.8). It is worth noting that, in an instance where a charter commitment has been rated red, amber or green with elements of amber, it is not necessarily implied that the CiC Council believe the Service is inadequately performing in these areas, only that they are regarded as areas of priority focus and on-going scrutiny.

- 2.8 The areas identified for further focus and enquiry corresponds with the following Children in Care and Care Leaver commitments:

Charter Commitment: we will make sure they know about advocacy and complaints services in case they want help to have their views heard or are unhappy with us.

This year's survey revealed that Children in Care and Care Leavers have greater awareness of the complaints service, and are more willing to speak to the advocacy service, than in 2015. However, there was a 5 percentage point drop (from 92% to 87%) in those who knew where to go if they had a problem or wanted to make a

complaint. The CiC Council propose that this is addressed and monitored through the imminent roll-out of the MOMO (Mind of My Own) engagement and feedback app, through which Children in Care and Care Leavers will be able to raise issues of concern and be signposted to further help.

Charter Commitment: We will keep our children and young people safe by seeing that they have the right place to live as quickly as possible.

Just under 4 in 5 respondents (79%) considered that 'where they are living is the right care place for them', which is down 6 percentage points on the 2015 return. The CiC Council felt that more work should be carried out to identify the reasons for this reduction and maintain a focus on providing Children in Care with the optimum level of choice over their care placements.

Charter Commitment: We know that a change of home, carer, social worker or school can easily cause problems for a child or young person so we promise to do all we can to prevent such changes unless they are absolutely necessary to keep the child or young person safe and well.

The CiC Council recognises that good progress has been made in providing Children in Care and Care Leavers a more settled experience across a range of settings (home, carer, school and social worker), and also recognises that satisfaction with how change was managed has also increased. However, on the basis that almost three quarters of respondents (73%) have experienced one or more changes in the above settings in the past 12 months, the CiC Council wants focus to remain on having more stable environments in which children and young people can learn and grow.

Charter Commitment: we will help our children and young people to plan for and achieve a successful journey into independent adulthood.

The survey revealed that most young people felt they have the basic skills to become independent (cleaning, cooking, ironing and washing clothes), broadly in keeping with 2015 levels. However, there is an increase in those who would like help with preparing for interviews, budgeting money, finding information on jobs and training and being a responsible tenant. The CiC Council recognises that more children and young people asking for help can be seen as a positive development as they are taking charge of their lives, but also felt that further investigation was warranted. In addition they would like to explore different ways in which younger Children in Care can develop key life skills before they reach the age of 15 and start their Leaving Care Pathway Plan.

The following areas have been proposed as subjects for the three 2017-18 Corporate Children in Care Council meetings:

- Having the right place to live at the right time
- Reducing change in the care journey
- Building skills for independent living

- 2.9 In line with good practice the survey will undergo annual review by the CiC Council. Potential changes to the way questions are asked will be identified and made in order to ensure questions are easily understood by respondents and that the answers yield high quality information that can be used to influence decision making. In particular the question about the regularity with which people see family members and friends while in care requires redrafting in order to give us answers we can interpret and develop insight from.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Not to use or implement the findings from the survey – discounted - since the Have Your Say survey was introduced in 2011, it has served as a highly effective tool to gain primary insight into the lives of children in care and care leavers, in relation to how they perceive the services we offer to them. It is therefore an invaluable and unique tool, and should continue to be consulted as a primary data set for the purpose of service development.

4 FINANCE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

- 4.1 The cost of the Have Your Say survey is approximately £1000 per year, consisting primarily of printing and postage. This cost is currently met by the Children in Care team, who also provide officer support. Survey structuring and results analysis is provided by the Strategic Insight team, citizen engagement and overall management by the Engagement Lead officer.
- 4.2 Improvements in services based on the insight from service user views can lead to a wide spectrum of benefits, including resource efficiencies.

5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)

- 5.1 Each survey has a unique reference number enabling all responses to be screened for individual safeguarding and specific service-use complaints.

6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)

- 6.1 None.

7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No



An EIA is not required because:

(Please explain why an EIA is not necessary)

Not needed as the report does not contain proposals or financial decisions.

8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

8.1 Have Your Say survey.

9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

9.1 Nottingham City Children and Young People's Plan.

9.2 Children in Care and Care Leavers' Charter:
http://nottinghamcitychildcare.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/care_leav_chart.pdf