

## CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

9 October 2017

### Change Council Update

#### 1. Regional Work:

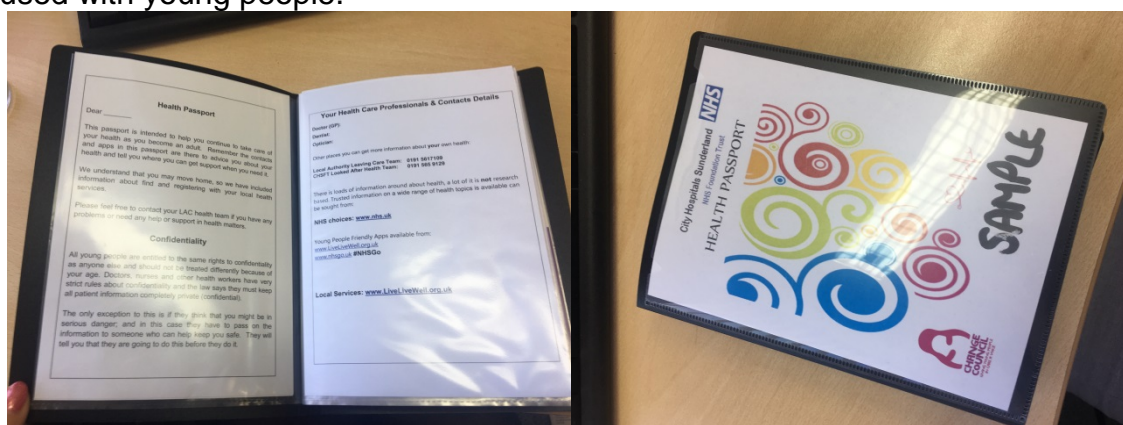
We have been working hard as a region to prepare for our second regional children in care council. The conference is going to take place on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November in Stockton this year at the ARC Centre. It is a fully young person led conference. This year's conference will include hearing the direct experiences, views and ideas from children in care and leaving care.

There will be keynote speakers, including inspirational young people talking about their stories, and a range of workshops that professionals can book onto. Sunderland will be leading and delivering a workshop around mental health and being in care. There will also be a panel of young people in the day that professionals will be able to ask direct questions to. If you would like to attend the event you will need to follow the attached link;

<http://arconline.co.uk/book-tickets?n=3876&sid=8181036>

#### 2. Health passport:

As mentioned at the last CPB, young people in change council had been working on the development of a new health passport. The completed version is now in place and being used with young people.



### 3. Waiting Room at Durham Road

We have been working with staff from Durham Road Children's Centre to make sure the waiting area is young person friendly especially for the teenage age range. We weren't happy with what the waiting area was like as it wasn't comfortable and full of younger children's stuff. Durham Road received money from the Niall Quinn and the OK2 Fund to purchase some new seating, a TV and table football.

In July we got the opportunity to go and see the new waiting area and we were really please with it and felt the staff listened to us.



### 4. MOMO Conference

Loren attended the MOMO conference in London in June 2017 and was asked to share her experiences of being a care leaver and using MOMO One. Loren was confident and spoke in front of over 100 people. Sunderland also received the award for most improved service from across the country.



### 5. Fostering

Sheila Lough came to our meeting in May and asked the group if any of the group would be interested in being involved in the training of foster carers. Six young people who have had some experience of foster care put their names forward. The sub group met with Sheila and two members of her team, Norma Donkin and Dawn Bell to look at the training and look at what they could bring to the training. A date in August was arranged to do some filming with the young people around their experience of being in foster care, unfortunately this had to be re-arranged and will be happening on 1<sup>st</sup> November.

## 6. Leisure Activity Update

We have been working together to look at the Leisure Offer we would like in Sunderland. The aim of the leisure offer is to promote healthy and active lifestyles, for the children and young people in our care.

We would like free access to the following;

- Gym
- Dance classes
- Climbing wall
- Cinema
- Bowling
- Football Clubs
- Rugby Clubs
- Arts and Craft sessions
- Martial Arts
- Boxing
- Quaser Lazer
- Pool/Snooker

## 7. ADCS Meeting and The Fostering Network North East Conference

Dylan attended both the above meetings as a representative from Sunderland. At both meetings the young people gave a presentation to professionals present to discuss how the Regional Children in Care Council was developed and about the campaigns they had been working on to make changes to the care system across the North East. The main areas that are important to us are areas such as making sure we are ready to live on our own and cope in independence when we are older. We also want more local authorities to take on apprentices who are care leavers and support them to do well. We also wanted decision makers to listen to our ideas around leaving care accommodation and supported lodgings.

We are have also working together to ensure that all children in care or leaving care get free local leisure use no matter where they live.

## 8. Pledges Vs Promises

On 11<sup>th</sup> July young people met with councilors and senior members of the TFC team and partners to review the pledges that we had done in Sept 2015. The group agreed that they didn't really like the term 'pledges' and would like to prefer to 'promises'. We have identified 6 again but this time looked at what they really mean to us as young people and want we would like you to promise us.

### ***1. When you come into care we will make sure you feel like you have a sense of belonging***

- *We will aim to provide you with a home that can best meet your needs and interests.*
- *We will try and find a placement that is near your family and friends if appropriate.*
- *We will help you keep in contact with you family and friends when this is not possible, give you a reason why.*
- *When we make decisions, take account of your age background and beliefs, including your ethnic and cultural needs and any needs you may have because of a disability, especially communication needs.*

- Your social worker will stay in touch regularly to check you are OK
- We won't talk about you to other people or professionals unless we need to keep you or others safe

**2. If you need to come into care we will make sure that you are safe and properly cared for.**

- You will have the right to privacy unless it would be unsafe
- You will get good information about your placement and the area it is in, you will have a proper introduction to your carers unless it is an emergency placement.
- We will ensure you have regular health assessments
- We will encourage and support you to participate in wider opportunities to build your confidence so that you are able to make safe decisions for yourself
- We will try and find a warm, welcoming, friendly, safe and stable place where you can stay for as long as you need to and where you can have your favourite toys and possessions
- We will provide you with
- If you are moved out of area we will explain in a way that is easy for you to understand the reasons why and try our best to help you live a normal life and have contact with people that are important to you.

**3. I feel like I'm being listened to**

- We will listen to what you have to say and take your views seriously.
- We will support you if you want to make a comment or complaint
- Involve you in plans and decisions made about you
- If you need someone to talk to, this includes at evenings and weekends, we will make sure you know who to call
- We will take your feelings into account in decisions that affect you
- If you want to make a complaint we will provide you with access to an advocate to help you get your views across
- We will only promise you things that we know we can do
- We promise to listen to the voices of all looked after children and care leavers, ensuring they are not only listened to but where appropriate, acted upon.
- We will take to your wishes and feelings in to account in all our work and will explain why if we have to override this.
- We will make sure the voice of looked after and leaving care young people are heard by talking and consulting with change council.

**4. I want to get a good school education and would like support to go into higher education.**

- We will continue to develop the virtual school and use our power to support you in the best way, to suit your individual educational needs, dreams and aspirations.
- We will continue to promote the importance of your involvement in your own care plan which includes your personal education plan (PEP) because we understand that your views matter
- We will help you to celebrate your achievements and recognise when you have made a personal achievement yourself.
- We will expect your carers to take an active interest in your education and support you to do your homework and attend parent's evenings.
- We will support you to get the most from your education and encourage you to reach all your goals and achieve your potential

- *We will provide a named teacher in your school or education setting who understands the issues that you may face*
- *We will help you if you want to do an apprenticeship, go to college or university*
- *We'll help you get ready for the world of work, find a job or training placement and give you the chance to get work experience*
- *We will provide a laptop where it is an essential part of your learning.*
- *We will make sure that you don't miss any school because of things that are happening in your life and if you fall behind then we will help you get back on track.*

#### **5. *I would like to keep fit and healthy***

- *We will make sure someone is available to listen to your feedback about health services that are available to you and we will act to improve areas that need to be developed.*
- *We will support you during any difficulties you might face by constantly trying to understand more about how we can improve "being there for you "*
- *We will provide you with the right services to meet your medical, physical and emotional health needs.*
- *We will make sure you have regular health assessments*
- *We will help you to access all the services you need to keep you healthy and safe*
- *We will make sure you have opportunities to do fun things like, free access to leisure activities*
- *Support you if you wish to use mental health services and professional counselling.*
- *We will provide advice and guidance on how to look after yourself including, smoking, drinking and drug use.*
- *We will support you if you want/need to access sexual health services*

#### **6. *I don't want to leave care until I feel ready***

- *We will ensure that your carers and people supporting you provide support to improve you independence skills including practical, social and emotional skills so you are able to care for yourself and become more independent individuals.*
- *We will support you to access your entitlements as a care leaver.*
- *We will make sure we talk to you regularly about your pathway plan.*
- *We will support and guide you in making a positive start to your adult life by supporting you in your choices for employment, education and training and by ensuring that you have a safe and stable place of your own*
- *If you can't live on your own we'll make sure that choices are there for you after you are 18*
- *We will make sure that the home we provide for you when you are going to leave care is safe and properly supported, and that temporary accommodation is a last resort and used for as little time as possible;*
- *We will make sure that your move to adult services, if you need them, is as smooth as possible.*
- *We have huge ambitions for you. We will make sure that we work alongside you to support you to achieve the best start into adulthood as you deserve.*
- *We will make sure you have enough money and help you learn how to manage it*

## 9. YP Themes for CPB

Young People discussed the following areas that they would like CPB to look at over the following year;

- **Access to information, knowing your rights**
- **Fostering Allowance** – such as X amount of money should be spent on activities for young people
- **Placements away from family and friends** – want to be closer to friends
- **WIFI in Children's Homes**
- **Mental Health and Accommodation** – how having mental health issues can affect your accommodation
- **Leisure and Cultural Activities** – free places to go
- **Practical skills for care leavers including managing finance** – care leavers want more practical advice
- **Look to increase Toiletry money** – girls mainly didn't think this was enough
- **Advertise better what TFC can offer LAC and Leaving Care young people** – sometimes young people only know things because of other young people