

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 21 October 2015

Agenda item:

Wards: All

Subject: Corporate Parenting, Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers

Lead officer: Yvette Stanley

Lead member: Cllr Maxi Martin,

Contact officer: Paul Angeli, Assistant Director CSC & YI/Sarah Daley, Head of Permanency, LAC & Care Leavers

Recommendations:

A. Members of the panel discuss and comment on the contents of the report.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. The report provides members of the Children and Young people Overview and Scrutiny Panel with information which is seen and scrutinised by the statutory Corporate Parenting Panel. This panel oversees the work the council and partner agencies undertake to help looked after children and care leavers achieve positive outcomes. The panel also has a championing role for this group of service users for whom the council has key responsibilities.

2 DETAILS

2.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is chaired by the Chief Executive and attended by the administration and opposition lead members for children's services as well as officers from across the council and its partners in providing children's services.

2.2 The terms of reference include:

- Understanding and championing the needs and ambitions of Looked After Children and care leavers across the Merton Partnership.
- Ensuring joined up pathways in education, health, employability, leisure and recreation, for Merton LAC, LAC children overseen by the Virtual School and Merton Care Leavers.
- Receiving direct feedback from Merton Children in Care Council and the wider Looked After Children population, to improve council and partner service development and delivery.
- Providing mutual challenge within and across the partnership to prioritise continuous improvement of services and outcomes.
- Giving conspicuous care and attention to particularly vulnerable Looked After Children such as young offenders, substance misusers and

pregnant teenagers, to ensure effective risk assessment and appropriate service support.

2.3 The Panel meets bi-monthly and routinely: reviews the LAC and care leavers and their outcomes; receives feedback from LAC and care leavers participation; and receives reports with a specific focus: health; education; housing; CAMHs etc. An annual report is produced in the autumn of each year.

2.6 A selection of reports received at the last meeting of the Panel are attached providing information on our LAC cohort and our very important work on ensuring that our LAC and care Leavers views are built into their care planning and inform service development. CYP scrutiny Panel are invited to comment and ask questions on the content of these reports to better understand our LAC, care leavers and the partnership's work to give them the best life chances and choices during and post care.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. None for the purposes of this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. None for the purposes of this report.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. N/A

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. No specific implications.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The council has extensive legal duties with regard to LAC and care leavers and is the legal parent to these children and young people..

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. We are dedicated to narrowing the gaps in outcomes between our Lac and care leavers and their more advantaged peers.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. Children entering the care system become looked after and can be eligible for leaving care services. .

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. No specific implications.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- LAC & care Leavers Cohort Update
- Participation Annual report

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. None

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