

Care Leaver's Group

9 May 2018

Present: Courtney G; Valerie; Shannon; Paige; Caitlin; Jade; Kelly; Jack; Mark; Nancy

Minutes

| | Topic/Discussion | Actions |
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| 1. | <p>Council Tax Exemptions</p> <p>We split into 2 groups to look at some questions re council tax exemption for care leavers. In Nancy's group, some of the young people thought that all care leavers should be exempt from paying council tax, whilst others thought it should be means tested. There was a mix of views about how the exemption should be processed. Some thought that the bill should go straight to HCC, one person saying 'care leavers should not even have to worry about this bill. We did not choose to move out at 18yrs. We were made to move down to unfortunate circumstances'. But others thought young people needed to get into the habit of taking responsibility for their own bills and they should [pay it first and then be reimbursed by HCC</p> <p>In Mark's group there was a different opinion and the young people thought care leavers shouldn't be exempt from Council Tax and it is part of adult life. They felt it was another thing to make them different. However they thought if they were exempt then it should work on a pay scale, so if you earn over a certain amount you would have to pay it. They did like this idea of paying it and then claiming it back from HCC at the end of the year almost like a way to save or being able to put that money towards next year's tax.</p> | <p>Nancy and Mark to give the council tax exemption feedback to Jo Mayes</p> |
| 2. | <p>Use of black bags</p> <p>In our two groups we talked about whether any young people had ever had to move their stuff using black bin bags. Three out of the four people in the group said yes. Comments included that it was upsetting and it's not nice. Stuff falls out and the bags rip. It's horrible if other people pack your personal stuff without asking you and just throw your personal possessions into the black bag. Generally the young people thought it was very disrespectful. The young people in this group were 17yrs, 19yrs, 24yrs and 25yrs</p> <p>In Mark's group there wasn't a very strong opinion on it. They felt it was just a way of moving your stuff and it's easier than having boxes. They did feel in certain situations such as having your stuff being put into a black bag by someone else and being "kicked out" of a placement would feel worse. No</p> | <p>Nancy and Mark to pass the feedback to Jo Mayes</p> |

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| | <p>felt they had had a bad experience of this and it hadn't affected them in a negative way.</p> | |
| 3. | <p>CL Offer In our 2 groups we looked at the visuals for the care leavers offer. There were 2 options to choose from Nancy's group chose option 2 which was more personalised.</p> <p>Mark's group chose option 2 as well, they liked the personal touch.</p> <p>We read out a note from Jo Mayes updating us on progress with the care leaver's offer. The first draft of the offer is currently being consulted on internally. Once we are sure all the information is correct, it will come back to CLG to look at and more widely for feedback from care leavers.</p> | <p>Nancy and Mark to pass feedback to Jo Mayes</p> |
| 4. | <p>Care Leavers Event 2018</p> <p>Back in the main group we discussed ideas for this. The theme this year is Aspire. Nancy said that the thinking this year is to have 4 separate events, coordinated by YC Herts District teams and the care leaver's hubs. The CLG's perception was that the hubs do not have local groups of care leavers meeting up and they therefore didn't think it would work having the events based in 4 areas. They felt it would be very hard to get the numbers up to anything like the numbers needed for an event and they thought we should carry on having 1 main event. One person said again how much she enjoyed the laughology session last year. Another person said it would be good to do something completely different this year</p> | <p>Nancy to discuss the young people's feedback with Jonathan Jack (Head of Youth Engagement)</p> |
| 5. | <p>CHICC Social</p> <p>We are planning a social with the Deputies on 14 June. Young people's ideas for this included Hertford Castle again; Westmill Farm; a boat trip (not much time to squeeze this in in the evening), trampolining in Stevenage or near St Albans (Hatfield Road). The most popular idea seemed to be crazy golf in Stevenage.</p> <p>Young people thought of other things they would like to do, more generally. The idea of a residential, possibly at Hudnall Park was very popular, even just for one night over a weekend, with outdoor activities and a camp fire etc</p> | <p>Nancy and Mark to check with the Deputies what they would like to do and then book a venue.</p> <p>Nancy and Mark to discuss the possibility of a residential with Jonathan Jack</p> |
| 6. | <p>Pieces of work for CLG</p> <p>Going forward, Nancy is meeting soon with the Head of Leaving Care service to look again at the workplan we agreed at the beginning of the year and start looking at other aspects</p> | <p>Nancy to discuss the suggestion of looking at semi independent with manager</p> |

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| | <p>of it including for example, pathway plans (a couple of people in the group said they hadn't been involved in the development of their own pathway plan and didn't know what they were for. One of these young people is just turning 17yrs).</p> <p>Another suggestion for a piece of work was to look at semi independent accommodation. A couple of young people feel this needs looking at as the quality can vary. Also, when you're in semi independent it is like you aren't a child any more but you're not yet a care leaver and it is confusing</p> | |
| <p>7.</p> | <p>Next CLG Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 20 June</p> | |