

Joint CHICC (big) Young people and Senior Managers

Wednesday 13 December 2017, River Room, Hertford Theatre, 6pm – 8pm

Minutes

- 1. Attendees**
- 2. Progress with actions from October Joint CHICC**
- 3. Reviews**
- 4. Thank you to CHICC volunteers**
- 5. Any other business**

1. Attendees

Apologies: Felicity Evans (Head of Achievement, Virtual School); Lynn Costello (Service Manager, Fostering); Claire Lewis (Team Manager, Family Safeguarding); Cathy Shea (Service Manager, CLA service); Jonathan Jack (Youth Engagement Manager); Sarah Baker (Head of CLA Service); Rani Naidoo (Service Manager, CLA service); Marion Ingram (Operations Director, Specialist Services); Lindsay Edwards (Interim AD Services for Young People); Lynn Knowles (Head of Commissioning CYP); Jacqueline Gear (Senior Commissioning Manager); Glen Wheatley (Vulnerable Young People's Policy Manager); Teresa Heritage (Lead Member Children's Services); Sharrone Rogers (Team Manager, Fostering); Mark Hinton (Participation Worker).

The following people were present at the meeting:

Young people: Ben; Emily; Kelly; Paige; Shannon; Vicktoria; Alicia; Valerie; Courtney G; Gemma; Preston; Alex; George

Staff and Members: The following Hertfordshire County Council Staff and members were present:

Jenny Coles (Director of Children's Services)
Sue Williams (Director Family Safeguarding)
Kim Burrowes (Independent Review Service Manager)
Rachel Daughtry (Independent Review Service, Team Manager)
Clare Stanyer (IRO)
Yvonne Wensley (IRO)
Jasmin Payne (Youth Work Development Worker)
Andy Lawrence (Manager, Specialist Services)
Hayley Cook (Team Manager, CLA Service)
Aidan Moffat (16Plus Manager, Virtual School)
Justine Cox (Senior NYAS Advocate)
Joanna Jacobs (Participation Worker)
Ellie Foster (Participation Support Assistant)
Nancy Burge (Participation Officer)
Mary Emson (Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children at East & North Hertfordshire CCG)

The meeting was chaired by Ben and Nancy Burge

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. People introduced themselves and said what their role was. Everyone said what their favourite Christmas song or film was (Fairytale of New York proved the most popular!)

2. Progress with actions from October Joint CHICC

Ben asked us to review the progress with actions and comment or query as appropriate. Nancy Burge distributed the Top Ten Tips booklets and played the CHICC song '12 days of CHICCmas' which was sung at the CHICC conference on 1st December and lists all the Top Ten Tips. Nancy explained that in 2018 we need to look at embedding the Top Ten Tips and ways to measure that they are being done.

Young people asked about progress with driving lessons (the idea at the last Joint CHICC was to bulk buy driving lessons for care leavers in order to get a cheaper price). Nancy explained that we were at the stage of quantifying how many lessons are currently purchased and how many we might want to purchase. Commissioning have asked for these figures and then we can look into the possibility of procurement. Preston suggested subtracting the number of lessons currently purchased from the number of care leavers there currently are, so we can work out how many care leavers are currently not benefitting from the driving lessons which are paid for by Virtual School (linked to education/employment).

Young people asked re young people being on fostering panels. Nancy explained that Marion Ingram is looking into an arrangement with Essex, whereby care leaver's from Essex can sit on Hertfordshire's panel and vice versa.

Young people asked about progress with peer support via the care leaver's hubs. Jasmin advised of recent discussions between YC, Participation and Commissioning regarding peer support. This was in relation to advocacy and the forthcoming tender in 2018. It is proposed that the offer of advocacy to young people could include the opportunity to speak to a trained young person, and perhaps set up a phone line, similar to the idea of 'silverline' for isolated older people. Trained young people could be aligned to the hubs to provide peer support.

Young people asked how many care leavers are using the hubs and about quality assurance measures. It was agreed to forward this query to Jonathan Jack (Engagement Manager).

Young people asked about progress with shared tenancies. Nancy advised a meeting was to take place in February with John Short, Lynn Knowles and the Participation Team. We discussed some of the complications around shared tenancies and possible liability for each other's costs, especially if one of the young people is working and others aren't etc. We discussed how shared accommodation might become more widespread due to upcoming changes to housing benefit meaning care leavers may not get housing benefit on single occupancy accommodation. Young people had lots of questions about this. The expertise was not in the room however, so it was agreed to have an information session for care leavers in 2018 to talk about the implications and think about how this can be communicated to Hertfordshire's care leavers. This could be a project for some of the older care leavers to work on. It was also suggested that an information line for care leavers to call to get information on how the benefit changes will affect them would be useful. Nancy to follow up this idea with Glen Wheatley and Jonathan Jack.

Andy Lawrence mentioned an upcoming workshop on 1st February, looking at Caring Teams, which is going to be co-chaired by Luke and has come about through the work of Ben Ashcroft. Andy will extend the invitation to CHICC young people through Nancy .

Actions

- 1. Ask Jonathan Jack how many young people are using the hubs and what the quality assurance methods are**
- 2. Set up an information session for CHICC Care Leavers Group in 2018 to become informed about changes to benefits. Older care leavers to take on a project to communicate this to care leavers across the county**
- 3. Find out if an information line can be set up for care leavers to advise them of how the changes to benefits will affect them (this may already exist eg Cab?)**

3. Reviews

The CHICC survey of reviews was completed by over 100 young people in the summer of this year, giving a good sense of how young people experience their reviews. The survey summary had been circulated to all. Nancy Burge gave a short summary of the findings of the survey:

The main issues highlighted by the survey were:

- Not enough young people are aware of how to give their views before their reviews
- There is very low awareness of MOMO
- Young people would like more opportunity to *tell* someone their views before a review
- Social Workers visit young people prior to review in 70% of cases – could this be 100%?
- Not enough young people get to choose *where* their review takes place
- Although in the minority, a number of young people were not comfortable speaking at their review and a number of issues came up about general comfort in the meetings. Things like formality, refreshments, being stared at, not being listened to, speaking about the past were all issues
- Some young people felt the review lasted too long
- A number of young people highlighted that it would have been better if they had had an interpreter

The main positives were:

- The majority of respondents felt that the number of people at reviews was about right and that they were the right people
- The majority felt the right things were discussed at their reviews
- The majority said they felt listened to and some very positive comments were made about reviews.

We got into small groups to look at 6 key questions:

1. How can we improve take up of MOMO and What You Want People to Know forms?
2. How can we ensure all young people can *tell* someone their views prior to their review?
3. How can we make sure young people get a say in *where* their review is held?
4. How can we make review meetings less 'professional' and more young person focused?
5. How can we make sure all young people who need one can have an interpreter?
6. How can we make sure review meetings don't go on too long?

Each group looked at one question plus all groups looked at question 4. Lots of useful feedback came out of the discussions and lots of ideas about how to improve things. See separate notes for details of feedback. It was agreed that Kin Burrowes, Nancy Burge and a couple of young people would meet to look at putting an action plan in place to take forward the points raised. Gemma, Alex,

Alicia, Vicktoria, Emily, Kelly, Ben, Preston and Paige all said they were interested. Nancy said she would take 2 names from a hat.

Jasmin Payne updated us about training for young people to chair their own review. A training session has been developed and offered to young people. YC Herts are liaising with the IRO service to ensure young people are invited.

Action:

Kim Burrowes and Nancy Burge to meet with 2 young people and put together an action plan for reviews.

4. Thank you to CHICC volunteers

Jenny Coles (Director of Children's Services) gave out cards and chocolates to all the young people and thanked them for their work, commenting that it has been a great year for CHICC, with lots achieved.

5. Any other business

We ran out of time to complete an evaluation of the meeting or to vote on topics to look at in 2018, so Nancy said she would circulate this by email and post after the meeting.