

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

7 September 2021



Child and Youth Voice Children Select Committee Update

Wiltshire Youth Union - Mental Health Consultation

1. The Child and Youth Voice Team successfully engaged with young people from across Wiltshire to find out about their experiences of receiving mental health support. The findings were put into a report and presented to key leaders at the council.
2. The leaders have pledged to explore the issues raised and make improvements such as introducing more interim support whilst young people are on a mental health service waiting list. Full reports available if required.

Young Carers Consultation

3. The next area that the Child and Youth Voice Team is looking at is support for young carers. The team has spent 6 days having conversations with Young Carers over the summer school holidays finding out what is important to them and gathering feedback on services which they receive.
4. Young carers have also completed a survey and the team aims to engage with schools regarding young carers support in September. A report and recommendations will be published in October.

Youth Council

5. The Child and Youth Voice Team is aiming to expand youth democracy in Wiltshire. This will be achieved by supporting secondary schools to hold elections for a new Wiltshire Youth Council in February 2022.
6. Each school will be eligible to elect one Youth Councillor and one Deputy Youth Councillor and these students will represent their school and their schools catchment area on Wiltshire's Youth Council for a period of two years.
7. Youth Councillors will also get the opportunity to be part of a Shadow Youth Cabinet and stand in an internal election to become one of three Members of Youth Parliament.

Other Community Connections

8. Staff from the team have been to events in the community for young people that may be considered more vulnerable this was to gain their views and build relationships. These groups include Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and members from Wiltshire's LGBTQ+ communities.

Children Social Care - Children in Care Council (CiCC)

9. In July we hosted a virtual health and wellbeing festival for our CiCC members, they took part in a mindfulness exercise that helped developed skills such as self-regulation. There was also a professional athlete who shared how exercise and poetry helps her to stay healthy.
10. Our CiCC members also enjoyed a trip to Longleat Safari as a reward for their contributions over the past 6 months.
11. To recruit new CiCC members we will be taking 18 children in care on a weekend residential to PGL Liddington in September. The 18 participants all met in the summer holidays at a BBQ event held at Aspire House, here they were introduced to staff members and told about the CiCC. We hope that if we regularly see this group of young people, they will be more willing to support the youth voice work.
12. The CiCC annual report has been written and is available to those wanting to see it.
13. The team is planning to take CiCC members on a 'walkabout' to the 2 Children in Care Teams. The Children in Care Teams will be asked to share anonymous storyboards outlining work they have done with service users and present some different communication tools that they use to the CiCC members. This exercise will be done in a Dragon's Den format, giving the CiCC members a chance to scrutinise practice.

Star Awards and Fashion Show

14. The Child and Youth Voice Team has started to plan the Star Awards, with the aim of hosting them in the February 2022 half term holidays. Other teams from across Children's Social Care will also be involved in planning the event to celebrate the achievements of children in care.
15. At the event we will also be putting on a fashion show with children in care with the support from one of Wiltshire's amazing foster carers who also runs a charity that takes care of 550 children in Kenya. The children in Kenya will also be putting on a sister event and we hope to stream footage of that event at the star awards.
16. Putting on an event like this, not only is rewarding for all of those taking part. It promotes self-esteem foremost, but also allows us to bring awareness

to Fostering and its importance, the Tumaini Children's Charity, and allowing us to celebrate the children through the awards and through recognition.

Advice and Guidance

17. The team has offered advice and guidance on other initiatives in Children Social Care including -
- Providing advice on the Care Leaver App and Care Leavers Local Offer
 - Reviewing Child Protection Conference Paperwork
 - Delivering Language Workshops with the Principle Social Worker
 - Continue to deliver Mind of My own Training and offer advice and support to users
 - Support with fostering panel ensuring that the views of those that have lived experience of being in care have a say on who becomes a carer
 - Give advice to the BME staff network on how they can support looked after young people to reconnect to their heritage

Activities Planned for Next Period

18. The Child and Youth Voice Team are planning to expand on the learning offer to young people that are involved in voice work. The team will be inviting young people to a half day workshop that will help them to develop skills such as public speaking, active listening, impromptu speaking and how to cover a story. The team is also linking up with the BBC who will be delivering a careers talk to children in care and care leavers.
19. The team will be working with other teams and a group of children in care to put on the Star Awards and the fashion show, meeting regularly to plan the event.
20. The team will be planning a Christmas get together/ event for CICC members and CPP members.
21. The team will be supporting schools enabling them to be ready for the Youth Council Elections.
22. The team will be part of the conversation with the National Implementation Advisor for Care Leavers Mark Riddell MBE
23. The Team will be supporting a Care Leaver Youth Consultant to start a new podcast called Fostering Positivity, this will also be promoted through the Comms Team.
24. The team will be finalising the Young Carers Consultation and identifying the next youth consultation subject.

Author: Joe Sutton, Child and Youth Voice Lead Worker