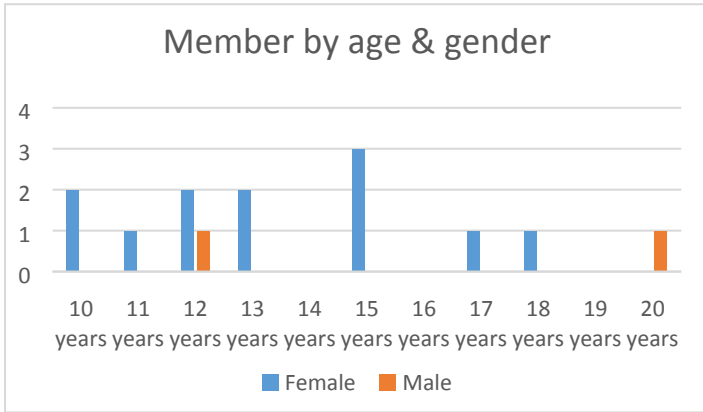


Children in Care Council - update on activities Corporate Parenting Panel 19 June 2018

1. Membership



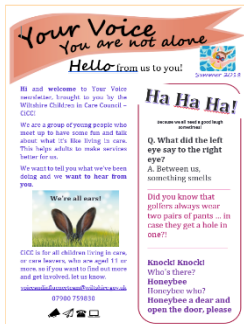
Membership has increased to 14 young people. One member has left and two new members joined. One further care leaver has indicated a wish to be involved in the Corporate Parenting Panel, and other activities, but not as a CiCC member.

Challenges remain around increasing the representation at CiCC from males and from unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Recruitment activities continue via the Children's Champions Working Group, Virtual School, Independent Visitor Scheme and Children in Care teams.

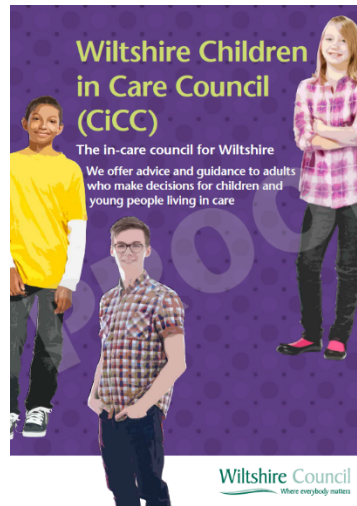
The member handbook is now complete, and has been circulated to members. Copies have also been given to independent visitors and will be shared with social workers at Children in Care team meeting in June, to encourage further engagement and, also, at Post 16 Options and Careers event.

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2. Communication from CiCC to the wider looked after population



A second **newsletter** is due to be mailed out to children and young people aged 8+ with *Become* magazine in June. The newsletter includes a piece from Cllr Palmen, following on from his presentation at Shared Guardian Session on mental health. Also included is information, and request for feedback, on the Care Leavers' Covenant. The newsletter also invites young people to a **CiCC Fun Day** on Saturday 8 September. Work needs to continue to ensure that young people know that they can respond to the newsletter and communicate with CiCC in that way. CiCC is developing a logo to support with branding.



What is CiCC?

CiCC is a group that meets most months to have some fun and, also, to talk about living in care – what it's like, what works well and what needs to change. Members of CiCC are aged 11 to 18 and have their own views that they are encouraged to share.

As well as meeting with each other, CiCC meets with adults who make decisions about looked after children and living in care.

CiCC is a **very important** part of Wiltshire Council and helps the council to remember children are at the centre of decisions that it takes.

What does it actually do?

CiCC does all sorts of things to help get the voice of children and young people heard. It also helps the Council to get services right for children living in care.

- "We comment on all sorts of services and plans"
- "We interview key staff for new jobs in children's services"
- "We train new staff, including foster carers"
- "We campaign for change – we helped to raise the Leaving Care grant"
- "We meet our corporate parents and helped them to decide what is important for them to focus on"
- "We create leaflets and information for looked after children and care leavers"
- "We take part in Ofsted inspections and meet inspectors"

A meeting has been held with the web team to discuss developing **web pages** for children living in care and care leavers on the Wiltshire Council website. CiCC has agreed that it would like this. Currently, the opportunity for a separate website is not tenable given cost and maintenance requirements. CiCC looked at other websites and thought that they might like to include an area for jokes, games, children's rights, and copies of the newsletter and other documents.

3. Mental health priority

CiCC began a discussion on delivering a campaign on positive mental health to children and young people living in care. This may take the form of an Arts Award. Senior Family Keyworker, Dawne Dawes, is an Arts Award Assessor and is currently supporting with the delivery of CiCC. Members discussed trigger points for anxiety and stress, as well as making suggestions about what could help.

Triggers	Things that help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of family • Moving home and care home • Stigma • Not being able to do their favourite hobbies • Leaving/moving school • Leaving friends • Splitting up with siblings/family • Contact • Seeing a sibling at contact then having to go back to foster home • People not being honest • Bullying • Staff and carers not being careful what they say • Feeling left out of family scenarios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling loved • Advertising support such as Childline, Kooth • Provide information about depression and self-harm • Improving CAMHS self-referrals • Tackling stigma

Lead Commissioner (child and adolescent mental health) has submitted a proposal to the Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group to fund additional emotional wellbeing and mental health support for children living in care.

4. Foster care

CiCC met with Jay Williams (newly-appointed foster care manager) during which an interest was raised in interviewing new staff and training foster carers. This will be considered further once Jay is in post. Suggestions were also made about the level of contact that children/young people have with fostering social workers; as carers get to meet with child/young person's social worker it was felt that they should also be able to meet foster carer's worker. These ideas will be taken forward and progress reported on through the You Said, We Did process.

5. Placements Strategy

CiCC met with Lucy Kitchener (Lead Commissioner for looked after children, young people and care leavers), to talk about the draft Placements Strategy and their views on its main themes. They gave Lucy constructive feedback and insight. These ideas will be taken forward and progress reported on through the You Said, We Did process.

6. Virtual School

CiCC met with Chris Whitfield, Virtual School Head, and discussed ways of celebrating the achievements of children and young people as well the effectiveness of the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process. These ideas will be taken forward and progress reported on through the You Said, We Did process.

7. WSCB walkabouts

2 CiCC members joined 16 other young people from the Wiltshire Assembly of Youth and Youth Safeguarding Board to be trained to take part in 'walkabouts'. This saw young people being trained in listening and communication skills. The schedule of walkabouts is being planned with WSCB and will involve young people in visits to partner agencies, potentially to talk professionals and young service users about the service.

8. Progress towards the action plan

Action	Progress
1. Raise awareness about mental health and emotional wellbeing	Underway with hopes for young people to achieve Arts Award
2. Raise awareness about bullying	To be considered within Arts Award and during Anti-Bullying Week
3. Continue to make newsletters	Ongoing at two per year
4. Train new staff – children’s services induction, Wiltshire college and any other opportunities	Ongoing
5. Be professional when we have meetings and develop skills to be effective representatives. CiCC felt that a training programme would be a positive thing to develop their skills.	To be confirmed with development of Wiltshire Youth Forum (name to be confirmed)
6. Meet other CiCCs from other counties (it will be more fun if there are some activities)	Judy Edwards to action for Autumn term
7. Taking part in consultations	Ongoing
8. Influence decision makers by sharing experiences and those of others	Ongoing

9. Proposals for Corporate Parenting Panel

Consideration has been given to how the voices of children and young people are heard by the Corporate Parenting Panel. This usually takes the form of a report from CiCC, presented by a CiCC representative when possible, and Shared Guardian Sessions which take place twice per year. This current system offers some limitations due the fact that:

- children and young people are asked to be absent from school to attend Corporate Parenting Panel (causing difficulties for most the recent representative, whose school attendance was a concern);
- a CiCC report represents only what activities the relatively small CiCC group has undertaken and their relatively limited views;
- when representatives are present in the meetings, they are given opportunities to be involved and speak but are not central to and leading the meetings.

Learning from Somerset County Council suggests that a few minor changes to the way that the CPP meetings run may enhance the impact of children and young people’s voices at the Panel.

Proposals

- i) Change the time of CPP meetings to allow for young representatives to attend without taking time out of education.
- ii) Consider appointing a young person to co-chair CPP meetings to raise the profile and presence of young people on the panel.
- iii) Reinforce the corporate parenting duty of the wider elected membership and workforce by chair/co-chair sending summary of positives and ‘for action’ directly to the Leader of the Council after each CPP meeting. (This is something that happens in Somerset and is reported by Somerset chair as being very effective in driving forward change for children and young people)
- iv) Replace item ‘CiCC update’ with ‘Feedback from children and young people’ which would allow more scope for other pieces of quality assurance work, e.g. young inspector/young assessor work linked to walkabouts, to be reported, alongside direct feedback from CiCC.