



Child, Youth and Family Voice Team Annual Report

2022-2023

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Introduction

The primary objective of the Child, Youth, and Family Voice Team is to ensure that Wiltshire Council routinely takes a co-production approach and actively listens to and takes action based on the opinions and feedback of children and adults receiving support from the Families and Children's Directorate. Additionally, the team plays a broader role by overseeing the management and facilitation of the Wiltshire Youth Council, which addresses various topics ranging from the environment to education and equalities. The team consists of 1 FTE Child & Youth Voice Team Manager, 1 FTE C&Y Voice Support worker and a 0.5 FTE Voice Apprentice. In December we expanded the team to include 1 FTE Family Voice Worker. A further 0.5FTE role is being introduced to recruit Voice Ambassadors.

Families and Children's Services

Children in Care Council

1.1 This section provides an overview of the activities, achievements, and feedback received from the Children in Care Council (CiCC) during the period of April 2022 to March 2023. The C&Y Voice team aims to support and develop the CiCC by building trust, meaningful relationships, and confidence among participants whilst actively engaging them in improving services and enhancing their overall well-being.

1.2 Attendance and Recruitment:

- Over the year, 48 different children in care participated in CiCC sessions, consisting of 25 females and 23 males.
- Additionally, 27 new CiCC members were recruited during this year, reflecting the growing interest and engagement among children in care.
- The average age of attendees was 14 years old. The age range was 8 years old to 21 years old. With the older cohort who are 18+ not attending the groups but supporting with initiatives such as the Foster Carer Panels and interviews,

1.3 Activities and Engagements:

- The team organised and facilitated a diverse range of activities in collaboration with council leisure facilities, community partners, and charities.
- Noteworthy activities included climbing, water sports, horse riding, drama sessions, and two residential experiences, one at PGL Activity Centre and the other a trip to Cornwall.
- These experiences aimed to provide opportunities for personal growth, skill development, and fostering positive and meaningful relationships.

1.4 CiCC Contributions and Impact:

- CiCC members actively contributed to improving services by participating in young person interview panels for senior leader positions, ASYE Social Workers, and applicant foster carers.
- They played a crucial role in the commissioning process of the Residential Block Contract, where their questions and input contributed to the decision-making process.
- CiCC members engaged in a mystery shopper exercise evaluating the effectiveness and user-friendliness of the Integrated Front Door (IFD), providing valuable feedback such as staff sharing their first names, staff to offer reassurance when writing and not talking,

Information Officers to prioritise next steps for children and families once the call has ended, staff need to use trauma informed language and that the automated phone lines hinder accessibility.

- One CiCC member had the opportunity to speak at a Full Council Meeting, sharing a video showcasing their involvement in various initiatives and showing what is possible with the right support and encouragement.

1.5 Themes from CiCC Meetings:

Feedback from Care Experienced young people was sought as part of the review of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) priorities.

- Members highlighted the need for consistent and stable support systems, we know in Wiltshire we are strong in this area compared to other local authorities; however some young people may still not feel this is their experience.
- The participants often felt different from their peers due to the number of professionals involved in their lives and the frequency of meetings they had to attend.
- The majority (80%) of members reported having a loving home and good relationships, while the rest were unsure, although none stated they didn't have a loving home.
- 60% of CiCC members reported having links with their local communities where they were trusted, while 40% were uncertain. None reported a lack of local community connections.
- A significant majority (90%) felt they had support to maintain their physical and mental well-being and be the best version of themselves.

Moving forwards we want to increase the feedback from the total cohort of CiC, which we will be doing through the Bright Spot's surveys in 2023/2024.

1.6 Learning and Future Plans:

- Engagement by children in care in the activities we offered was high. Although there is more to do in terms of enabling our CiC to feel able to fully participate in the voice work and group discussions; which for some posed challenges i.e., being triggered by the discussion, becoming distracted, and not being in a place to fully reflect on their circumstances. The age difference between some of the members meant that on occasion the younger participants distracted others which impeded their ability to contribute. To address this, a subgroup of the CiCC has been formed called the CiCC Committee for those who are most interested in sharing their views and participating in initiatives to improve services.
- The CiCC Committee has plans to create a regular podcast that aims to amplify the voices and experiences of children in care, providing a platform to share their perspectives, challenges, and suggestions with a broader audience, including the Corporate Parenting Panel and at training events. The CiCC Committee will aim to raise awareness, enhance understanding, and encourage meaningful discussions about the experiences of children in care within the wider community.
- We have a core group on the committee who signed up to make a change and a difference for themselves and other CiC. We understand that not everyone wants to participate in voice work, but we still believe that they need to be part of the CiCC community and have fun activities, and that this may over time also help to create future opportunities to participate. The Committee will devise fun activities to do with the wider group, and Committee members will also get first choice of these fun activities. In addition, the team will continue to organise activities and residential experiences for the wider cohort of young

people and encourage members of the CiCC Committee to facilitate voice exercises with the extended group.

1.7 Conclusion:

The CiCC has made significant progress in building trust, relationships, and confidence among participants while actively contributing to the improvement of services for children in care. The feedback received and the ongoing initiatives demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that the voices and experiences of young people in care are heard and acted upon. We have a core group of current CiCC Members who are interested on being on the Committee and we will work with them to be involved in co-production and service improvement. As for attaining feedback from children in care about services, the Bright Spots survey, which this report will outline in section 4, should provide a more representative understanding of how well Wiltshire Council are achieving for their looked after children and young people.

2. Voice Ambassadors

- 2.1 The Child, Youth, and Family Voice Team acknowledges the importance of involving individuals who have received support from Families and Children's Services in co-production to achieve meaningful and positive change. In previous years we have utilised our Voice Consultants, however we have created a new role to work on this agenda.
- 2.2 **The Role:** Sessional Voice Ambassadors will either be employed by Wiltshire Council or volunteer their time depending on their preference. They will utilise their personal experiences to provide feedback on areas for improvement, deliver training, assist in staff and foster carer recruitment, and offer support under CYV Team supervision.
- 2.3 **Inclusion of children and young people from a diverse range of backgrounds:** The roles are open to anyone supported by the directorate, including care-experienced adults, parents, and young people from the Children and Young People's Disabilities Team (CYPDT). The roles will be promoted on the Wiltshire Council Jobs portal, and we will send an email to the directorate promoting the opportunities. Moreover, current members of our groups will be invited to apply.
- 2.4 **Corporate parenting responsibilities:** Wiltshire Council has corporate parenting responsibilities towards care experienced young people, aiming to support their success. The Voice Ambassador role will provide care experienced young people with valuable first-hand experience working for the Local Authority, helping them develop confidence, skills, and knowledge.
- 2.5 The inclusion of Sessional Voice Ambassadors from diverse backgrounds contributes to shaping service delivery in alignment with the needs of service users, whilst also providing care experienced young people with opportunities for personal growth and development.

3. Mind of My Own App

- 3.1 **Introduction:** The Mind of My Own app is a highly effective tool designed to engage service users who are under the care of a Social Worker or Family Key Worker. This report highlights the app's features and benefits, as well as provides a real case example to demonstrate its practical application.
- 3.2 **App Description:** The Mind of My Own app offers a secure and supportive platform for young individuals to explore their thoughts, emotions, and personal experiences. Its innovative features and user-friendly interface make it an exceptional tool for promoting mental health, self-awareness, and overall resilience among young people. By actively involving them in their well-being, the app empowers individuals and establishes a valuable connection between them and their social workers, fostering open communication and collaboration.

3.3 Highlights of Financial Year 2022/2023: During the financial year 2022/2023, the following achievements were observed:

- **Account Creation:** A total of 180 young persons' accounts were successfully created on the app.
- **Statements Sent:** The app facilitated the exchange of statements between young individuals and their social workers. A total of 716 one-app statements and 259 express statements were sent, resulting in a combined total of 975 statements.
- **Worker Engagement:** A significant number of social workers received statements, with 130 workers receiving at least one statement. Among them, 56 workers received statements more than 5 times, indicating a high level of engagement and communication facilitated by the app.

One app Usage

STATEMENT TYPE	SENT BY YOUNG PEOPLE	SENT BY PRACTITIONERS	TOTAL
Totals	353	363	716
Conference	4	31	35
Foster Care Review	83	16	99
My Life	75	131	206
My Wellbeing	23	42	65
Pathway	4	2	6
Post Meeting	4	0	4
Preparation	58	13	71
Problem	26	9	35
Share Good News	15	15	30
This Is Me	24	41	65
Worker Visit	37	63	100

*Excludes Express Statements

3.4 Case Example 1: Statement Leading to an IFD Referral:

A young person who was no longer under the care of social services used the Mind of My app to express their concerns about their mother's drinking and their desire to know the truth about its duration. They expressed sadness and worry when their mother consumes alcohol, highlighting a preference for their auntie and grandmother to care for them over their mother. "I want mum not to drink", "I would like to know the truth about how long mum has been drinking again for". As the young person no longer had an allocated worker, an Integrated Front Door (IFD) referral was made. This led to the reopening of the family's case by the SASS Team under a Child in Need (CIN) plan. Currently, the family is under a Child Protection (CP) plan to address the concerns raised through the app statement.

3.5 Case Example 2: Views shared on Care Plan

A young person sent in a statement using the Mind of My Own App. The young person was upset about not being consulted regarding their future participation in horse therapy as this was due to be

cancelled without consulting them first, this caused them to feel that they lacked autonomy in decisions affecting their life. They emphasised the importance of horse therapy for their well-being, especially considering its potential benefits for their future. The young person also mentions self-harm concerns related to exam pressure.

The equine therapy could not continue over school holidays unfortunately. However, on understanding the young person's views, the Social Worker has pledged to relook at other provision available in the summer holidays.

3.6 Conclusion: The Mind of My Own app has proven to be an exceptional tool for engaging young individuals, supporting their mental health, self-awareness, and overall resilience. The highlighted case examples demonstrate how it facilitates children and young people in having their voice heard and how it helps them raise important issues happening in their lives, leading to appropriate referrals and support for families in need. Wiltshire Council will be recommissioning the app for a further 3 years when the contract expires in September.

4. Young Person's Fostering Consultation Panel

4.1 The Young Persons Fostering Consultation Panel serves two main purposes:

- Ensuring care experienced children and adults have a say in the decision-making process.
- Providing applicants with a unique learning opportunity by engaging with care-experienced young people as "experts by experience."

4.2 The panel follows an informal 2-way dialogue format, allowing young people to meet applicants and provide feedback on their suitability as foster carers. Applicants, in turn, can learn from care-experienced young people about what children in care need from their foster caring families and what makes a good foster carer.

4.3 The panel formulates questions based on topics important to children in care, such as motives to foster, relevant experience, and expectations for young people. Panellists provide feedback and share their own experiences to help applicants understand effective approaches to foster care.

4.4 Additionally, the panel offers feedback on family profiles to ensure they are child-friendly and cover essential information for prospective foster children.

4.5 The outcomes of the Young Persons Fostering Consultation Panel include:

- Valuable insights: Care-experienced young people share their perspectives and opinions on applicant suitability, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Enhanced decision-making: Feedback from young people helps The Main Panel, Team Managers, and decision-makers understand the thoughts and preferences of young people regarding applicants.
- Continuous improvement: Applicants receive feedback and suggestions for improvement, helping them provide quality care to foster children.

4.6 To date, the panel has successfully conducted 10 sessions with the participation of over 13 care-experienced young people.

Future Plans for Families and Childrens Services 2023/ 2024

5. Bright Spots

5.1 We recognise that the feedback from CiCC and Mind of My Own does not reach every child and young person within the wider children in care population. Given this, the team has been asked to procure the Brights Spots Survey to aid us in getting the views of our wider cohort of children in care. The Bright Spots Programme, a partnership between Coram Voice and the University of Oxford, aims to systematically listen to children in care and care leavers, enabling them to express their needs, desires, and experiences. By implementing the Your Life, Your Care and Your Life Beyond Care surveys, we can measure the subjective well-being of these individuals and identify areas where improvements can be made.

5.2 In the implementation of the Bright Spots Programme, our goal is to collaborate with the Virtual school to administer the survey primarily through Designated Teachers in schools that have children in care (CIC). This approach takes advantage of the perceived impartiality of schools in collecting responses. The following details the method of implementation:

5.3 Survey Distribution: The surveys will be sent to Designated Teachers in all schools that have CIC. These Designated Teachers will be responsible for distributing the surveys to the CIC within their respective schools.

5.4 School Notification: Schools will be instructed to notify us when all CIC have either completed or refused to participate in the survey. This feedback will enable us to monitor the response rate and take appropriate actions to maximise participation.

5.5 Survey Duration: The survey will be conducted over a period of six weeks. This timeframe will provide sufficient time for the Designated Teachers to distribute the surveys, for the CIC to complete them, and for any necessary follow-up communication.

6. Care Experienced Parent and Baby Group

6.1 The CYV Team worked with a care experienced adult to support her in setting up a care experienced parent and baby group, there was mixed success and learning opportunities and a subsequent revamp of the group based on feedback and challenges encountered.

6.2 Initial Vision and Challenges:

- Aimed to create a group for care experienced young people and their children to socialise and establish connections.
- Initially it seemed most young people with children were in the south, leading to the selection of a venue in Bemerton Heath, Salisbury.

- A lack of attendance, transportation issues, and difficulties with commitment and communication hindered the success of the group.

6.3 Revamp and Learning Opportunities:

- Location changed to Studley Greens Children's Centre in Trowbridge.
- Revised vision of the group now includes voice work and collaboration with consultants.

6.4 Identified learning opportunities from the previous experience:

- Improved support from Personal Advisors (PA) regarding referrals, transportation, and staying for sessions if possible.
- Better dissemination of information about the group for advertising purposes.
- Clear expectations set for both group members and staff.
- Implementation of deadlines for booking taxis.
- Enhanced communication between group members and staff.

7. Family Voice

7.1 The remit of the Child and Youth Voice Team has recently expanded to include gathering the perspectives of families. To support this initiative, we have recently appointed a dedicated Family Voice Worker to oversee this important work. The primary objective of the Family Voice Worker is to enhance the engagement and participation of families who receive support from Wiltshire Council in the design and development of services. By involving families directly, we ensure that their voices are at the core of our quality assurance framework. This strengthens our commitment to providing services that truly meet the needs and preferences of the families we serve.

7.2 Family Advisory Board

- Since April 2023, the Child, Youth and Family Voice Team has taken over the responsibility of running the Family Advisory Board.
- The current FAB membership consists of four former service users from the PAUSE Programme.
- Our aim is to make the FAB more inclusive by broadening its demographic representation and involving a wider range of families.
- The Family Voice Worker will achieve this by actively engaging with other groups working with Wiltshire's families.
- Each quarter, a specific theme will be discussed across all groups, and the outcomes will be brought back to the central FAB group to drive positive changes within the directorate. This will be achieved through meetings with decision makers, supporting on training and using creative methods such as podcasting.
- Members of the wider groups will also be invited to join the FAB, although we recognise that some may not be able to participate actively.
- By adopting this inclusive approach, we will have a more representative FAB that accesses a wider range of families and collaborates closely with the council to bring about positive changes.

7.3 Embedding Service User Feedback

- Our new Family Voice Worker has worked with the IFD to support them in creating a questionnaire to gather the views of families that encounter their service.
- The questionnaire responses will be utilised to provide feedback to IFD staff members. This feedback aims to support their professional development and enable the IFD team to identify successful practices, as well as areas requiring improvement. The IFD team will

compile and share the feedback internally. This includes highlighting any process issues, such as phone line waiting times and response times for call backs.

- The Family Voice Worker will be embedding a similar system with Child Protection Conferences, ensuring families shape the way the New Strengthening Family Safety approach is implemented.

8. Social Care Mobile Application

8.3 8.1 Through feedback from families about the challenges they can face when working with social care we are exploring potential digital solutions to enhance communication, empower families in the care planning process, provide access to self-help resources, and ensure understanding of plans and rights. The council's Transformation Team is supporting the development of feasible options for further consideration.

Wiltshire Youth Council

9. Mental Health First Aid

9.1 A subgroup of WYC collaborated with Healthy Schools Lead, Nick Bolton to undergo Mental Health First Aid training. The aim was to equip Youth Councillors with the necessary skills to establish peer support networks and groups within their schools. Youth Councillors successfully completed the Mental Health First Aid training. Trained Youth Councillors can now offer support and advice to their peers regarding mental health concerns. They can gather insights into the main issues affecting children in their schools, which can be shared with the wider Wiltshire Youth Council group.

9.2 The collaboration between the WYC subgroup and Healthy Schools Lead aims to enhance mental health support and awareness among young people in Wiltshire.

10. Wiltshire Youth Pride

10.1 Consultation with young people from the LGBTQ+ community in Wiltshire revealed a lack of socialising opportunities within their community. It was identified that children and young people who identify as LGBTQ+ needed a safe and inclusive space to connect and socialise. In response, Wiltshire Youth Council organised a Youth Pride event which formed part of the Salisbury Pride celebrations, providing a dedicated space for young people.

10.2 Engagement: Youth Councillors, staff, and volunteers actively interacted with approximately 180 young people and their families throughout the event.

10.3 Inclusive Space: The Youth Pride event created a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ+ young people to gather, socialise, and express themselves.

10.4 Connections and Support: Attendees had the opportunity to connect with peers who shared similar experiences and challenges, fostering a sense of belonging and support.

10.5 Celebrating Diversity: The event promoted diversity and LGBTQ+ pride, encouraging participants to embrace their identities and celebrate their uniqueness.

10.6 Impact and Future Considerations:

- Positive Feedback: Initial feedback from attendees and participants indicated a high level of satisfaction and appreciation for the Youth Pride event.
- Continuous Support: The Wiltshire Youth Council intends to explore ongoing initiatives and activities to sustain and expand support for LGBTQ+ youth in Wiltshire.

- Collaboration: The success of the Youth Pride event highlights the importance of collaboration between youth councils, community organisations, and local pride celebrations to create inclusive spaces and opportunities for LGBTQ+ young people.

11. Healthy Schools Awards Auditors

11.1 Background: The Wiltshire Youth Council took on the role of conducting Health and Wellbeing audits at selected schools in Wiltshire. The purpose was to assess the schools' achievements and efforts in promoting health and wellbeing among their students. Two schools have been audited so far.

- School Tour: Youth Councillors visited the schools and were given a comprehensive tour to observe the facilities and environment.
- Focus Group: A focus group session was conducted with pupils to gather their perspectives and feedback on health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Head Teacher Interviews: Youth Councillors interviewed the Head Teachers to gain insights into the schools' strategies and approaches.

11.2 The Wiltshire Youth Councillors provided feedback on how well they believed the schools were achieving in terms of promoting health and wellbeing.

11.3 The assessment considered various factors, including the schools' policies, initiatives, and engagement with students.

11.4 Presentation of Bronze Healthy School Award: Trafalgar School: Cllr Laura Mayes, accompanied by two Wiltshire Youth Councillors, presented Trafalgar School with their bronze Healthy School Award. The award ceremony took place during an assembly in front of the pupils, acknowledging the school's commitment to health and wellbeing.

11.5 Future Plans: More healthy school audits are scheduled for May 2023, where additional schools will be assessed to evaluate their efforts in promoting health and wellbeing among students.

12. Wiltshire Youth Council Eco Week 2023

12.1 Introduction: Eco Week was a collaborative event organised by the Child and Youth Voice Team and the Wiltshire Youth Council. The objective of the event was to promote eco-friendly practices and raise awareness about positive changes regarding climate change. The event took place from 6th March to 10th March 2023.

12.2 Participating Schools and Activities:

- Seventeen schools actively participated in Eco Week, comprising 7 secondary schools and 10 primary schools.
- Each school had the freedom to decide how they would contribute to Eco Week and shared their initiatives on social media using the hashtag #wycecweek.
- Activities included a wide range of eco-friendly practices such as implementing mileage trackers for walking and cycling, introducing gardening clubs, organizing Green Days, distributing reusable sanitary products, rewilding areas of the school, creating artwork from recycled materials, and engaging in litter picking and gardening projects.

12.3 Judging and Awards:

- A panel of councillors and officers with expertise in environmental matters served as the judging panel for the Eco Week activities.
- Winners and runners-up were selected based on the creativity, impact, and commitment demonstrated by the participating schools.

12.4 Secondary Category:

- Winner: Pewsey Vale School - Activities included implementing a mileage tracker, introducing a gardening club, and organizing a Green Day. Notably, the school accumulated an impressive total of 172.9 miles through walking and cycling.
- Runners-up: South Wilts Grammar School - Activities included distributing reusable sanitary products, rewilding areas of the school, and creating artwork from collected bottle caps.

12.5 Primary Category:

- Winner: Marlborough St Mary's CE Primary School - Activities included raising awareness about the 5 R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair, and Rethink), designing a pond area, and sharing energy-saving techniques with parents.
- Runners-up: Queen's Crescent School - Activities included litter picking, building hedgehog houses, and engaging in gardening projects.
- Runners-up: St Patrick's Catholic Primary School - Activities included planting vegetables, conducting litter picks, making compost, and creating informative posters.

12.6 Conclusion: Eco Week was a successful event with active participation from 17 schools, promoting eco-friendly practices and positive changes related to climate change. All participating schools in both the secondary and primary categories showcased commendable initiatives and demonstrated their commitment to environmental sustainability. Events such as these help promote the Wiltshire Youth Council and the Child and Youth Voice Team and encourage participation.

Future Plan for Wiltshire Youth Council 2023/ 2024

13. Young Person Debating Competition

13.1 Young Person Debating Competition: The Wiltshire Youth Councillors have proposed the organisation of an interschool debating competition. The purpose of this competition is to provide a platform for young people to discuss and explore issues that impact them and their peers, considering different perspectives and innovative solutions. We are considering local business sponsorship opportunities for this.

13.2 In addition to fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills, the debating competition aims to achieve the following educational outcomes:

- Enhance Communication Skills: Through engaging in structured debates, participants will develop their ability to articulate their ideas clearly, present logical arguments, and effectively communicate their viewpoints.
- Promote Research and Analysis: To prepare for the debates, students will conduct research on the assigned topics, enabling them to gather relevant information, critically analyse different sources, and strengthen their information literacy skills.

- Encourage Critical Thinking: Debating encourages participants to think critically by challenging their own beliefs and considering alternative perspectives. This process enhances their ability to evaluate and analyse complex issues from multiple angles.
- Foster Collaboration and Teamwork: The competition will involve teams of students working together to develop arguments, coordinate their speeches, and counter opposing points. This promotes teamwork, cooperation, and the ability to collaborate effectively.
- Develop Confidence and Public Speaking Skills: Through presenting their arguments in front of an audience, participants will gain confidence in public speaking, overcome stage fright, and improve their overall presentation skills.
- The Youth Councillors intend to host the debating competition in the Council Chamber during the last week of the summer term. They will provide guidelines, topic options, and resources to the participating schools, ensuring a fair and engaging competition that promotes valuable educational outcomes.

14. Summary of work completed in 2022-23 and outcomes

Activity	Aims 2022/2023	Outcomes
Children in Care Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and develop the CiCC by building trust, meaningful relationships, and confidence among participants. • Actively engage CiCC members in improving services and enhancing their overall well-being. • Increase attendance and recruitment of children in care to CiCC sessions. • Organise diverse activities and engagements • Actively contribute to improving services by participating in young person interview panels and decision-making processes. • Evaluate and provide feedback on the effectiveness and user-friendliness of the Independent Futures Directory (IFD). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation and engagement of children in care in the Children in Care Council (CiCC) sessions. • Enhanced trust, meaningful relationships, and confidence among CiCC participants. • Improved services and overall well-being of children in care through their active involvement and contributions. • Expanded membership of the CiCC with the recruitment of 27 new members, reflecting growing interest and engagement. • Diverse range of activities organised and facilitated, including climbing, water sports, horse riding, drama sessions, and residential experiences, providing opportunities for personal growth and skill development. • Valuable contributions of CiCC members in the decision-making process of senior leader positions, social workers, foster carers, and the commissioning of the Residential Bloc Contract. • Feedback provided by CiCC members on the IFD to improve its effectiveness and user-friendliness. • Recognition and visibility of CiCC members' involvement in various initiatives, including speaking at a Full Council Meeting, showcasing their

		experiences and contributions.
Mind of My Own App	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable service users to have their voice heard and raise important issues happening in their lives. • Empower service users by actively involving them in their plans. • Secure the recommissioning of the app for a further three years when the contract expires in September. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased engagement and active participation of service users who are under the care of a Social Worker or Family Key Worker. • Improved communication and collaboration between service users and their social workers, establishing a valuable connection. • Successful creation of 180 young persons' accounts on the app, providing them with a secure platform to express themselves. • Facilitation of the exchange of 975 statements between service users and their social workers, promoting open dialogue. • High level of engagement and communication observed, with 130 social workers receiving at least one statement and 56 workers receiving statements more than 5 times. • Young people can share things that worry them even when they have been closed to social care.
Young Person Fostering Consultation Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating an informal 2-way dialogue format where young people can meet applicants and provide feedback on their suitability as foster carers. • Allowing applicants to learn from care-experienced young people about the needs of children in care and the qualities of a good foster carer. • Formulating questions based on important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care-experienced young people shared their perspectives and opinions on applicant suitability, strengths, and weaknesses, providing valuable input for decision-making. • Feedback from young people helped The Main Panel, Team Managers, and decision-makers understand the thoughts and preferences of young people regarding applicants, leading to informed decisions. • Applicants received feedback and suggestions for improvement, enabling them to provide quality care to foster children and enhance their skills and understanding.

	<p>topics to children in care, such as motives to foster, relevant experience, and expectations for young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing feedback and sharing personal experiences to help applicants understand effective approaches to foster care. • Offering feedback on family profiles to ensure they are child-friendly and provide essential information for prospective foster children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The successful conduct of 10 sessions with the participation of over 13 care-experienced young people, indicating the engagement and effectiveness of the project.
Wiltshire Youth Council	<p>Mental Health First Aid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To equip Youth Councillors with the necessary skills to establish peer support networks and groups within their schools. • To enhance mental health support and awareness among young people in Wiltshire. • To enable trained Youth Councillors to offer support and advice to their peers regarding mental health concerns. • To gather insights into the main issues affecting children in schools, which can be shared with the wider Wiltshire Youth Council group. <p>Wiltshire Youth Pride:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address the lack of socialising opportunities within the LGBTQ+ community in Wiltshire. • To provide a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ+ young people to connect and socialize. • To foster a sense of 	<p>Mental Health First Aid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Councillors successfully completed the Mental Health First Aid training. • Trained Youth Councillors can now offer support and advice to their peers regarding mental health concerns. <p>Wiltshire Youth Pride:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 180 young people and their families actively interacted with Youth Councillors, staff, and volunteers during the event. • A safe and inclusive space was created for LGBTQ+ young people to gather, socialise, and express themselves. • Attendees had the opportunity to connect with peers who shared similar experiences and challenges, fostering a sense of belonging and support. • The event promoted diversity and LGBTQ+ pride, encouraging participants to embrace their identities and celebrate their uniqueness. <p>Healthy Schools Awards Auditors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trafalgar School received the Bronze Healthy School Award, acknowledging their commitment to health and wellbeing. • Feedback was provided to the audited schools on how well they were achieving in terms of promoting health and wellbeing.

	<p>belonging and support among LGBTQ+ young people.</p> <p>Healthy Schools Awards Auditors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess selected schools' achievements and efforts in promoting health and wellbeing among their students. • To provide feedback on how well the schools are achieving in terms of promoting health and wellbeing. • To evaluate schools' strategies, initiatives, and engagement with students in promoting health and wellbeing. <p>Wiltshire Youth Council Eco Week 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote eco-friendly practices and raise awareness about positive changes regarding climate change. • To encourage schools to implement various eco-friendly initiatives and activities. • To recognise and reward schools that demonstrate creativity, impact, and commitment in their eco-friendly practices. • To engage schools in promoting environmental sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More healthy school audits are scheduled, indicating a continuation of efforts to evaluate schools' promotion of health and wellbeing among students. <p>Wiltshire Youth Council Eco Week 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventeen schools actively participated in Eco Week, implementing various eco-friendly initiatives and activities. • Winners and runners-up were selected based on creativity, impact, and commitment demonstrated by participating schools in both the secondary and primary categories. • Active promotion of eco-friendly practices and positive changes related to climate change were achieved. • Commendable initiatives were showcased by all participating schools, demonstrating their commitment to environmental sustainability.
<p>Hearing the Views of families to co-produce services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the engagement and participation of families who receive support from Wiltshire Council in the design and development of services. • Ensure that the voices of families are at the core of the quality assurance framework. • Develop a project mandate for a mobile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful recruitment of a Family Voice Worker to the team. • Valuable time has been spent networking with different groups in the community to build connections and recruit new members to the FAB • Clear and shared understanding among stakeholders about the purpose, goals, and scope of the social care mobile application project, leading to increased alignment and commitment towards its successful implementation.

	application to support families and improve communication and transparency in working with social care.	
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16. Plan for 2023-24

Activity	Aims 2022/2023	Outcomes
Children in Care Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a subgroup called the CiCC Committee consisting of children who are more interested in sharing their views and participating in initiatives to improve services. Create a regular podcast by the CiCC Committee to amplify the voices and experiences of children in care. Continuing to organise activities and residential experiences for the wider cohort of young people and encouraging members of the CiCC Committee to facilitate voice exercises with the extended group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased participation of children in care in meaningful discussions. Amplification of children in care's voices and experiences through a regular podcast. Raised awareness and understanding of the experiences of children in care in the wider community. Influence on decision-making and improvement of services for children in care. Empowerment and development of leadership skills for children in care.
Bright Spots Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procure and implement the Bright Spots Survey to obtain feedback from a broader range of children in care. Provide a platform for children in care to share their perspectives and have their voices heard. Use surveys to measure well-being and identify areas for improvement in the care system and experiences of children in care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of the Bright Spots Survey allows for a more inclusive and representative sample of feedback from a wider cohort of children in care, ensuring their voices are heard. The surveys enable children in care to express their needs, desires, and experiences, providing valuable insights for improving support and services. The subjective well-being measurement and feedback obtained through the surveys help identify specific areas where improvements can be made within the care system and the experiences of children in care.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer surveys through Designated Teachers in schools with children in care to ensure broader reach and impartiality. • Receive feedback from schools on completion or refusal to participate, monitoring response rates and maximising involvement. • Allow sufficient time for survey distribution, completion, and follow-up communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By implementing surveys through Designated Teachers, the collaboration between the team and schools is strengthened, ensuring a broader reach and perceived impartiality in collecting responses. • Monitoring response rates and taking appropriate actions to maximise participation helps to ensure a higher level of engagement from children in care, leading to more comprehensive and meaningful feedback. • Conducting the survey over a period of six weeks allows sufficient time for distribution, completion, and follow-up communication, ensuring a well-organised and efficient survey process.
Mind of My Own App	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further train new and existing staff members around how to use the app with young people. • Encourage staff members to introduce the app to service users. • Ensure the advocacy service and other partners are utilising the app with young people. • Continue to send updates to the directorate around app usage and celebrating success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By providing training to new and existing staff members on how to use the app with young people, they will become more proficient in utilising its features effectively. • Encouraging staff members to introduce the app to service users can lead to a higher uptake of the app among young people, enhancing their engagement and participation in the service. • Ensuring that the advocacy service and other partners are using the app with young people promotes seamless communication and coordination between different stakeholders, resulting in more comprehensive support for young people. • Sending updates to the directorate regarding app usage and celebrating success highlights the app's impact and showcases the positive outcomes achieved through its implementation, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.

<p>Young Person Fostering Consultation Panel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver the young person Fostering Consultation Panels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed decision-making: The valuable input provided by care-experienced young people regarding applicant suitability, strengths, and weaknesses will enable The Main Panel, Team Managers, and decision-makers to make more informed decisions. This will result in the selection of applicants who are better equipped to provide quality care to foster children. • By incorporating feedback from young people, applicants will receive constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement. This feedback will empower them to enhance their caregiving skills and understanding, ultimately leading to better outcomes for foster children.
<p>Wiltshire Youth Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise an interschool debating competition for young people. • Address challenges of workload and resource allocation. • Conduct another Youth Council election to ensure continued representation and engagement of young people in decision-making processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interschool debating competition provides young people with a platform to express their perspectives, enhancing their communication skills and critical thinking abilities. • Young people gain confidence in public speaking and presentation skills, overcoming stage fright and fear of public speaking. • Conducting another Youth Council election ensures ongoing representation and engagement of young people in decision-making processes, promoting a sense of ownership and empowerment among the youth community. • The team can effectively prioritise and allocate resources to sustain and expand the youth council initiatives, ensuring a continued positive impact on the lives of young people in Wiltshire.
<p>Voice Ambassadors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the role of Sessional Voice Ambassadors to provide feedback, deliver training and assist in recruitment. • Advertise and recruit to the roles. • Provide training to the new Voice Ambassadors • Establish how the Voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective establishment of Sessional Voice Ambassador roles within the team, ensuring clear responsibilities and expectations for providing feedback, delivering training, and assisting in recruitment. • Successful advertising and recruitment process, attracting diverse individuals to fill the Sessional Voice Ambassador positions.

	<p>Ambassadors will link in with other services to ensure they are being well utilised, and their experiences make a difference.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of comprehensive training to the newly recruited Voice Ambassadors, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively fulfil their role. • Establishment of strong connections and collaborations between the Voice Ambassadors and other relevant services within the directorate, ensuring their experiences and insights are utilised effectively to drive positive change. • Improved engagement and participation of individuals receiving support from Family and Children's Services, as their feedback and perspectives are actively sought and integrated into service design and development. • Increased awareness and understanding of the importance of co-production and the valuable contribution of service users in shaping and improving services within the directorate.
<p>Care experienced parent group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocating the group to Studley Greens Children's Centre in Trowbridge to provide a more suitable and accessible venue. • Expanding the vision of the group to include voice work and collaboration with consultants, ensuring that the perspectives and experiences of care-experienced parents are valued and incorporated. • Improving support from Personal Advisors (PA) regarding referrals, transportation, and their presence during sessions, when possible, to provide necessary assistance and guidance to group members. • Implementing better strategies for disseminating information about the group to effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relocation of the group to Studley Greens Children's Centre in Trowbridge provides a more suitable and accessible venue, ensuring that care-experienced parents and their babies can participate comfortably. • By expanding the vision of the group to include voice work and collaboration with consultants, the experiences and insights of care-experienced parents are recognized and integrated into the group's activities and decision-making processes. • The Personal Advisors (PA) involved with the group demonstrate enhanced support by assisting with referrals, addressing transportation needs, and being present during sessions whenever possible. This ensures that care-experienced parents receive necessary guidance and assistance. • Better strategies for disseminating information about the group are implemented, leading to improved advertising and outreach efforts. This enables the group to reach a wider range of potential participants, ensuring that care-experienced parents are

	advertise and reach out to potential participants.	aware of and have access to the support and resources provided by the group.
Family Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the inclusivity of the Family Advisory Board (FAB) by broadening its demographic representation and involving a wider range of families, beyond the current membership of former service users from the PAUSE Programme. • Implementing a quarterly thematic approach across all groups, where specific themes are discussed, and outcomes are brought back to the central FAB group. • Creating a feedback system for Child Protection Conferences, ensuring that families have a voice in shaping the implementation of the New Strengthening Family Safety approach. • Explore the creation of a social care app with the support of a Transformation Team Worker to create a detailed business case, outlining the potential benefits, functionalities, and implementation strategy of the application. 	<p>Increased representation of diverse families within the FAB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voices and perspectives from a wider range of families included in FAB discussions. • Meaningful discussions and exploration of specific themes across all groups. • Identification of outcomes and insights from these discussions. • Positive changes driven within the directorate based on the outcomes brought back to the central FAB group. • Empowerment of families to contribute their insights and suggestions to shape the implementation of the New Strengthening Family Safety approach. • Enhanced collaboration between families and professionals involved in child protection processes. • Continuous improvement of child protection practices based on feedback and input from families. • Development of a detailed business case for the social care app, outlining its potential benefits, functionalities, and implementation strategy. • Potential improved communication and transparency between families and social care services through the app. • Empowerment of families by providing access to self-help resources and ensuring their understanding of care plans and rights.

17 Conclusion

17.1 In conclusion, the various initiatives and programs implemented by both the Child, Youth and Family Voice Team demonstrate a strong commitment to actively involving children, families, and young people. The social care initiatives, such as the Children in Care Council (CiCC), Voice Ambassadors program, Mind of My Own app, Bright Spots Survey, Young Person's Fostering Consultation Panel, Care Experienced Parent and Baby Group, and Family Voice, all contribute to

meaningful change and improvement in service delivery, while prioritising the voices and experiences of those they serve.

Simultaneously, the Wiltshire Youth Council's initiatives, including the Mental Health First Aid training, Youth Pride event, Healthy Schools Awards Auditors program, Eco Week event, and proposed Young Person Debating Competition, showcase our dedication to promoting the well-being, empowerment, inclusivity, and environmental sustainability of young people in Wiltshire.

Both social care and youth council elements of the team have achieved significant progress in their respective areas, with a focus on enhancing support systems, providing safe spaces for self-expression, promoting healthy school environments, fostering eco-friendly practices, and nurturing critical thinking and collaboration among young individuals.

Appendix A - You Said We Did, Children Social Care

You Said	We Did
<p>“The offer for mental health services seem to come to a halt when we turned 18 and we also feel increasingly isolated”.</p>	<p>In response to the feedback from young people regarding the limited mental health services available to care experienced adults after they turn 18, we have taken steps to enhance emotional wellbeing support. Our CiCC teams have hired dedicated wellbeing practitioners who specialize in assisting care experienced adults with various challenges, including mental health issues, feelings of isolation, and stress.</p> <p>Furthermore, as part of the staying close project, care experienced adults who have previously resided in a residential children's home will receive additional support, including access to wellbeing services. We understand the importance of providing comprehensive and ongoing assistance to ensure the emotional wellbeing of care experienced adults as they transition into adulthood.</p>
<p>“we want help to understand our care journey’s”</p>	<p>In response to the expressed need for support among care experienced adults to access and comprehend their personal files, we have taken steps to address this issue. Our Personal Advisors (PA) have taken on a greater responsibility in assisting care experienced adults in understanding their care journeys. While this is a short-term solution, we recognise its importance in providing immediate support.</p> <p>Additionally, new measures are being explored to ensure that social workers produce "latter life letters" whenever significant life-altering decisions are made. These letters aim to provide</p>

	<p>care experienced adults with a comprehensive overview of the decisions and events that have shaped their lives. We understand the significance of these letters in helping individuals gain a deeper understanding of their personal histories and experiences.</p>
<p>“We want you to get to know us and build relationships with us.”</p>	<p>In response to your desire for us to get to know you better and foster meaningful relationships, we have implemented several initiatives. These initiatives aim to ensure your voices are heard and enable you to provide feedback on the professionals involved in your care.</p> <p>Firstly, we have established a process where young people are actively involved in interviewing all newly qualified social workers (ASYE). This gives you the opportunity to participate in the selection process and provide valuable input on who gets appointed. Your perspectives are essential in shaping the team that supports you.</p> <p>Furthermore, we have created opportunities for you to directly engage with senior leaders. Through interviews, you have the chance to ask questions about their motivations and ethical approach to relationship-based practice. This open dialogue allows you to better understand and influence the decision-making processes within Wiltshire Council.</p> <p>To ensure our staff members are equipped with the necessary skills, we now provide Motivational Interviewing training. This training focuses on working in a child-friendly manner and provides our staff with valuable knowledge and techniques for effective communication and engagement with young people.</p>
<p>Children living with foster carers mostly did not have worries about moving on from care, however young people in residential placements have expressed that they feel unsure about what their next steps would be</p>	<p>While children living with foster carers generally did not express concerns about transitioning out of care, we acknowledge that young people in residential placements have expressed uncertainty about their future steps. In response to this, we have taken steps to address their specific needs.</p> <p>To support children leaving residential foster care and assist them in preparing for adulthood, we have initiated the Staying Close Pilot program. This program aims to provide comprehensive support to young people during</p>

	<p>their transition out of residential placements. By offering tailored assistance, we strive to equip them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to navigate the challenges of adulthood successfully.</p> <p>Through the Staying Close Pilot, we are committed to ensuring that young people in residential placements feel supported and prepared as they embark on their journey beyond care. Our goal is to empower them with the tools they need to confidently take their next steps and build fulfilling and independent lives.</p>
<p>“We want to have more work experience opportunities at Wiltshire Council, including actual employment”</p>	<p>Recognising the desire of service users with lived experience of social care to gain work experience and employment opportunities at Wiltshire Council, we have taken significant steps to address this need. We understand the importance of including individuals who have firsthand experience with our services in shaping and co-producing the services we provide.</p> <p>To facilitate this, we have launched the Voice Ambassador scheme. This initiative aims to employ individuals with lived experience of our services, providing them with valuable work experience while simultaneously involving them in the co-production of services within Wiltshire. Through their unique perspectives and insights, Voice Ambassadors contribute to the development and improvement of our services, ensuring they are more inclusive, effective, and responsive to the needs of our service users.</p> <p>By creating employment opportunities and empowering individuals with lived experience, we strive to foster a more diverse and inclusive workforce at Wiltshire Council. The Voice Ambassador scheme serves as a vital platform for service users to contribute their expertise, shape our services, and ultimately make a meaningful impact on the lives of others within our community.</p>

Appendix B – You Said We Did, Wiltshire Youth Council

<p>Young people from the LGBTQ+ community made a number of recommendations in a Young Health Watch report</p>	<p>Following the recommendations made by young people from the LGBTQ+ community in the Young Health Watch report, we have taken significant actions to address their concerns and</p>
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	<p>improve the services offered in Wiltshire. We recognize the importance of responding to their views and ensuring that their needs are met.</p> <p>To effectively track and address the recommendations, we have implemented an action tracker. This tool enables us to monitor progress and ensure that each recommendation is responded to appropriately. We have adopted a collaborative approach, involving multiple organizations, to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated response to the needs of the LGBTQ+ community.</p> <p>In addition to these efforts, the Wiltshire Youth Council organized a Youth Pride event. This celebration serves as a platform to honour and acknowledge the LGBTQ+ community while providing a safe and inclusive space to further hear their views. By actively engaging with young people at Youth Pride, we demonstrate our commitment to valuing their perspectives and actively involving them in shaping the future of our services.</p>
<p>Wiltshire Youth Councillors said that they would like to inspect schools around health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>In response to the request from Wiltshire Youth Councillors to conduct inspections of schools regarding health and wellbeing, we have actively engaged them in the process of conducting Healthy School Audits. We value their perspectives and understand the importance of involving young people in shaping the health and wellbeing initiatives within schools.</p> <p>To date, Wiltshire Youth Councillors have participated in six Healthy School Audits. During these audits, they have held focus groups with pupils, toured the school facilities, and gathered valuable insights into the existing health and wellbeing practices. Their involvement has allowed for a comprehensive assessment of the school's efforts in promoting student wellness.</p> <p>Furthermore, based on their observations and findings, the Youth Councillors have provided recommendations to the Senior Leadership Teams of the audited schools. This feedback serves as a valuable resource for the schools to improve their health and wellbeing initiatives, making them more effective and inclusive.</p> <p>Moreover, the Youth Councillors have actively</p>

	<p>shared good practices identified during the audits with their own schools. By disseminating these insights, they contribute to a collective effort to enhance health and wellbeing practices across different educational institutions.</p>
<p>Wiltshire Youth Councillors wanted to raise awareness in schools about environmental issues</p>	<p>In response to the desire of Wiltshire Youth Councillors to raise awareness about environmental issues in schools, we organised an Eco Week Competition. The competition aimed to engage schools in promoting sustainable practices and fostering environmental consciousness among students.</p> <p>We are pleased to report that the participating schools achieved remarkable levels of participation from their pupil cohort. The competition successfully inspired students to explore diverse initiatives aimed at addressing environmental challenges.</p> <p>During Eco Week, schools organised various activities and projects to educate and engage students. These initiatives encompassed areas such as waste reduction, energy conservation, recycling, and biodiversity preservation. Students were encouraged to think critically about environmental issues and develop practical solutions.</p> <p>The Eco Week Competition not only heightened awareness about environmental concerns but also empowered students to take action. Through their active involvement, young people became catalysts for change within their schools and communities, spreading awareness and encouraging sustainable practices among their peers.</p> <p>We commend the schools for their enthusiastic participation and the students for their commitment to making a positive impact on the environment. By fostering a sense of responsibility and promoting eco-friendly behaviours, we are collectively working towards a more sustainable future.</p>