

Report on Wiltshire Youth Voice activities

1. Introduction

This report offers a summary of activities for the Wiltshire Youth Union (WYU), the Children in Care Council (CiCC), Care Leavers Forum, Members of the Youth Parliament and Youth Consultants Pilot during the period August 2019 – October 2019.

2. Meetings

The updated October to December 2019 meetings and activities are confirmed, with planning for more community-based engagement, and less meetings in council buildings. This includes WYU members having liaised with their schools and local communities to host meetings throughout the year, and the Care Leavers' Forum's aim of meetings being co-arranged with volunteer care leavers and Wiltshire Council Personal Advisers. 'Dispatches' include surveys, newsletters/news articles/updates.

The CiCC and WYU members have discussed and are planning to come together for a shared Christmas event.

Month	Children in Care Council	Wiltshire Youth Union	Care Leavers Forum
October	Sat 2 November Fun Day Corsham Campus 10.00am-3.00pm	Dispatch out to Youth Union	Dispatch to Care Leavers: Any updates
November	Joint meeting for all – anti-bullying week (11-15 th) 5pm-7.00pm Thurs 7 Nov County Hall Trowbridge		Email Invite out for next meeting
December	*Thurs 12 Dec Children in Care Council and Wiltshire Youth Union Shared Christmas Event *Details to be confirmed – Date may be changed		Fri 6 December Longfield Community Centre Weavers Drive, Trowbridge BA14 7DZ 6.00 – 9.00pm

3. Wiltshire Youth Union

The WYU facilitated their youth voice forum on 26 September at County Hall. It was a packed evening agenda, chaired by Heather Newton, MYP for Wiltshire East. The WYU were pleased to have as special guest speaker Sir Al Aynsley-Green. The WYU also welcomed Councillor Jon Hubbard, Chair of the Children's Select Committee (CSC) and Wiltshire Council's Executive Director of Children and Education, Terence Herbert.

Sir Aynsley-Green talked about his working life. He has over forty years of experience working with governments and organisations worldwide on children, childhood and children's services. He has been recognised nationally and internationally and was knighted by HM Queen Elizabeth in 2006 for his services to children and young people. His talk elicited a robust discussion on what it is like being a young person in Wiltshire and the benefits of having youth voice forums to support, inform and feedback on services.

WYU agenda items also included:

- Children Select Committee – Councillor Jon Hubbard, spoke about the committee, what it does, and what his role consists of as chair.
- Special Schools Consultation – David Paice, Special Schools Consultant, discussed student engagement within the schools and enlisted WYU feedback.
- PHSE education in schools – Nick Bolton, Personal Development Education Adviser, updated the WYU on the changes that will come into place in 2020 and asked for their views on the changes. WYU members have said that they will be putting together a letter to go to schools which will support the work Nick Bolton is doing to raise the profile of PHSE in Wiltshire schools, as they do not feel there is a universal offer being made that meets all young people's needs.

4. Working in partnership

Below are examples of partnership working Wiltshire Youth Voice members/groups have been involved in since August 2019;

4.1 Recruitment

Members of the WYU, CiCC and the Care Leavers Forum want to have a say in who gets recruited by the Council. In October, Lucy Townsend (Director, Families and Children's Services) requested the support of young people from WYU/CiCC to form a youth interview panel in a further round of interviews to recruit a Head of Service for Children in Care and Young People. Feedback from the young people's panel was included in the candidate scoring process.

4.2 Wiltshire Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Event – 13 November

The event is being co-ordinated by the Children's Commissioning Team. Members of CiCC and WYU have been asked to co-produce and help lead this event. The aim of the day is to bring together professionals from across Wiltshire and work in partnership to:

- Raise awareness of the system of early help available to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing
- Create a coordinated system of support around children, young people, parents, carers and the people who support them
- Re-launch the On Your Mind website - a local hub of information and advice

When delegates leave the event, the objectives will be that they:

- Have heard from children and young people about what they need, where and when
- Feel that their views have been listened to and understood by decision-makers
- Are confident that their ideas will be taken forward
- Know where to go to get information, advice and help

The event will be taking place at the Devizes Corn Exchange between 9.30am-4.00pm. For more information about the event and/or to book a delegate space please contact: Dexter Chipeni at dexter.chipeni@wiltshire.gov.uk.

4.3 Raising Awareness – Corporate Parents

CiCC members have been working with Wiltshire's HR & Organisational Development Team in the development of a 'Roving Reporter' style video to help raise awareness of what it means to be a Corporate Parent.

5. CiCC

5.1 Shared Guardianship Session 10 September 2019 – Corporate Parent Panel

CiCC discussed and agreed that they would like to focus on Mental Health for their September Shared Guardianship Session with Wiltshire's Corporate Parent Panel. These sessions occur biennially.

CiCC asked Lauren Jones, Project Co-ordinator for the SOMEHOW Project to support the session. Lauren is on placement within Children's Commissioning in partnership with Bath University. The SOMEHOW Project is exploring best practice and options for supporting young children with mental health issues.

'The Project will be important to Corporate Parents, school staff, and specialist services, by means of providing the best possible service and support to young people in Wiltshire. Furthermore, as part of an academic piece of work at the University of Bath, the views of the young people and recommendations for service delivery will be disseminated to researchers and clinicians working with young people.'

Lauren Jones – Session Proposal

Shared Guardianship Session Plan ¹: CiCC members including CiCC's Chair reviewed and signed off the session plan. Its content supports CiCC's ongoing action to raise awareness and improve mental health services for their peers.

5.2 Corporate Parent Panel – Strategic Priorities

Members of CiCC met with Councillor Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills and Lucy Townsend, Director of Families & Children's Services on 29 October. The existing priorities were discussed and the young people gave their views on what new ones should be. This feedback will be collated by the Council and reviewed by CiCC members. A wider consultation with young people supported by the Council is being planned for the next stage of the process.

6. Care Leavers' Forum

A review is underway on the present model of the Care Leavers' Forum.

The existing forum takes place at external venues, with a meeting time of 6.30-8.30pm to support as many young people as possible to attend. This format was put in place after consultation with a representative group of Care Leavers. The first two Care Leavers Forums took place on 29 March and 18 June in Trowbridge and Salisbury. Each session had seen a reduction in the numbers of Care Leavers attending.

A piece of work is now taking place to capture and collate feedback from Care Leavers and other stakeholders to ascertain the barriers and reasons for Care Leavers not attending. We will support Care Leavers to co-produce an alternative format for the forum to ensure that all those who wish to can fully participate and have their voice/views heard. This will include exploring alternative methods such as the use of online surveys and remote electronic voting options.

The aim is to have a new proposed way of working in place for 2020. Deborah Barlow, the Interim Head of Children in Care, has committed to support the forum and promote it within operational teams and the wider community.

7. Elections to the UK Youth Parliament – 2020

Preparation is now underway for the 2020 UK Youth Parliament Elections. The window for submission of candidate manifestoes is planned for 18 November until 16 December 2019. The voting for next year's elections will take place between 3 February and 14 February 2020. The new term of office will commence on 1 March 2020, and the three newly elected MYPs will represent: Wiltshire East, Wiltshire North and Wiltshire West.

8. Make Your Mark 2020

Following this nationwide consultation, climate change has been declared the biggest priority for young people across the UK. The Make Your Mark campaign called on young people aged 11-18 to choose which issue they felt was a priority.

The ballot this year has seen more than 825,000 young people take part, maintaining the campaign as one of the largest consultations of young people in the UK. Wiltshire had a record number of votes cast this year, over 14,000 young people completing ballots.

The five issues that have been prioritised are:

1. **Protect the Environment** - We believe that we have a responsibility to protect the environment from the effects of climate change for the next generation; and that the Government should look towards carbon neutral alternatives.
2. **Put an end to Knife crime** - Too many young people's lives are lost to knife crime; the Government need to do more to help end the knife crime epidemic.
3. **Mental Health** - Mental health services should be improved with young people's help; and should be available in schools.
4. **Tackling Hate Crime** - Give young people the same amount of pay, if they are doing the same work as adults in the same job.
5. **Curriculum to Prepare Us for Life** - Schools should cover topics like finance, sex and relationship education and politics.

Wiltshire's top two priorities voted for are:

1. **Protect the Environment**
2. **Put an end to Knife crime**

The priorities of Wiltshire young people reflected those of the wider UK youth voice.

Knife crime was voted the most important issue for young people in 2018 and remains a critical issue as knife crime hits a new record high nationally. Members of Youth Parliament have been campaigning on knife crime throughout 2019, calling on the Government to take urgent action.

Full results on Make Your Mark can be found at: www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk/makeyourmark/

Wiltshire's 2019 MYPs, Heather Newton, Declan Kiely and Aanya Verma have been actively supporting the Make Your Mark Campaign and will be taking part in the British Youth Council Annual Sitting of Parliament on 8 November to vote in the top priorities for 2020.

In addition to the national priorities, the British Youth Council introduced a 'Local Topic' voting option this year that allowed young people from each area to highlight what they felt were local issues that needed addressing.

9. Youth Consultants – Pilot Project

Youth Consultants have been completing their induction and training over the last few months. They have also been introducing themselves to young people, Councillors and Wiltshire Council Officers. They have attended the Wiltshire Youth Union, Children in Care Council and Corporate Parent Panel.

NB. A verbal update of the pilot work plan will be supplied by a representative Youth Consultant who will be attending the Children's Select Committee.

Appendices



Shared Guardianship
i Session Children in C:



Make Your Mark
ii 2020 - Wiltshire Youn