

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

6TH NOVEMBER 2017

THE BLUEPRINT FORUM PROGRESS REPORT APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2017

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, CABINET & PUBLIC RELATIONS

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Board with an update of progress made by the Blueprint Forum in April – September 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Board:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report attached at Appendix 1.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The primary focus of the Blueprint Forum is to provide looked after young people and care leavers in RCT the opportunities to have their voice heard and to promote their lived experiences at a strategic, policy and legislative level both locally, regionally and nationally.
- 3.2 Receiving personal experiences of the Council's services from a young person who has utilised the system assists the Corporate Parenting Board in establishing where the Council needs to focus priorities for the benefit of the children in the looked after system and for care leavers to ensure that they receive the support and same start in life as everyone else.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 As stated in the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2015-16, the Board felt it was important to receive updates from Voices from Care to learn of their progress made and future initiatives.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There is no consultation required for this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

- 9.1 The work of the Blueprint Forum links directly to the Council's Corporate Plan priority – 'Rhondda Cynon Taf's Children will receive a great start in life...'

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Corporate Parenting Board feel it is necessary to receive regular updates in respect of the progress and future initiatives made by the Blueprint Forum.
- 10.2 The updates provide an opportunity for Members and Young People alike to pose any questions they may have to one another.



The Blueprint Forum

Progress Report: April to September

VOICES FROM CARE

45 The Parade, Cardiff, CF5 3AD
Authored by: Christopher Dunn

A summary of activities from Voices From Care's Blueprint Forum participation project with RCT Local Authority.

The Blueprint Forum

Progress Report: April to September

The primary focus of the Blueprint Forum is to provide looked after young people and care leavers in RCT the opportunities to have their voice heard and to promote their lived experiences at a strategic, policy and legislative level both locally, regionally and nationally.

Participation Group Details

Number of Young People engaging with Blueprint;	10
Age range:	14-22
Foster Care:	3
Residential Care:	2
After Care:	5
Young People from RCT Linking in with VFC Regional / National Projects	9

Headline Achievements

- Promo Cymru film workshop and film premiere (April)
- Alfie Army ½ marathon (May – October)
- Challenge Wales Voyage (October)
- Wider Corporate Parenting (May, June & September)

Summary of Blueprint Meetings and Activities within RCT.

January

- Blueprint – Corporate parent(s) attended
Young people at the forum had the opportunity to develop 2 questions as a forum to be asked at the Question Time event on January 26th at the National Assembly for Wales.

Themes including homelessness of care leavers and asking the panel what does care mean to them.

- Corporate Parenting Panel

Young person presented with Voices From Care any opportunities she has been involved with as part of Blueprint.

February

- Blueprint

A session around what Blueprint members would like to be involved in as part of the group. An opportunity for young people to have an active say in what further activities they would like to be involved in as part of the forum.

March

- Promo Cymru Film Workshop

A workshop around an opportunity for the forum to create a video to highlight what Blueprint get up to as a group, along with what there is to do in and around Pontypridd for young people.

- Promo Cymru Film Workshop

Working on creative video skills and learning about new techniques when creating a film to carry forward in further sessions.

- Promo Cymru Film Workshop

Carrying on from the previous workshop, young people from the forum started to go out into the community to film for the project around what there is for young people to do in the local area.

- Promo Cymru Film Workshop

Carrying on from the previous workshop, young people looked at putting the film together, using cut and edit techniques with professionals.

April

- Blueprint young people attended RCT CLA awards and presented on stage about the forum.

Helped on the sign in desk, the information desk and represented Blueprint with the idea of informing more young people about the forum.

- Worked on the Blueprint newsletter.

Looking at the content, what should be included in the newsletter and what changes should be made to the newsletter from the first edition.

May

- Consultation with Jay McCabe around services in RCT for young people

Finding out what services work well in RCT, what services need improving and what needs there are for future services.

June

- Arts consultation with Jessica Jenkins – Youth Arts Coordinator RCT
Information workshop to inform the forum about creative activities and groups in RCT. To find out from young people what art services would they like to see in the future and how would they like to access these.

July

- Blueprint Newsletter
Workshop around how the forum would like to see the newsletter's distributed effectively so that more children looked after are aware of the publication.
- Practice Solutions event with RCT workers
Event for RCT professionals at Navigation Park around children looked after and how services currently work in RCT and what could the future of services look like. Young person from Blueprint attended this session to co-deliver an ice-breaker to professionals called 'This is Me' along with networking with professionals and sharing her thoughts in workshop discussions.

August

- Children/ young people's event in partnership with Practice Solutions
Following the July event for RCT professionals; a children and young people's workshop around what's important to young people.
- Bristol Zoo Trip
Chosen by the young people, all attended a day out to the zoo.

September

- RCT Job Fair visit
For young people to explore what opportunities are available in RCT. Young people showed an interest in opportunities such as 'Inspire 2Work'.
- Cwm Taf Health Workshop
Workshop around local NHS services, what works well, what should be improved and what needs to change. Workshop influenced by Cwm Taf Health Borad Survey and carried out by Voices From Care.

Summary interactions with National Projects

Below provides a snapshot of some of the Blueprint Forums' interactions with Voices From Care's Regional/National Membership Programme.

January

- Question time event
Question time event for children and young people who are, or have been looked after across Wales. Young people from Blueprint attended with an opportunity to ask questions to the panel members.

February

- Care Day Exhibition
An exhibition celebrating Care Day in Wales for children and young people who are, or have been looked after. This is part of the national work with sister organisations. Young people from Blueprint attended the exhibition.
- Proud 2 Be Me Event
An event celebrating care identity in Wales. Young people from Blueprint attended the event with an opportunity to be involved in pro-active workshops, fun activities and a chance to meet new young people.

March

- Erasmus under 18's residential
Part of an Erasmus project. A residential in Glan Llyn, North Wales for young people to come together from across Wales to talk about developing resources and attending a national conference on corporate parenting, and to share their experiences and their voice around what does corporate parenting look like and their needs as young people, along with their involvement in co-production.
- Erasmus over 18's residential
Part of an Erasmus project. A residential in Llangrannog, Mid Wales for young people to come together from across Wales to talk about developing resources and attending a national conference on corporate parenting, and to share their experiences and their voice around what does corporate parenting look like and their needs as young people, along with their involvement in co-production.

April

- Blueprint attended the regional looked after group for children & young people who are, or have been in care from Cardiff, The Vale, Merthyr & RCT.
Young people fed into a published online guide created with Children in Wales around health assessments for young people.

May

- Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama taster session in Pembrokeshire.
Introductory session for young people into the arts.
- Street Football Wales Women's Cup
Girls from Blueprint took part in the Women's Cup with Street Football Wales in Newport. This was the first time girls from the forum engaged with other girls from Wales in a football activity. From this they participated in the cup and came 2nd in the entire competition.
- Hay Festival Trip
Young person from Blueprint attended the renowned Hay Festival event in Hay on Wye. This Festival is to inspire children, young people and adults into the world of literacy and the arts.
- Alfie's Army ½ Marathon meeting about the run
Meeting with young people to engage them in the running opportunity.

June

- National Assembly Youth Parliament Consultation
Young people had the opportunity to have an active say and input into the youth parliament in Wales for young people. The NAFW attended Blueprint to raise awareness of the opportunity for young people and to take young people's voices on board about the parliament.
- 5N1V Scotland Summer Camp Meeting
Young person from Blueprint attended a meeting in Cardiff for the Summer Camp to cover aspects of what the Camp involves.

July

- 5N1V Scotland Summer Camp
Young person from Blueprint attended the Summer Camp with young people from Wales as representatives at the Camp. The Camp is a fun initiative for care experienced young people across the Nations; this year young people got involved with the 1,000 campaign in Scotland with Nicola Sturgeon.
- Confident Futures Summer School
Opportunity for young people to attend the Cardiff initiative to encourage young people to explore higher education in Wales. This involved a smaller scale graduation for attending the activity.

August

- Picnic in the park

Blueprint forum attended the Voices From Care summer picnic for children and young people who are, or have been looked after in Wales. This opportunity encouraged social networks and development of friendships.

- Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama Summer School
An opportunity for young people to explore the arts in a renowned university with professionals in the arts.
- Regional event in Cardiff
Hosting at the Wales Millennium Centre, the forum attended a regional event facilitated by Voices From Care to highlight the voice of young people in Cardiff, The Vale, Merthyr and RCT.
- 5k Cardiff Park run for Alfie's Army
Training for the Cardiff half marathon with Gareth Thomas.
- Pontypridd run for Alfie's Army
Training for the Cardiff half marathon.
- X2 Pontypridd run for Alfie's Army
Training for the Cardiff half marathon.

September

- National Assembly For Wales Consultation
A consultation brought to the forum to find out what works within the care system and what needs improving.
- Challenge Wales Activity
Opportunity for young people to experience a sailing voyage to the Bristol Channel to Cardiff while achieving a Entry Level 3 TeamWork qualification.
- 5N1V Residential in Wales
Opportunity for young people to be involved on a national level around care experiences across the UK.
- 10k Cardiff for Alfie's Army
Training for the Cardiff half marathon with Gareth Thomas and Jamie Baulch.
- Pontypridd run for Alfie's Army
Training for the Cardiff half marathon.

What's happened / coming up in October?

- Alfie's Army Half Marathon
4 young people from RCT and voices from care participated in the BBC Alfie's Army ½ marathon run and all completed the race successfully.
- Children in Wales – Transition into independence

Forum sessions with Children in Wales around creating a online published guide for young people across Wales around things that are important to young people. The forum will be responsible for developing and creating these guides.

- RCT Mayor's Parlour award ceremony
Event for young people who completed the Alfie's Army ½ marathon run with Voices From Care. Representatives will be attending from RCT to congratulate the young people along with the Mayor to recognise their achievements.
- NYAS Employability Workshop
- A workshop with NYAS around employability and the opportunities there are for young people. To highlight NYAS and what their service offers for young people, to inform young people what other services are available.

Initiatives for the Next 6 Months

- To build relationships with those who have Corporate Parenting responsibilities in RCT; particularly with departments and bodies that sit outside of social services. The aim of this is to offer insight, advice and guidance on how to support looked after children and care leavers.
- To continue to build the relationship between the Corporate Parenting Panel and The Blueprint Forum. For young people from the Forum to be more actively involved in Corporate Parenting Board Meetings as representatives.
- Working with RCT's 16+ team to scope the development of a 'drop in service' for care leavers at the Old Barnardo's Centre. Voices From Care currently utilise the building for the Blueprint forum sessions.
- The group will be publishing their third newsletter, with assistance from RCT's press and promotions team. Additionally the group are keen on improving the engagement of young people in the newsletters content through competitions.
- To draft a 'work plan' for Blueprint forum for the year 2018 with RCT and young people.
- The group to work more collaboratively with RCT on the RCT two sides website.
- Continuing to build link to teams, project and schemes within RCT such as 'Inspire 2 Work'.
- To engage with more young people, particularly those aged 14-16.

For more information on this report or VFC events please contact Chris on 02920 451431 or email christopher@vfcc.org.uk

