



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

19TH NOVEMBER, 2018

THE BLUEPRINT FORUM UPDATE – APRIL, 2018 – SEPTEMBER, 2018

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 during April, 2018 – September, 2018.

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 COUNCIL'S 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/ RCT Forum

Progress Report: April 2018 – September 2018

VOICES FROM CARE

45 The Parade, Cardiff CF243AB
Authored by: Christopher Dunn

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

The Blueprint/ RCT Forum

Progress Report: April 2018 – September 2018

The primary focus of the Blueprint/ RCT 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.

Headline Achievements;

- **Two Side's Event**

Voices From Care collaborated with the IRO team and MisKin project to deliver a consultation event for care experienced young people focusing on the Two Sides website. This event captured young people's voices on the RCT Two Side's website including its content and how it can be used more by young people/promoted. From this a follow up meeting will take place in October to establish a young person's website group.

- **Corporate Parenting- Youth Justice**

A session was facilitated by working links on what support looks like for care experienced young people in the criminal justice system and how young people can be supported in preventative work to prevent them from re-offending. NYAS delivered a taster session in Peer Mentoring. Finally, Children in Wales attended the session to provide feedback on their 'Money & Wellbeing' guide that the Blueprint group previously developed.

- **RCT Children Looked After (CLA) Awards**

Representatives from the RCT forum attended and supported administration the CLA awards. This included operating the sign in desk, distributing information to attendees and a young person becoming the balloon dragon mascot for the Awards. Many of the young people received awards in recognition of their achievements within the forum.

Summary of Blueprint/ RCT Forum Meetings, Local & National activities.

This section highlights the work undertaken by The Blueprint Forum within RCT, engaging wider influencing work and national participation activities that aim increase confidence and wellbeing of care experienced young people.

April

- **'When I'm Ready' in residential care**

Young person from RCT shared their views on their experience of residential care with support from Voices From Care Cymru. Young person's experiences and views then fed into the final findings around introducing 'When I'm Ready' into residential care. This consultation; commissioned by the Welsh Government, informs a Ministerial Advisory Group work stream which seeks to extend the principals of When I am ready to those in residential Care. Report Link- <https://vfcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/WIR-Resi-report.pdf>

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- **Challenge Wales 2 day residential**

Young people from RCT forum took part in a residential with other young people from across Wales. The residential took place on an around the world 72ft yacht with Challenge Wales. Young people managed the running of the boat, including preparing the boat to sail, cooking food, steering on the helm whilst working towards an Agored Cymru entry Level 3 qualification in 'Team Work' – young person who attended from RCT achieved a level in 'Communication Skills' as previously completed the 'Team Work' qualification.

- **Listen Up Regional Group**

Young representatives from the RCT forum attended Voices from Care's regional event in to share their views on Voices from Care's new National Advisory Group. The purpose of the group is to better represent the Voices of care experienced young people within the operational and strategic direction of Voices From Care. This session coproduced the application phase for young people who wish to be part of the advisory group.

- **University of South Wales Atrium open evening**

Young people from RCT forum attended an open evening at USW where they had the opportunity to take part in a taster session in Art, Music and Drama. Young people were informed about what the university offers in terms of higher education and how young people can apply to study at the university. The aim of the day was to inspire young people to further their education.

May

- **Corporate Parenting- Housing**

Corporate Parenting representatives from RCT Local Authority attended May's meeting to hear from young people on their experiences with housing services and to discuss the housing strategy for care experienced young people.

- **Hay Literacy Festival**

An educational one-day trip to the Hay Literacy Festival, Hay-on-Wye to meet with authors and take part in educational workshops to inspire young people to the world of literacy and the arts.

June

- **Corporate Parenting- Independent Reviewing Officer**

Judith Davis from the IRO team in RCT attended to meet with young people and consult on the Two Sides website. This then fed into the 'Two Sides Consultation Event' in August which stemmed from the findings from this initial consultation. Young people helped shape what the consultation in August looked like.

July

- **Summer Trip**

This was an annual summer trip decided by young people. Young people went to Porthcawl Fair as a group with support from Voices From Care staff.

- **WCVA recognition**

The Blueprint/ RCT forum along with the Alfie's Army group were 'highly commended' by the WCVA for volunteer of the year awards. The group were incredibly proud of this achievement.

August

- **Corporate Parenting- Care Inspectorate Wales**

The group worked with CIW on the inspection framework for Local Authorities, with particular focus on the levels of support for care experienced young people.

- **'Two Sides' Event**

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- **NYAS Peer Advocacy Training**

Representatives from the group took part in peer advocacy training with NYAS. The 2 day accredited course focuses on how to be an effective representative for care experienced young people. Some young people from the Forum are continuing their training with NYAS Peer Advocacy.

September

- **Corporate Parenting- Youth Justice**

A session was facilitated by working links on what support looks like for care experienced young people in the criminal justice system and how young people can be supported in preventative work to prevent re-offending.

NYAS also delivered a taster session in Peer Mentoring.

Finally, Children in Wales attended the session to provide feedback on their 'Money & Wellbeing' guide that the Blueprint group previously developed.

- **NSPCC**

The forum has shown particular interest in supporting the development of mental health services for care experienced young people. An additional forum meeting was delivered in partnership with the NSPCC, focusing on what positive mental health looks like and how this can be achieved. This session forms part of a scoping project NSPCC and Voices from Care are undertaking into emotional and mental health of looked after children. This project has been endorsed by the Ministerial Advisory Group and the paper will be launched in January.

Upcoming Blueprint/ RCT Forum sessions:

- 21st November
- 5th December
- 21st January
- 19th February
- 20th March

These sessions are being held at the Old Barnardo's Building (21A Morgan Street) in Pontypridd 5.30pm-7pm.

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