

Warwickshire



Notes from meeting on Tuesday 9th May, 6.30pm, Shirehall, Warwick

Present:

- Nagina A
- Alicia
- Tehetena T
- Mia W
- Katherine W
- Jack O
- Gabrella T
- George W

Supporting Staff:

Shin Bhangal (Practice Leader Participation)
Emily Inns (Apprentice Participation Worker)
Andy Mclean (Part time Youth Worker)

Visitors

Brenda Vincent (Service Manager - Central)
Santosh Dosanjh (Care Leaving Ops Manager)
Peter Hatcher (Service Manager)

Apologies

Sophie H, Keely G, Megan D, Shakore H, Jack E

• Hellos & Intros

Everyone introduced themselves to the 3 visitors; Brenda, Santosh and Peter. The group paired themselves up to take part in a quiz. Santosh and Brenda joined in on the quiz.

• House Project- Peter Hatcher (Service Manager Innovation Projects)

Peter had asked to attend the CiCC meeting to speak about 2 upcoming projects which he wanted the CiCC members to know about and possibly get involved with. The first project Peter mentioned was the House Project. He explained to the members that this had become a bigger project (following the first House Project in Stoke) for young people leaving care. Warwickshire has been successful in their application to participate within a new House Project involving 5 local authorities.

The project will be looking to recruit 10 care leavers aged 15-17 (approx). Peter explained that the project will enable 10 young people to manage their own homes and achieve successful independence. The project will allow the 10 young people to;

- Have their own home
 - Take ownership
 - Gain independence

- Take responsibility

Peter explained that young people involved with the project will be making the majority of the decisions i.e. from the house decor to finance. However, Peter did say that there are some decisions the young people would not get to make and this would include any legal issues and if the young person put themselves or another young person at risk or in danger.

Peter suggested creating a group of young people (who may not be eligible to take part within the housing project-but this is okay) to help support the project. Peter showed a short clip from YouTube to the group which explained more about the House Project in Stoke. CiCC members got a chance to hear what some young people who had taken part in the Stoke Project had to say about their experience.

Peter then spoke of another project around the idea of a Training Flat. He explained that Children in Care can get worried at the thought of moving into independence. CiCC members agreed that a Training Flat would help young people to get a feel for what it might be like to live alone.

Peter explained that a setting up a Training Flat was a good possibility within Warwickshire. The plan would be to find and convert a building that could be used for this purpose. The Training Flat would be multi-use in respect of all ages. The Training Flat would be used to give young people a taster of how it may feel like to live independently. Care leavers would have the chance to learn new independence skills whilst living independently for a short time. The care leavers staying at the Training Flat would be supported but they would also be given as much freedom as possible to make the experience feel as real as possible. For those young people who are adamant they want to live alone this could be a good opportunity to test out whether they are ready. The Training Flat will allow young people to explore whether they are responsible enough to live alone.

Peter asked who in the group was interested in supporting the House Project and the Training Flat project. Alicia, George, Gabby, Teh, Heather, Katherine and Mia were all interested in being a part of both Projects.

The group then said that the easiest way for Peter to keep in touch about these projects was social media, however, younger members who are interested have no access to Facebook, etc. Members agreed that email and texting seems the way forward for the moment.

- **Care Leaving Service- Brenda and Santosh**

The Care Leaving service was invited back to the CiCC meeting to speak about what has changed since the suggestions made in Jan 2017.

- Brenda and Jo to explore if and how the question of life skills and living independently can be raised with young people at an earlier age

Brenda presented a government document named 'Keep on Caring'. Brenda explained that the government document requires Care Leaving Services to make changes to the services they provide to young people, for example, that Leaving Care services have to extend services to young people from 21 to 25. Brenda said that how Leaving Care services are delivered will need to be looked at and when that happens the younger age suggested by the CiCC will also be considered.

- Brenda and Jo to look at setting up an interactive course helping care leavers to think about and life skills and preparing for independent living

Santosh said that the course is currently being planned. The Leaving Care service is considering running the course in August and again later in the year. This would be a rolling programme. The 2 week course (spread over a longer period) will help to support young people to understand various responsibilities around independent living, such as benefit entitlements, finance, tenancy agreements, etc.... Once a young person has completed the course they will get a certificate. Brenda said that young people are more likely to get a tenancy agreement if they can show they have completed a course and a certificate is good evidence. The course will be open to all young people who are looked after. However, Santosh, and the CiCC members agreed, that care leavers should do this course. Teh suggested that young people should be referred to this course which Brenda and Santosh were keen to introduce. Santosh explained to the group, that adding this course to pathway planning would encourage young people to participate.

- Brenda and Jo to involve young people in the design and delivery of training for staff and foster carers. The focus to be on building life skills and preparing young people for independent living

Brenda explained to the CiCC members that a training planning meeting is being held on 15th June to discuss this matter further.

- Brenda and Jo to consider if the "Who Cares Now" booklet should be distributed to care leavers
The Booklets have arrived. Brenda and Santosh said they are going to distribute these to care leavers. How this will be done needs to be agreed. Brenda suggested that when a Booklet is given to a young person that they sign for it.

- Brenda to share information on the shared housing project with the CiCC
See Peter Hatchers input above.

- Shin to make sure information for Care leavers is on the "Children in Care" website
This work is ongoing. Adam Firth from IT has partially constructed the Care Leavers section of the website.

The Care Leaving will be invited to the September CiCC meeting to give a further update on the actions above.

Any Other Business - None.