

Notes from the NICC meeting 7th July 2015

Visitors

Sarah Hunter (learning and development team foster carer training) Carey Cake (statutory services manager)

Item	Purpose	Discussions	Any actions
<p>Foster carer training</p>	<p>To speak to the NICC about thoughts on how we currently train foster carers. Sarah was asked to attend to see if the learning and development team can work with the NICC to make sure foster carers take up training opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah talked about the kinds of training offer that the council makes to foster carers and shared the training plan. • NICC members raised concerns that foster carers are not taking up training offers despite being responsible for very vulnerable children and young people. • Sarah explained that this is a concern shared by the training team and they would like to see foster carers doing more than just the compulsory first aid and safeguarding training. • NICC felt that there needs to be more emphasis on carers being expected to take up training and would like to see it written into their agreements that they will take up a minimum number of hours on relevant training courses every year. • Sarah explained that was exactly what happened in the USA where it was set at around 30 hours per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NICC would like to raise this issue as one of their priorities at the next corporate parenting executive board. • The NICC would like to invite reps from the fostering advisory partnership (FAP) to meet with some of them to explore reasons why carers don't take up training. • The NICC would also like to discuss with FAP the types of training that could be added to compulsory training. • The NICC will report these findings to the Corporate parenting executive group. • Sarah invited the NICC to attend the foster carers conference on 16th October and run a market place stall advertising the work of the NICC.

<p>Ofsted</p>	<p>Carey attended to talk to the NICC about the current Ofsted inspection visit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carey asked on behalf of Don Evans AD for performance what questions the group would like to ask Ofsted. • Carey outlined to the group some areas she and Don felt the NICC might be asked about. • The group felt that they had worked with Ofsted before and knew what to expect and were happy to do their own preparation. • NICC members felt it was right that Ofsted did unannounced visits as they had seen the difference an expected visit can make in schools they attend. • The NICC asked for it to be noted that in their opinion unannounced visits were essential and should be the only type of visit as <i>“it is important that Children’s services works towards the standards Ofsted expect all the time every day and not just when they think a visit may happen”</i> • The group did not feel they had any questions for Ofsted at this time but were looking forward to showcasing what they do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group made a decision during evaluation that they will do a preparation meeting for the group members that have volunteered to meet with Ofsted. • The group have asked IK to print out a list of all activities they have completed since the last Ofsted inspection and they will decide at their preparation meeting which they want to showcase. • They have asked IK to write a short table showing which activities have been completed and a short description of any impact their work had. They also would like an update on where open activities are and what needs to happen next to complete them. They will use this as a refresher so that they feel confident they will be able to show Ofsted what they do. • IK to book a prep meeting and arrange transport and finance.
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<p>Performance</p>	<p>Carey had some questions that she and Don wanted to raise with the NICC to help towards performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carey had spoken with customer services who wanted to do a mystery shopping exercise of care services. • Carey had a question about the impact a lot of changes of worker has on a young person. • Carey wanted the NICC to develop a list of questions that they felt they should be asking all looked after children and care leavers about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NICC were not sure how this would work as mystery shopping. • The suggestion was that a child/young person would get a call from someone in customer services asking about the experience a young person had with a specific professional, for example, social worker or IRO. • The group were not sure many would want to talk to a stranger on the phone and didn't feel there were enough young people present due to transport issues that evening to make a decision. This will be deferred to next meeting. • The group did feel this was an important issue but felt it was an issue that needed consultation with all looked after children and not just the NICC members • The NICC again felt this is something that all looked after children and care leavers should be asked an opinion on and not something just they should decide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitation to be extended to the customer services team to come and talk to the NICC and look at how the NICC can support what they are trying to do. • IK to check with Carey who is the contact within the team and extend the invitation. • Add item to next agenda setting meeting. • NICC to develop and run a short questionnaire over the next few weeks. • Agreed to feed back the findings to Carey within 12 weeks.
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Leaving care Grants	The joint chair of the corporate parenting executive board and NICC member had taken the NICC's proposal for a better way to manage leaving care grants to the corporate parenting executive group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from the corporate parenting executive board was very positive and they agreed with all of the recommendations. • Stew Betts is to develop a short document which will be added to the procedures and the recommendations will become accepted practice when the new leaving care service starts in September. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IK to contact Stew Betts and ask him for a copy of the document that can be shared with the NICC before it goes live to staff.
Leaving care packs	The list of items that the NICC felt should be included in the new leaving care information packs were agreed by the corporate parenting executive board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 gaps had been identified when we were putting together a list of information the NICC nothing for young people around the staying put and returners policy. • The NICC felt these documents are essential to young people and decided that they will develop the 2 young person friendly versions. • The group voted that a booklet should be designed which formed a leaving care handbook not a series of leaflets. • They also want to look at developing electronic versions and other more accessible versions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IK to set up a meeting for the young people who volunteered to write the documents • IK to collate the information selected by the NICC and arrange a meeting for NICC reps to meet with the graphic design team at County Hall
Pilot project proposal	The chief fire officer in Norfolk had identified some houses on fire station land that he felt could be used to support vulnerable children in some way. He had asked the NICC to consider some options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During planning for an up-coming conference the issue arose about not being well enough prepared for independence especially when it came to practical skills. • The idea of using the fire station houses as a base for a week long course around independence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IK to set up the meeting with the fire service and NICC reps • A steering group to be identified by the NICC to plan this pilot • A proposal to be written

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The NICC are in favour of this and feel a fire station venue with volunteers from the fire service working with them would be a real draw to young people.• The NICC voted to meet with reps from the fire service and to invite Cllr James Joyce to attend as the lead member for Children's services to develop this idea	by NICC volunteers that can be presented to both the corporate parenting executive board and the Children's services leadership team.
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