



CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL REPORT 2010

February 2010

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NOVEMBER 2008 TO JANUARY 2010

Background

The governments white paper Care Matters Time for Change proposes that each local authority should put in place arrangements for a Children in Care Council with direct links to the Director of Children Services and the Lead Elected Member to improve the corporate parenting role and ultimately to improve the outcomes for children in care.

Over a 100 of Wirral's children in care were asked for their views either by questionnaire or through face to face consultation, regarding how the Children in Care Council for Wirral should operate. These views were incorporated into a proposal with the draft pledge for children and young people in care and agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee. See report Proposed Children in Care Council 16th March 2009 Children Services and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Children in Care Council consists of a membership of 15 to 20 of Wirral's children in care aged 13 and above.

Brief update on meetings and work to date.

November 2008

Consultation by questionnaire and focus groups how the council should be run.

December 2008

Focus groups how the council should be run. Views for the pledge.

January 2009

- Views for the pledge.
- Focus groups re model and terms of reference for Children in Care Council
- Membership.

February 2009 meeting

- Agreed model, terms of reference, pledge.
- Children in care council to start from March 2009.

March 12 2009

- Newsletter and Questionnaire agreed to be sent out to children in care, to find out what areas of work to be done and explain role of council.
- To identify Training needs.
- Team building day agreed for young people.

March 16th 2009

Two members of the Children in Care Council Attend Committee with Report.

March 28th

Team building day. (Barnstondale Centre)

April 20th 2009

- Work on Pledge young people views.
- Children rights survey completed.

May 26th 2009

- Meeting with Lead Member, Director, and Head of Branch.
- Discussion terms of reference, action plan and team building day.

June 2009

No meeting

July 16th 2009

Discussion and feedback from questionnaire re area of work, children in care would like the Children in Care Council to look at, Consents forms first piece of work.

August 13th

Training session for Children in Care Council.

September 17th 2009

- Universities training social workers Chester
- Questions for social care staff re consent forms.

October 29th 2009

- Pledge.

- Two Children in Care Council Members attend Youth Conference 13th October.
- Universities training social workers Warrington.
- Questionnaire sent out to social care staff/carers re consents forms.

November 26th 2009

- Training Les Ebbrell
- Recommendations re consents forms

December 8th 2009

Meeting with Department Children Schools and Families Council met with DCSF to discuss Placements for Children in Care.

January 22nd 2010

- Discussion re update of work, new members for the Children in Care Council.
- Agreed flyer to be done for new members
- Report to be completed for February for meeting with Director and Head of Branch.

January 28th 2010

Keeping Wirral Safe Conference. Four Children in Care Council Members involved with Conference 'Listening to Children and Young people'.

Other Activities

- One member has been interviewed for Foster Panel and has been offered a place on the panel.
- One member has been involved with the Looked after Children's Service Manager looking at the Leaving Care Policy.
- The members have also come up with some suggestions for a new name for the Leaving Care Team. (The Pathway Progression Team).

Consent Forms

The Children in Care Council asked other Looked after Children in Care what areas of work they would like the council to look at, this was through a questionnaire and focus group.

Consents forms came out on top followed by complaints, contact and reviews.

The children in care council decided to look at consent forms. The children in care council sent out a questionnaire to staff within social care branch which included managers, social workers, and foster carers.

From the information given and talking to children and young people the following recommendations have been made by the Children in Care Council.

Recommendations made

1. Any activity that is organised by Wirral Local Authority and has a risk assessment completed can be approved by a foster carer. This includes all school trips and Jeanette Geary's Step into Leisure.
2. This information should be put into the procedure for delegated consent to outings visits and activities.
3. All staff and carers to be sent this information, letter
4. All looked after children and young people to be sent this information. letter
5. Information to be put into the Foster Carers Handbook.

Actions for March/ April 2010

1. Four to six members of the Children in Care Council to stay on for another year.
2. Kim to remain Chair for the next six months.
3. Membership for Council to be 12 to 15.
4. Flyer to be sent out to Looked after Children for new members March/ April 2010.
5. Children in Care council to Look at Complaints for this year's project.
6. Newsletter/ report to be sent out to Looked after Children to update on Children in Care Councils Work.
7. Pledge to be sent out to Looked after Children.
8. Agree funding for the council to continue.
9. Minute taker need for Children in Care Council.
10. Meetings to continue monthly for the next year.
11. Funding to be found for Training (Les Ebbrell).
12. This report to be taken to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Wirral Children in Care Council

Chair: Kim Fenna

Members: Amanda Peters, Martin Peters, Matthew Peters, Martin Jones, Paul Caine, Sam Hill, Chris Anderson, Peter Hatton, Lee Edwards, Phillip Hughes, Bobby J Sword, Becci Fenna, Emma Taylor.

23 February 2010