

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

9 JANUARY 2023

ELECTED MEMBERS ENGAGEMENT SESSION

Reasons for the Report

1. This report has been prepared to provide an overview to the Committee of an engagement session that took place with some members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and Bright Sparks group in September 2022. The report outlines the activities that were undertaken in the session and the key themes identified by our care experienced young people.

Background

2. The Bright Sparks group is the primary participation mechanism for Cardiff Children Looked After and Care Leavers. The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) are commissioned by Cardiff Children's Services to deliver a participation service to children and young people aged 11-25 who are receiving care and support from them, with the principle objective of ensuring that Children and Young People (CYP) are afforded a voice and are active participants in shaping policy and service provision within the council and within a wider external context.
3. In addition, Bright Sparks is a peer support forum for care experienced children and young people, providing them with opportunities to take part in social activities, other participation opportunities and avenues of support. The NYAS Cymru Participation Officer facilitates fortnightly group sessions.

4. In September an engagement session was held to provide an opportunity for members of Committee to hear the views and direct experiences of the members of the Bright Sparks group. It also provided an opportunity for the young people of the group to find out more about the role of the Committee members.
5. At the beginning of the session members of the Committee were shown a video that was developed by the Bright Sparks group. The video showed key messages from the young people of what support they would like to see from professionals and Elected Members.
6. To help build confidence some of the young people were supported by staff at NYAS Cymru to facilitate a series of ice breaker activities, also providing an opportunity to build rapport with members of the Committee.
7. Following on from the ice breaker activities, an open discussion took place to provide an opportunity for the young people of the Bright Sparks group to share their direct experiences with members of the Committee.
8. The discussions were based around the following themes:
 - Mental Health & Well being support Services
 - Accommodation
 - Profit from Care
9. Several questions were asked by the young people to Committee members in relation to the themes, for those young people who were unable to attend the session the participation worker from NYAS relayed messages and questions on their behalf
10. Further detail of the themes, issues and experiences of young people of the group and next steps is provided in the presentation in Appendix B
11. Feedback from the session was that members of the Committee would like to engage with care experienced children and young people in the future.

Next Steps

12. The issues and themes raised at the session will be raised with appropriate partner agencies and be incorporated into the Corporate Parenting Strategy action plan. Updates will be provided to our young people on the progress of implementation of the issues discussed.

13. The themes identified at the session will also help to shape the Forward work programme for the Committee for the upcoming year.

Financial Implications

14. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

Legal Implications

15. There are no legal implications arising from this report

RECOMMENDATION

16. The Committee are recommended to note the engagement session update with children and young people and make any observations or comments.

17. The Committee are recommended to identify how they would like to engage with care experienced children and young people in the future.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
DIRECTOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
29 DECEMBER 2022