

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safeguarding Sub-Committee	12/05//2022
<b>Subject:</b> Participation Service – Children in Care Council	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	Outcome 1
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Pat Dixon, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service	

### Summary

The key priorities for the Participation Service this year will be to move from virtual meetings of the City of London Children in Care Council (CiCC) to face-to-face meetings. In May 2022 the young people will be revisiting the pledge, reviewing the progress that has been made, and updating the priorities for 2022–2023. The Participation Service will also be offering training for the young people on becoming Young Inspectors. This training is likely to be delivered in July 2022 and it is envisaged that they could be inspecting providers as early as August or September 2022. However, this would be dependent on their availability due to college and other commitments. Summer activities that have been arranged include: a film project led by the young people, with support from a film company that has experience in working with young people; and several trips during the summer holidays, to ensure that all the young people have an opportunity to go on a summer outing.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. Since January 2022, the Participation Service has been moving towards face-to-face meetings with young people; during the pandemic, there were limited opportunities for young people to meet with their peers on a regular basis. The participation lead for this area has developed and maintained strong links with

the young people, which has helped them to feel connected to the group. However, the ability to meet face-to-face and have contact with other members has significantly improved their experience and connection to the City of London. The first face-to-face CiCC meeting took place in February this year. At this meeting, the young people were informed about the Young Inspectors programme and the film project. The group agreed that they would like to participate in these projects, so steps have been made to bring in training for young people and participation leads on the Young Inspectors programme.

2. The February CiCC was well attended, and the young people had an opportunity to voice their views to a senior leader and Member who attended the latter part of the meeting. Following the meeting, the young people had an opportunity to go out together and try go karting, which they all enjoyed. The young people who raised issues at the CiCC meeting were listened to and their requests were acted on. One request was for training on interview techniques. A workshop on interview skills was organised by the Independent Reviewing Officer, with support from Prospects in early April of this year. It was well attended by young people, and feedback after the workshop was positive.
3. In May 2022 the City of London CiCC will be reviewing the pledge, looking at how the City of London is meeting the commitments it made to the young people at that time. It has been a while since the pledge has been reviewed and many of the young people who were originally involved in developing the pledge have now left the programme. Therefore, it gives the new members of the CiCC the opportunity to add their views and opinions to the pledge, so that it reflects the current needs of the young people cared for by the City of London.

### **Current Position**

4. The training for the Young Inspectors Programme will be provided through the London CiCC, although it will be funded by the City of London. This should not incur any additional cost for the City of London: opening up training to other young people across London will mean the resource is used more effectively and offer the opportunity for shared learning and support across other London boroughs. The training for this programme involves a one-day training session for participation leads and a two-day training session for the young people.
5. Once the training has taken place, the young people will be able to be involved in inspecting service providers. However, clear guidance will be needed on the inspection scope, and how feedback is given. Most of the young people either attend work, college or school, so any inspections will need to be time-limited to ensure that this does not impact on their education or employment. The strengths of this model will give the young people an opportunity to have a voice regarding the services being provided for young people, as well as the confidence to voice their views.

6. This year the Participation Service will also be progressing a film project to give young people the opportunity to work together on a combined project. It will also give them an opportunity to reflect on something that is important to them, that they can retain as part of their life story and journey in this country. The young people will decide what the film is about, with support from the film company and participation lead. They will also be involved in the production and editing of the film, which will be open to all the young people. This project was discussed at the last CiCC meeting in February, and the young people were excited about the opportunity to be involved.
7. Activities for the young people are arranged following the CiCC meetings and these events are well attended by the young people, as they enjoy meeting up with their peers. This year the Participation Service will be arranging some summer day trips for the young people. These trips will ensure that all the young people have the opportunity to attend one of the summer trips during the summer break. Possible destinations will be discussed and decided at the next CiCC meeting in May 2022.

### **Options**

8. N/A

### **Proposals**

9. N/A

### **Key Data**

10. N/A

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

11. Financial implications – N/A
12. Resource implications – N/A
13. Legal implications – N/A
14. Risk implications – N/A
15. Equalities implications – N/A
16. Climate implications – N/A
17. Security implications – N/A

## **Conclusion**

18. The pandemic has been a challenging time for the young people, as much of their contact with peers and the Participation Service has been virtual. The participation lead has stayed in close contact with the young people through WhatsApp group chats and individual contact, although this has not been ideal. The young people's engagement during this time has involved a proactive approach to involve them with the service. The participation lead who started in her role during the pandemic has also managed to maintain close relationships with the young people by virtual means during this period.
  
19. This year there has been a significant move to bring back face-to-face contact, with the arrangement of the CiCC meetings and activities. The young people's involvement and feedback would indicate that the ability to have face-to-face social interaction significantly improves their wellbeing and their connection to the City of London. Therefore, the activities arranged for this year aim to create a more inclusive approach that supports all young people being involved. Through having a variety of projects and trips, the young people will have more choice and opportunities to be involved.

## **Appendices**

- None.

### **Pat Dixon**

Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service  
Department of Community and Children's Services

T: 020 7332 1215

E: [pat.dixon@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:pat.dixon@cityoflondon.gov.uk)