

By: Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager  
To: Children's Champions Board – 12 March 2008  
Subject: **MEETINGS WITH CARE LEAVERS**  
Classification: Unrestricted

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Summary: This report updates Members on a successful recent meeting with young people in care and leaving care, and plans for future work.

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## **Background**

1. At its meeting on 5 December 2007, this Board agreed to meet once again with young people who are in, or have recently left, the care of the County Council. A previous meeting had been held in October 2005 and had proved very successful. A number of areas of concern had been highlighted by the care leavers at that meeting, and these were addressed at subsequent meetings of this Board and later contributed to the County Council's Pledge to Children and Young People in Care.

## **Wednesday 23 January 2008**

2. (1) The second meeting took place on 23 January at County Hall. Nine young people aged between 15 and 20 visited County Hall to meet Members and officers. They were accompanied by youth workers and staff from the Upfront Rights Service in Maidstone and Rainer Kent 16+ from across the county.

(2) A note of the meeting is attached as Appendix 1. This has been shared with and agreed by all the young people who attended.

(3) This Board has often acknowledged that such events are vital in allowing Members to meet young people in an informal setting and hear at first hand their experiences, views and concerns. Hearing and addressing the issues which arise at these meetings contributes towards the development of Members' role as Corporate Parents.

## **Future Meetings**

3. (1) It was agreed that Members and officers should meet up again with the same party of young people in six months' time to see what progress has been possible in addressing the issues which arose at the January meeting. Members are asked to support this meeting, which is due in July.

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(2) One of the challenges in arranging these meetings is that young people cannot be asked to take time out of school or college to attend, so meetings have so far been held in the evenings. In July it is possible that the event could be placed in the summer holiday, and so could possibly be held in the daytime. I welcome Members' views on timing, and will obviously also need to consult the young people on the timing which best suits them.

### **Corporate Parenting**

4. Work also continues on a second Corporate Parenting event, planned for Spring 2008, to which all Members of the County Council will be invited. This will update Members on developments in the Corporate Parenting role since the last event in September 2006, and aims to make use of new training materials being produced early in 2008 by the National Children's Bureau.

### **Recommendations**

5. Members are asked to:-
- (a) note the successful outcome of a meeting with care leavers held on 23 January 2008, and the points which arose;
  - (b) support a future meeting between Members and officers and the same group of young people in the summer of 2008, and give their views on the timing of the meeting; and
  - (c) note that work continues on a second Corporate Parenting event, planned for Spring 2008.

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Background Information: *Nil*