

From: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing

To: Corporate Parenting Panel – 1 June 2017

Subject: **ADVOCACY AND INDEPENDENT VISITORS SERVICES, PROVIDED BY THE YOUNG LIVES FOUNDATION – REPORT ON ACTIVITY 2016/17**

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Divisions: All

Summary: A report on the Activity, Outputs and Outcomes of Young Lives Foundation's Advocacy and Independent Visitors Services 2016/17.

Recommendation: Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to **CONSIDER** the information contained in the report and **COMMENT** on the issues, outputs and outcomes delivered by Young Lives Foundation across both services in the last year.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Kent County Council is committed to ensuring that children and young people in their care are able to access effective Representation, Rights and Advocacy Services in line with National Legislation, Guidance and Standards and based on accepted principles of good practice.
- 1.2 Services are currently commissioned under a Representation, Rights and Advocacy Contract to an independent organisation, The Young Lives Foundation (YLF). The contract commenced in April 2015 and is due to expire in March 2018.
- 1.3 The contract is for the provision of five statutory services to cover the Kent County Council geographical area and to service users out of county where the Local Authority is the appropriate agency. Provision includes :
 - Advocacy for Children in Care and for Care Leavers aged 16 to 24, children who are assessed as being in need or needing safe plans to be made for them and those subject to a child protection plan under the Children Act 1989
 - Independent Visitors for Children in Care aged 8 to 18 years
 - Independent Person for Stage 2 complaints under the Children Act 1989.
 - Appropriate Adults Service for young people aged 10 to 17 years and vulnerable adults detained at Police Custody Suites who require support

- Accompanying Adults Service for the purpose of age assessment interviews for unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

1.4 This report summarises activity relating to the Advocacy and Independent Visitors Services.

2. Advocacy Service

2.1 A report summarising activity relating to the Advocacy Service for Children in Care and for Care Leavers aged 16 to 24, children assessed as being in need or needing safe plans to be made for them and those subject to a child protection plan under the Children Act 1989 is attached as Appendix 1.

3. Independent Visitors Service

3.5 A report summarising activity relating to the Independent Visitors Service for Children in Care are aged 8 to 18 years is attached as Appendix 2.

4. Conclusion

4.1 YLF is an established and reliable provider of Independent Representation, Rights and Advocacy Services ensuring capacity to meet the required commissioning outputs effectively within the timescales, despite the increases in demand across all services. YLF's Services are led by young people to ensure sustainable and positive outcomes are jointly achieved whilst offering significant added value. Effective communication channels with Kent Specialist Children's Services (SCS), Commissioners and other practitioners ensures any issues and concerns are addressed promptly so that our children and young people are heard, their voices are respected and valued in shaping the delivery of care across Kent.

5. Recommendations

Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to **CONSIDER** the information contained in the report and **COMMENT** on the issues, outputs and outcomes delivered by Young Lives Foundation across both services in the last year.

6. **Background documents:** *none*

7. **Contact Details:**

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