

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: **CORPORATE PARENTING CHALLENGE CARDS**

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Divisions: All

Summary:	This report is intended to provide Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel with an overview of progress made and the current challenges.
Recommendation:	Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to NOTE the content of this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2015, through consultation with young care leavers and children in care, the Virtual School Kent (VSK) Participation and Engagement Team developed the concept of 'Challenge Cards.'
- 1.2 The initiative came about through various discussions at Kent's Children in Care Council (OCYPC) meetings, where young people told us that they would like a formal way to have the opportunity of having their voices heard by their Corporate Parents and by the decision makers in the Council. The young people also wanted a way to be able to 'challenge' or make suggestions about how improvements could be made to the care system. The idea of the Challenge Card evolved and these cards allow Children in Care (CiC) and Care Leavers to challenge their Corporate Parents around issues facing them in care.

2. Process

- 1.2 A process was then agreed and was signed off by the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) and is outlined below.
 - Any young person in care or Care Leaver can raise a Challenge. The challenge is then taken to one of the Children in Care Councils (Super Council (the Junior Council), OCYPC or the Young Adults Council (YAC)). A challenge can also be raised at a Children in Care Council meeting. The Challenge is then discussed and if it is agreed upon by three or more members it is agreed
 - Agreed Challenges are then taken forward to the CiC Meetings where the Lead Officer will review and a decision will be taken in the meeting

as to whether the Challenge is actionable. If the Challenge is actionable the Lead Officer will delegate responsibility to a senior officer for action.

- The delegated officer will then action the challenge and will update the VSK Participation and Engagement (P&E) Team with the outcome of the Challenge
- At the next CiC Council meeting the Chairperson will update the CiC Council as to the outcome of the Challenge. The CiC Council will have an opportunity to advise if they are satisfied with the outcome and will sign off the card. The VSK P&E Team will be on hand to support and advise if there are particular reasons as to why a Challenge cannot be actioned. (Sometimes Challenges received are personal child specific issues; these are discussed with the young person and then passed onto their Social Worker or Personal Advisor for resolution and other times the challenges are on a large scale with significant cost implications and therefore potentially slower to resolve)
- VSK Care Leaver Apprentices who are co-opted as members of the CPP provide regular updates to the Panel as to the outcome of the Challenge Cards. CPP also comment and advise on Challenges where necessary
- Outcomes of Challenges are disseminated to CiC who are not Council members via the VSK Newsletters that published three times a year.
- Challenge cards are discussed at every Super Council, OCYPC and YAC meeting
- A detailed log is kept by the VSK P&E Team recording the Challenges, responsible officers, outcomes and updates to young people.

3. Current Challenges

3.1 For KCC to provide a young person's railcard to YAC members to help them with their travel costs as a reward for becoming a YAC member. It would make jobs more accessible, and encourage independence.

Action: Responsible Officer – Assistant Director, Corporate Parenting.

Costs: The cost for this is estimated at 16 young people x £30 per railcard and so a total cost of £480.

Outcome: This challenge is approved and the cost will come out of the VSK P&E Budget 2017/18. With regular attendance from members, this could potentially save Kent County Council money.

Feedback to young people: This was fed back to YAC members and actioned at the meeting of 4 May 2017.

3.2 If a young person over school leaving age decided to be fully independent and work full time paying their own rent, would KCC as a 'Corporate Parent' act as the young person's guarantor.

Action: Responsible Officer – Assistant Director, Corporate Parenting

Costs: N/A

Outcome: Kent County Council would not legally be able to undertake this role but the Care Leaving Service will cover the whole subject of accommodation

rights and entitlements with the new Transitions Workbooks and will continue to support care leavers as part of the day-to-day service provision. With the current realignment towards a 0-25 children's service model, services currently offered out of the district Youth Hubs are being mapped and the potential for care-leaver drop-ins is being developed.

Feedback to young people: This was fed back to YAC members at the meeting of 4 May 2017.

3.3 That KCC could run a skills demo day where local businesses could be invited to show young people practical skills for example bleeding a radiator, being able to turn the water and electricity off and other general household jobs.

Action: Responsible Officer – Assistant Director, Corporate Parenting

Costs: To be identified

Outcome: This has been picked up by Nick Crick and the 18+ Leaving Care Service and, in conjunction with the Participation and Engagement Team. Together there is a plan to hold local area events two to three times a year across the county. There is also a plan for 'drop-ins' for care leavers and this will provide opportunities for young people to engage with the service gaining advice about life skills and employment opportunities.

Feedback to young people: This was fed back to YAC members at the meeting on 4 May 2017.

4. Recommendation

4.1 Recommendation: Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to NOTE the content of this report.
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5. Contact Details

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