



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**26<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2023**

**PARTICIPATION UPDATE FOR CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE**

**REPORT OF THE ITERIM DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES, IN  
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER,  
COUNCILLOR G CAPLE**

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Services)**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update about RCT Children's Services engagement activities and the Participation Strategy for 2023. An implementation plan has been developed to take forward actions and key milestones as part of a Children and Young People Steering group. This is in development from January 2023. Young people will also be invited to give feedback about the Participation strategy and implementation plan going forward.
- 1.2 The Children's Services 'Get Involved' survey launched in early November 2022 and is currently open to engage further responses from care experienced children and young people. The survey asks children and young people about what is going well, what could be better and how they would like to get involved with participation activities and their preferred methods of communication (See appendix 1).
- 1.3 The survey will gather qualitative and quantitative responses from children and young people and this will be used to help inform the implementation plan going forward. Young people will receive feedback following the report as part of a 'You said, we did' mechanism.
- 1.4 The Christmas themed feedback event for Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 has been rescheduled for the beginning of February 2022 with Voices from Care Cymru due to staff sickness with Covid (See appendix:2).

- 1.5 Voices from Care Cymru have been working alongside the Graduate Officer for Participation to develop nature-based activities and well-being initiatives for care experienced young people during October half term (See appendix:3 and 5).
- 1.6 The Transform Team in Children's Services have worked with young people in Residential and Foster care to develop videos about why staying local matters to young people in RCT. This will be shown to the Deputy Minister for Social Services on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023.
- 1.7 The care experienced summit was on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December and we are awaiting responses from Welsh Government.
- 1.8 Discuss how Corporate Parenting Board members could join a Task and Finish group with young people supported by VFCC to decide how young people will be involved in the Corporate Parenting Board as equal partners with members rather than as contributors.
- 1.9 The Reviewing Team have sought views from young people open to the 16+ teams about their experiences of review meetings as well as asking for their views about the 'My Voice, My Review' consultation document. The Reviewing Team also provide an update about the Children Looked After website advancements.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the information contained within the report.
- 2.2 Scrutinise and comment on the information provided.

## **3. BACKGROUND/ PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 3.1 The Participation Strategy for 2023 has been developed and will be shared with Children's Services staff in January 2023. The strategy outlines guidance for children, young people and families for consultation, participation, and co-production.
- 3.2 An implementation plan has been written to take forward key action and milestones for participation. A children and young people steering group will be appointed in January 2023 to take forward these actions.

- 3.3 The Christmas feedback event (following the 1<sup>st</sup> September event) was scheduled for Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 but this has been rescheduled for early February due to staff sickness with Covid (See appendix:2).
- 3.4 The 'Get Involved' survey for Children Looked After (ages 4 to 17) and Care leavers (ages 18 to 24) was launched in November 2022. The survey infographic with QR code and parent/carer letter has been sent to 863 addresses. We've had 61 responses (9.1.2023) and that is just over a 7% response rate and hope to receive further responses in January 2023. The closing date will be Mid-February 2023 (See appendix:1).
- 3.5 The Sky's the Limit Launch ( for ages 8- to 13-year-olds) received positive feedback from the 9 young people that attended the nature-based activities in Pontypridd (See appendix:3).
- 3.6 Voices from Care Cymru have been working with the Graduate Officer for Participation (Children's Services) to develop well-being initiatives that include a resilient based workshop for 8- to 13-year-olds for the Sky's the Limit Group and the 14–22-year-olds 'Local RCT Group'. This relates to feedback that young people asked for from the 1<sup>st</sup> September event that included well-being initiatives, experiences with nature and theatre events. 13 young people attended this event ( See appendix:4).
- 3.7 Voices from Care Cymru secured tickets for a theatre production of 'Snow White' in Cardiff and 30 tickets were allocated to care experienced young people and their carers in attendance for Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

#### **4. CURRENT POSITION**

- 4.1 The Participation strategy for 2023 will be shared with Children's Services staff and a Children and Young People Steering group will be developed.
- 4.2 The implementation plan will be discussed with the Children and Young People steering group and young people about how to take it forward.
- 4.3 The 'Get Involved' survey asks children and young people about what is going well, what could be better and how they would like to get involved with engagement activities and their preferred methods of communication. The survey results will help to inform participation work going forward and Voices from Care Cymru can be informed of this data for their next steps with Children's Services.

- 4.4 In December 2022 a small number of RCT care experienced young people contributed to a summit where young people made recommendations about change to Government Ministers including the First Minister. This work will culminate in a Declaration by Welsh Government as part of the Radical reform of services, it is aimed at ensuring rights are observed, and services across Wales work to remove barriers to improving outcomes for Care experienced young people.
- 4.5 Developing a Task and Finish Group with Corporate Parenting Board members and young people (supported by VFCC) is important for accountability to young people.
- 4.6 The Reviewing Team have approached the 16+ Teams, and partners in Health and Education to update the information relating to their service areas to ensure that the information continues to be relevant and up to date. In ensuring we capture the voice of the child and their lived experience; they are updating the My Review documents to make them more appealing and interactive. The Reviewing Team are developing a 'My Review' in consultation with colleagues in the Disabled Children's Team which will use 'widgets or 'emoji's' style infographics to assist disabled young children in sharing their voice and experiences.
- 4.7 The Reviewing Team recommend a pilot phase to review and analyse feedback from children and young people to ensure that the final 'My Review' document is co-produced, has appropriate content to suit their needs, isn't time consuming whereby it deters them completing it and is accessible in a range of formats.
- 4.8 The Reviewing Team have made the '2 Sides' website content link to the YEPS website. This includes 'My Health,' 'Leaving Care,' 'My Education,' 'Getting your Voice Heard,' 'Your Rights,' 'RCT Forum,' 'My Review' and 'What does Looked after mean?'
- 4.9 In February 2023, the Reviewing Team will consult with children and young people who have used the 'My Voice, My Review' to gain young people's experiences and ideas to improve the design and content of the 2 sides website.

## **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO ECONOMIC DUTY**

- 5.1 This is an information report. The implementation plan will be discussed with the Children and Young People Steering group and young people going forward.
- 5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the future implementation process.

## **6. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

- 6.1 This is an information report.
- 6.2 Further consultation will however be undertaken as part of the work of the participation strategy.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications aligned to this report.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 The legal requirements for children and young people are set down within the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

## **9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

- 9.1 This links to the Children's Services Delivery plan 2022-2023 that, 'Children's voices are Heard: To improve engagement with children and young people, to ensure co-production and that the voice of the child is heard in service development and delivery.'
- 9.2 It also contributes to 'The Children's Commissioner for Wales' that champion the development of a Children's Rights Approach grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

## **10. NEXT STEPS**

- 10.1 The feedback event that was arranged for Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December has been re-scheduled for early February and the young people from the

original event on 1<sup>st</sup> September will be invited for feedback about increasing CLA based awareness training for teachers.

- 10.2 The Participation Strategy will be shared with Children's Services staff going forward in January 2023.
- 10.3 The implementation plan will be discussed with a Children and Young People Steering group to take forward in January with key areas and milestones.
- 10.4 Developing strategies to increase the response rate for the 'Get Involved' care experienced survey.
- 10.5 An accessible digital platform for children and young people to keep up to date with participation events and the outcomes of these events.
- 10.6 The Reviewing Team will be consulting with care experienced children and young people about the 'My Voice, My Review' and the 2 sides website in February 2023.

## Appendix

1. 'Get Involved' survey, Parent/Carer Letter and live link



51809-13 Childrens Services Get involved  
'Get involved' Survey letter Cymraeg and Er

Live survey link:

<https://RCTCBC.welcomesyourfeedback.net/lohju>

2. Christmas feedback Participation event (this will be rescheduled late early February due to staff sickness)



Participation event poster 19.12.22- CYM  
Participation event poster 19.12.22 Englis

3. Voices from Care Cymru- 'Nature workshop' on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022



'Sky's the Limit  
Nature event with Voi

4. Voices from Care Cymru- 'Building Strengths' workshop feedback from young people on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022



Building Strengths  
photos workshop.ppt

5. Voices from Care Cymru January 2023 report



Corporate  
Parenting Board RC

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**  
**AS AMENDED BY**  
**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**  
**DATE: 26<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2023**

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES, IN  
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER,  
COUNCILLOR G CAPLE**

**Officer to contact:** Nicole Katchi