

Research  
Centre



Working with children  
for children

## Corporate Parents and Children in Care Councils

### **An evaluation of regional workshops hosted by NCB with A National Voice**

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# 1. Introduction

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) in partnership with A National Voice was funded by the Department for Education (DfE) to improve corporate parenting practice, working together with Children in Care Councils (CiCCs). The three year project involved the design and facilitation of a series of dynamic regional workshops. This report focuses on the final year of activity, and feedback from workshops held between September 2015 and December 2016.

The workshops were designed to provide opportunities for corporate parents to work directly with young people, share ideas with other local authorities to strengthen the CiCCs, explore how corporate parents and CiCCs could work together more effectively, and raise the bar in terms of aspirations and actions to improve outcomes for children in care.

The NCB Research Centre was involved in evaluating elements of this work, assisting with design of evaluation forms, distributing follow-up surveys, and analysing the resulting data.

This report presents key findings from the evaluation, drawing on the following sources:

- Feedback forms distributed at regional workshops
- Three-month follow-up surveys for workshop participants.

Feedback forms, completed at the end of each workshop, enabled gathering information from delegates about their experiences and plans.

Two-month follow-up surveys allowed gathering additional data on the impact of the workshops, in terms of steps taken and changes implemented by corporate parents and CiCCs.

## 2. Regional workshops: initial feedback

This chapter reports on participant feedback from a series of regional workshops. The workshops were focussed around strengthening Children in Care Councils and corporate parenting.

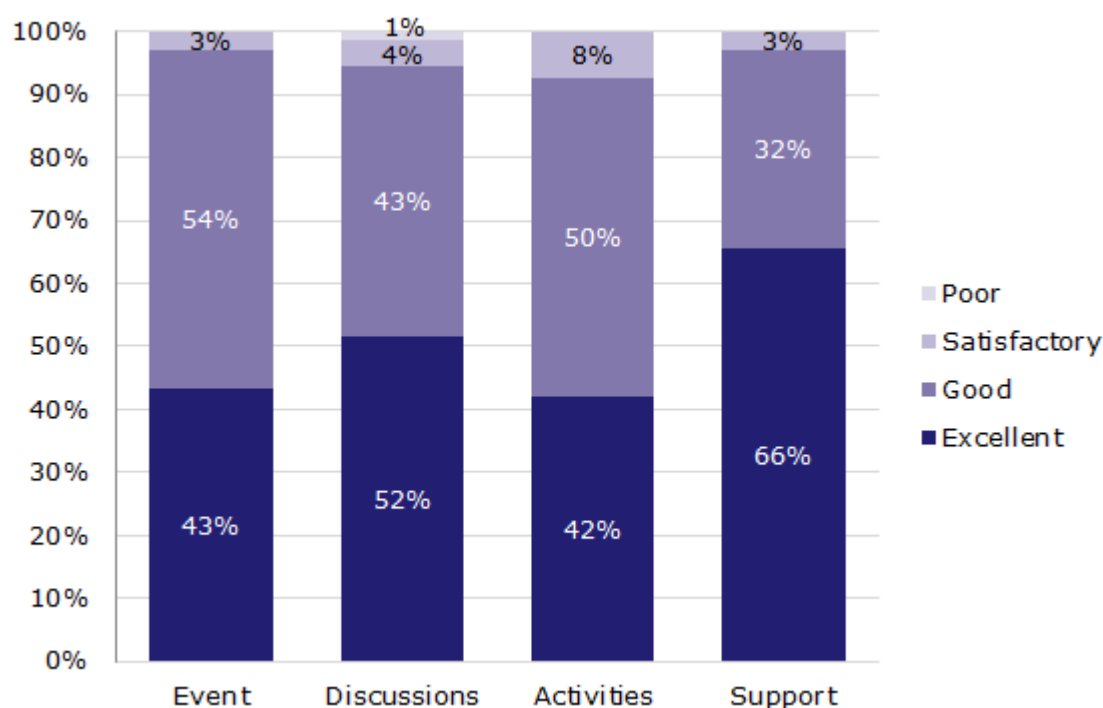
Overall, 147 feedback forms were completed from five workshops across the country; in London (two workshops), Birmingham (two workshops), Manchester and Newcastle. Feedback forms were distributed at five out of the six workshops and action plans produced on the day were available from all six.

Respondents came from 39 different local authorities. The largest group (45 per cent) consisted of Children in Care Council members. Among the remainder were participation workers (24 per cent), lead or elected members for children (12 per cent), directors of children's services (2 per cent), and a broad range of others – including care leavers, social workers, residential workers children's rights officers, foster carers, virtual head teachers, assistant directors and service managers.

### 2.1 Quality of the workshops

At each workshop, respondents were asked to rate particular aspects of the day (i.e. the discussions, activities, and support from staff) and their experience of the workshop overall. As shown in Figure 2.1, each aspect was rated as either good or excellent by over 90 per cent of respondents. None of the respondents rated the overall workshop, activities or support as poor, while just 1% of respondents rated the discussions as poor.

**Figure 2.1 Workshop ratings (N varies between 143 and 147)**



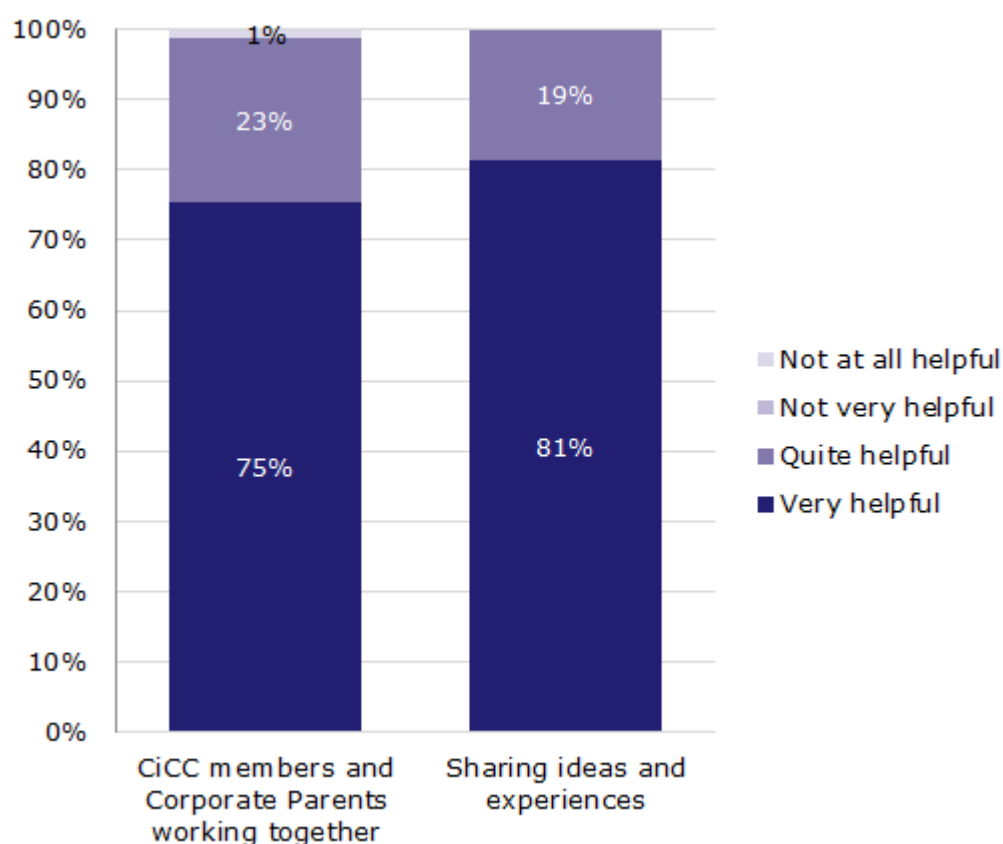
## 2.2 Helpfulness of the workshops

Respondents rated the helpfulness of two distinct aspects of the workshops:

- The opportunity for CiCC members and corporate parents to work together
- Sharing ideas and experiences with those from other local authorities.

As Figure 2.2 illustrates, respondents felt overwhelmingly positive about the helpfulness of both aspects of the workshops, with 98 per cent rating opportunities to work together as either quite or very helpful and *all* respondents doing likewise regarding the sharing of ideas and experiences.

**Figure 2.2 Helpfulness of aspects of the workshops (N varies between 145-146)**



### ***Hopes and expectations about the workshop***

Delegates were asked what they were hoping to achieve by attending the workshop. As in previous years, it was widely hoped that the workshops would serve as a platform for the generation of new ideas, particularly in relation to promoting improved educational achievement amongst care leavers. Delegates commonly referred to hopes of learning from experiences of other local authorities or Children in Care Councils, with a view to improving things or solving problems in their own areas. Delegates were also interested in informing themselves about what other local authorities were doing, to help them gauge their own performance and identify areas for improvements.

Likewise, a number of participants arrived hoping to meet and network with counterparts from other areas, sometimes with a view to further collaboration.

A number of children in care council members had attended in the hope that they would have opportunities share their views and showcase their achievements. Similarly, a number of elected members, practitioners and Directors of Children's Services highlighted that one of the things they hoped to get out of the workshops was the chance to hear from young people themselves.

## 2.3 Impact on future plans

During the workshops, delegates worked to identify three actions which they would take back to their local authority. These were recorded on each area's Action Plan and the key themes which emerged are listed below.

- Sharing learning or information from the workshop
- Recruitment, engagement and retention of CiCC members
- Engaging and supporting children in care
- Engaging and supporting care leavers/preparing for independence
- Communication
- Using technology for communication purposes
- Engaging other council services /agencies/ wider community
- Increasing the voice and role of the CiCC in scrutiny / service evaluation / service development
- Funding / resources
- Improving engagement of corporate parents and practitioners
- Involving and supporting carers
- Collaboration / networking with other local authorities and their CiCCs.

In several cases, respondents provided no more detail than 'funding', or 'sharing learning', simply highlighting areas they intended to explore. However, Appendix A provide examples of some more specific actions recorded by delegates on the day.

## 2.4 Further comments and suggestions

Evaluation forms provided an opportunity to gain feedback from delegates on the format and content of the workshop they attended.

Many respondents simply added compliments about the day, praising the quality of the workshops, programme and learning.

*'Fantastic day. Really enjoyed sharing good practice and networking.'*

(Children's participation worker)

*'Great to share ideas and know that my voice has been heard.'*

(Children in Care Council member)

*'Excellent workshop with lots of new ideas shared.'*

(Elected/ Lead member for looked after children)

Some delegates praised specific aspects of the day such as ice breaker sessions. The 'market stalls' and 'casual' question and answer sessions were also popular because they were deemed to be accessible. Others commented that it was *'particularly helpful'* to meet with both young people and corporate parents, with this leading to engaging, solution-focussed conversations.

Any less positive feedback tended to relate not to the content of the workshops but rather to other aspects of the experience, such as the venues or catering. There were comments from children in care council members, practitioners and councillors (particularly attending one workshop on 26th September) that the food was not very 'young person friendly'. At another workshop on 21<sup>st</sup> November, a number of delegates recalled struggling to hear because of poor acoustics.

Other comments included suggestions that various aspects of the programme be extended, to allow more time for:

- group discussions
- question and answer sessions
- absorbing information in the 'market place' and discussing practice illustrated on display sheets
- information sharing, *at the workshop*, for example in relation to entitlements for children in care, and *afterwards*, with learning from the workshop being circulated to attendees.

A number of delegates felt that it would have been desirable to have more input from young people throughout the day. For example one person argued that: *'Young people should have had more of a voice and [been] supported in discussing ideas from a practical perspective.'* It was also suggested that it would have been good to offer more places to children in care council members. One young person suggested that they could have more of an input through presentations so *'everyone hears and not just for the brave that ask questions.'*

Some delegates offered constructive feedback on other aspects of the workshop. For example, one lead member commented *'I'm not sure it's a good idea to begin the exercises with barriers. Its fine for the adults – but it's perhaps a little demoralising for the young council members'*. Similarly, another delegate felt that it would be better to adopt an approach which encouraged young people to focus on the fact that there are lots of positives and good work being done. Finally, one children's participation officer questioned whether the workshops were engaging a wide-enough audience: *'If it's about raising achievement should it be aimed at virtual school/SMT etc? Participation can raise participation/ confidence/ voice, but not really achievement'*. Similarly, others would have liked to see representatives from a broader range of local



authorities, in order to increase the opportunities for mutual learning. (Note that local authorities themselves were responsible for deciding who attended the workshops; organisers specified only that both CiCC members and corporate parents should be represented.)

### 3. Follow-up findings

Invitations to complete online two-month follow-up surveys were sent to 67 delegates who had attended 'Taking it to the Next Level' workshops, provided their email addresses and consented to further contact. A further 38 surveys for CiCC members were sent out to participation workers to pass on, with prepaid envelopes for their return to NCB. Altogether, 45 responses were received from adult delegates, with four from young people; two-thirds of the former but just one tenth of the latter. Accordingly, this chapter focuses mainly on responses from LA representatives, but young people's views are included under the relevant headings.

Respondents to the online survey included participation workers (49 per cent), lead/ elected members (27 per cent) and a broad range of others, including:

- Director /assistant director of children's services
- Service manager
- Corporate parenting officer /member of Corporate Parenting Panel
- Virtual head teacher
- Children's rights /advocacy officers and youth workers
- CiCC co-ordinators, champions for children in care and link workers between corporate parents and children
- Social worker
- (Graduate) trainees working with looked after children.

#### 3.1 Information sharing and networking

##### *Information sharing*

Asked whether they had shared any information from the workshop with colleagues, 98 per cent of respondents to the online survey said they had done so. As shown in Table 3.1, eight out of ten had shared information with senior managers while nearly two thirds had fed back to CiCC members with the same amount speaking to colleagues in their own teams. Fewer spoke to (other) elected members, social workers or staff in other teams. In addition to this, one respondent mentioned sharing information through a presentation they gave at a corporate parenting panel meeting.

**Table 3.1 Targets of information sharing (N = 45)**

Role	%
Senior managers	80
Members of the Children in Care Council (CiCC)	64
Colleagues in your immediate team	64
(Other) elected members	42
Social workers	20
Colleagues in other teams working in a similar field	22
Other	2

### ***Further networking***

14 respondents (31 per cent) said that they had since contacted people they met at the workshop, to share or learn from good practice. Of these, seven were participation workers who had contacted their counterparts in other areas to discuss subjects including possible collaboration opportunities and to follow up on particular pieces of work. Other respondents had contacted attendees from other authorities to discuss what works well with their CiCCs, to reflect on what they had learnt and to discuss possible next steps. Examples of best practice had inspired participants from other local authorities to seek more information, following the workshops, included around data recording protocols and a young people's guide to being in care.

## **3.2 Communication and engagement**

### ***Improvements in communication and engagement***

Respondents were asked if there had been any improvements in the way they communicated or engaged with their CiCC, since attending the workshop. Although almost a third ( $N = 14$ ) were unsure, more than half ( $N = 23$ ) said there had been improvement and the vast majority of these respondents felt that the workshop had played a part in this ( $N = 21$ ).

Many respondents outlined how communication or engagement had improved as a result of the workshop. As demonstrated by the examples in Box 3.1 below, responses referred to the fact that corporate parents had improved their understanding of the circumstances facing young people in care as well as of more practical ways to make greater use of technology to improve communication. Some mentioned new arrangements designed to help young people's voice be heard by more people, more often, while others referred to more direct conversations taking place between young people and managers or elected members. Elsewhere, the workshop had prompted a review of professional practice around communication and engagement.

#### **Box 3.1 Improvements in communication/ engagement with CiCCs**

##### **Greater understanding between corporate parents and CiCC members**

- Better understanding of different upbringings and how that may affect the young person.
- Working with CiCC members has helped develop a better understanding on both sides.

##### **Use of technology or other services to improve communication**

- Exploring use of technology (apps) to communicate with Children in Care.
- We have identified how we can improve our LACC website to enable LAC to submit their thoughts and feelings on specific topics. We are also working on how we can use this medium to increase participation in our LACC meetings from LAC young people who do not attend/ live outside of the borough.

##### **Arrangements for young people's voices to be heard more widely**

- CiCC now attending all Corporate Parenting Panel meetings.

- Members of CiCC have had a voice at more meetings.
- Members are being encouraged to support an Event of the CiCC during half term.
- Strengthening links between Corporate Parenting Panel and our Children in Care Council.

#### **More direct conversations taking place between managers/elected members and young people**

- Our young people have been able to communicate more effectively with heads of service.
- I hadn't met the young people before but am now engaging well with them as a result of the success of this trip.
- The workshop made me think how important it was for lead members to have direct contact with CiC Councils. I attend more often now.
- Making links with the two young people that attended the event.

#### **Recruitment drives/ Improved Children in Care Council attendance**

- Children and young people have come up with their own ideas of how to recruit more members to the CiCC including using foster carers website and newsletter.
- We have looked at setting up youth clubs for CiCC groups, and involving more young people and having more ideas for corporate parenting groups.

#### **Seeking views beyond the children in care council**

- We don't just focus on the members of CiCC, but try and get the views of other young people.

In addition to this feedback from professionals, three out of four young people who responded to the paper-based survey told us that communication between the CiCC and local authority was now either 'good' or 'very good', while one rated it as very poor. Two of the four young people felt that communication had improved since the workshop, with one explaining that it had encouraged greater discussion in general and the generation of ideas while the other explained that two workshops has been scheduled which would allow corporate parents to meet and talk with CiCC members.

### ***Reaching new audiences***

Almost three quarters ( $N = 33$ ) of the local authority professionals who responded to the online survey said that the views of CiCC members had been brought to new audiences, since the '*Taking it to the Next Level*' workshops. Most commonly cited were senior managers ( $N = 24$ ) and Councillors ( $N = 22$ ), followed by campaigning organisations supporting young people to express their views ( $N = 5$ ) and MPs ( $N = 2$ ). One other respondent reported that young people's views had been brought to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

### ***Responding to CiCC views***

Just over a third of local authority respondents ( $N = 38$ ) told us that there had been changes in the ways corporate parents respond to CiCC views. As listed in Box 3.2, these changes included raising expectations in term of the level of commitment that professionals need to demonstrate, guaranteeing quicker

response times and providing clear evidence that views are being acted upon. Other changes included the introduction of various forums for the discussion of young people's views. One respondent noted that young people now appear more confident in communicating with corporate parents, while another explained that their local authority was making moves to refresh the membership of the CiCC to improve its representativeness.

### **Box 3.2 Changes in the ways corporate parents respond to CiCC views**

#### **Encouraging commitment from professionals**

- Our CiCC is now taken more seriously and anyone who books to attend (workers) but doesn't show up gets reported to our Director of Children's services.

#### **Quicker response times and evidence of action**

- An eagerness to act on the views of young people.
- Changes to ways in which we consult, listen then act. Changes in expectations and the beginning of an aspiration strategy to support our efforts to narrow the gap in attainment.
- Ensure that when views are heard, action is taken sooner.

#### **Creating regular and one- off forums for discussion with young people and about their views**

- CiCC meet regularly with Councillors and others at our Cross Party Corporate Parenting Group soon to morph into the Virtual School Governing Body.
- We are looking to provide more opportunities for our looked after children to meet with all elected members and also to provide more opportunities for the CiCC to attend Corporate Parenting Panel meetings outside of school hours.
- More young people friendly meetings.
- Views of CiCC discussed at every CPP meeting
- CiCC have taken part in take over day and we are looking at different ways to work with individuals. We are also looking at linking up more regionally.

#### **Young people communicating more with staff**

- CiCC now feel more able to talk to the elected members. The chair of Corporate Parenting Panel has attended a CiCC meeting.

#### **Engaging with a more representative cross section of the 'looked after' and 'leaving care' population**

- Refresh the CiC to improve the voices of LAC.

Three out of the four young people who responded to the follow-up survey either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that CiCC members' views had been taken more seriously since they attended the workshop while the fourth young respondent disagreed.

### **Barriers to improving communication**

Among the 18 per cent ( $N = 8$ ) of LA respondents who were not aware of any improvement in communication or engagement with the CiCC since the workshop, all but one said that it was already effective, with the other respondent citing communication and behaviour issues as an obstacles.

### 3.3 Working arrangements and relationships

Asked whether working arrangements between the CiCC and corporate parents had improved since the workshop, 44 per cent of LA respondents said that they had ( $N = 20$ ), with 31 per cent unsure ( $N = 14$ ). Of those who *had* seen improvements, three quarters felt the workshop had made a difference.

As set out in Box 3.3 below, some provided examples of how relationships or mutual understanding had improved; others detailed specific changes that had been made, including inviting young people to meetings, ensuring key staff attended theirs, and revising procedures. Others mentioned that the '*Taking it to the next level*' workshops had raised the profile of local CiCCs and underscored the responsibilities of corporate parents.

#### Box 3.3 Improvements in working relationships

##### **Relationships established and barriers broken down**

- CiCC find it easier to talk to the elected members.
- The relationship between the Cllrs and young people.
- I've become more understanding and doing so enables better ways of working.
- Just spending more time sharing challenges has helped to form a closer bond.
- Positive face to face contact and support. Issued raised on the day with CP was dealt with speed due to YP going direct to CP.

##### **Inviting young people to meetings/ensuring corporate parents attend young people's meetings**

- Corporate Parenting board are now setting dates with CiCC to attend meetings.
- Having a councillor attend the workshop with our young people and then feedback she gave to our CPP.
- Improved arrangement for corporate parenting meetings.
- Members of CPP attending CiCC meetings and vice versa.
- More elected member involvement in CiCC.
- There is much more emphasis on providing opportunities for our looked after children to share time with them. An Event has been arranged during half-term, where all elected members have been invited.
- We have already in place an enthusiastic and committed CPB, since the chair of our CPB attended the event he has supported more engagement between CPB members and LACC with a shared meeting between the two now planned for the spring.

##### **Revising local authority policies and procedures**

- Redesign of team structure to end transfer point at 16.

##### **Raised profile of CiCCs and greater understanding of the roles of corporate parents**

- I believe that the workshop helped corporate parents to see the importance of the children in care council. We have also just secured more funding for the council and activity days.
- I think the council are keen to make improvements.

- The working arrangements have improved as there has been an acknowledgement by senior staff that corporate parents need to make more of an effort to liaise with our CiCC.

**Good practice sharing**

- New ideas, proven examples of good practice shared.
- More sharing of good practice.

Among the eleven respondents who felt there had *not* been any improvements in working arrangements since the workshop, the majority ( $N = 9$ ) said this was because they were working well already. Of the remaining two respondents, one cited 'inclusion' as an obstacle while the other referenced a settling in period for the new chair of the corporate parenting board.

Three out of the four young people who responded to the follow up paper survey described the working relationship between the local authority and CiCC as good or very good while one young person rated this as poor. Two of the four young respondents felt that there had been improvements in working relationships since the workshop through 'get to know you' events and the sharing of ideas. One young person did not think there had been any improvements while another was unsure whether or not this was the case.

### 3.4 Follow-up on planned actions

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which actions planned at the workshops had been put into practice, two months on. Although just three out of 45 felt their actions had been *fully* implemented, the vast majority ( $N = 36$ ) considered that at least some progress had been made.

Although two of the young people who responded to the paper survey struggled to remember the original plans that had been made at the workshops, the other two were aware of progress having been made on particular actions.

Many LA respondents also provided examples of actions which had been put into practice. These represented actions from across the range of areas highlighted in Chapter 2 (Section 2.3). Examples of actions said to have been taken at follow-up are set out in Box 3.4.

**Box 3.4 Actions which had been implemented at three-month follow-up****Recruitment, engagement and retention of CiCC members, including younger children**

- Need to look different age groups for CiCC.
- Refresh of CiCC.
- To start refresh of the CiC.

**Renewing and communicating ledges and promises**

- Renewing the Pledge.
- Rolling out [Local Authority's] renewed promise using a film.

**Improving the information that is available for children in care**

- To create an in care pack.
- To produce a health passport.

**Improving support for care leavers**

- More support for care leavers.
- Training flats are being considered as a potential pilot project for care leavers.
- Pulling all information together in one place for care leavers.

**Communication between LAC and corporate parents**

- Multi stakeholder Debate organised by CiCC around subjects that matter to Looked after Children and Care Leavers.
- Planned action is for CiC to take part in council members meeting and also to replicate the workshops we attended so all members can take part.
- Shared CPB/LACC meetings.
- We are going to hold a corporate parenting event, as a direct result of attending this workshop
- Exploring the establishment of the CiC council as a standalone body.

**Using technology to facilitate consultation and improve young people's engagement**

- MOMO (Mind of My Own advocacy app) designated teacher leaflet and e-learning on corporate parenting.
- Development of apps.

**Engaging other council services/agencies/wider community**

- Broadening membership of corporate parenting board across all directorates in the council. Asking for senior leadership to be represented, and engaging more partners in corporate parenting.

**Reviewing young people's entitlements**

- Investigating free/reduced cost of access to Leisure Centres.
- Leisure/Gym passes.

**Promoting achievement**

- Aspiration strategy.



### **Refocusing corporate parents on their obligations towards looked after children**

- Work with vulnerable young people to help them overcome their worries/problems and development.
- Seminar for members.

### **Collaboration with neighbouring local authorities and their CiCCs**

- Increasing communications with bordering local authorities. We are planning to start a regional children in care council for the south east.

Those who had faced barriers in putting actions into practice were asked to describe these. As shown in Box 3.5, the challenges included resource constraints, such as staff time, and competing priorities. A number of respondents also referred to challenges associated with instilling a corporate parenting mindset throughout the local authority as well as difficulties attached to recruiting young people and engaging a wide and representative cross-section of the overall looked after population.

### **Box 3.5 Barriers faced when seeking to put plans into action**

#### **Time constraints**

- The councils time line.
- Time constraints.
- Time restraints due to Ofsted inspection.
- Time, everyone is busy with other stuff.
- Time, resources and conflicting priorities.
- We've had a 4 week Ofsted inspection & the Christmas holidays which has prevented much progress.

#### **Difficulty recruiting and maintaining the engagement young people**

- Availability of young people and members.
- Hard to build relationships with young people who have faced neglect.
- Some recurring big issues that are difficult to tackle that are very important to young people i.e. stability, consistency, etc.

#### **Reaching a representative cross section of young people**

- Engaging all CiC with their peers in their council - social worker said the group needs widening.

#### **Instilling corporate parenting mind-set throughout the local authority**

- Change in CPB members and people understanding their role.
- Changing attitude of local authorities to raise aspirations.
- Lack of understanding from certain teams about how important this is.
- Bureaucracy.

***Further changes to plans, policy or practice as a result of the workshop***

Finally, respondents to the online survey were asked to detail any other plans or changes which had been stimulated by attendance at the workshops, and which had not already been mentioned among their original planned actions. Several respondents strongly reiterated the messages from feedback forms immediately following the workshop – i.e. that it had been interesting and helpful to hear about activity and achievements in other areas.

**Box 3.4 Further plans or changes stimulated by the workshops****Further specific plans or effects of the workshops**

- We are looking at how we can work more closely with other LA near us.
- We are going to continue our plan to start up a charity for care leavers.
- To visit CiCC more regularly.
- Exploring MOMO (Mind of My Own advocacy app) and further evidence that we need to look at different age groups for CiCC ideas.
- We want to include more council members in what the CiC are doing.

**General positive feedback**

- It does provoke new ways of thinking, trying new ideas, sharing of information.
- It was great to get new ideas on moving forward.
- The events are very worthwhile.
- It was great getting to meet other members of CiCC across the country and sharing some of the good things that we do and hearing some of the things they do.

## 4. Summary

NCB, in partnership with A National Voice, was funded by the DfE to hold a series of regional workshops between September and December 2015. The workshops were designed to provide opportunities for corporate parents to work directly with young people, share ideas with other local authorities to strengthen Children in Care Councils, explore how corporate parents and CiCCs could work together more effectively, and raise the bar in terms of aspirations and actions to improve outcomes for children in care.

Here, we summarise feedback from delegates, based on forms distributed at the workshops, and additional data from those who responded to follow up surveys three months after each one.

### ***Feedback on the day***

Attendees were generally very positive about their experiences at the regional workshops. The discussions, activities, and support from staff were all rated as good or excellent by the vast majority. Almost unanimously, they said that the workshops had been helpful in providing:

- Opportunities for CiCC members and corporate parents to work together
- The chance to share ideas and experiences with those in other areas.

During the workshops, delegates worked to identify three actions which they would take back to their local authority. Planned actions focused on:

- Sharing learning or information from the workshop
- Recruitment, engagement and retention of CiCC members
- Engaging and supporting children in care and
- Engaging and supporting care leavers/preparing for independence
- Improving communication, including through better use of technology
- Engaging other council services /agencies/ wider community
- Increasing the voice and role of the CiCC in scrutiny / service evaluation / service development
- Funding / resources
- Improving engagement of corporate parents and practitioners
- Involving and supporting carers
- Collaboration / networking with other local authorities and their CiCCs.

An online follow-up survey was completed by 45 local authority delegates. Findings from the online survey provided evidence of corporate parents putting plans into action. The vast majority of respondents described sharing information from the day, while just under a third had engaged in further discussion or collaboration with their counterparts in other areas, after meeting at the workshops.

Around half of LA respondents felt that communication between the CiCC and corporate parents had improved since attending the workshop, and nearly three quarters felt that, since the workshop, CiCC views had been brought to new audiences including senior managers, councillors, MPs, campaigning organisations, local safeguarding children boards and health trusts. In addition to this, just under half said that working relationships had also improved – which was typically attributed – at least in part - to attending the workshops.

Where there were no such improvements, this was generally held to be because relationships were already strong.

The vast majority of LA respondents said that they had made progress on actions agreed at the workshops, although few had implemented each one in full, two months on. Barriers and challenges were highlighted, including time constraints and difficulties in recruiting a CiCC that is representative of the local looked after population.

Although feedback from young people was limited in terms of numbers, it generally reinforced the positive picture painted by LA respondents. For example, three out of the four CiCC members who responded to the paper survey felt that their views had been taken more seriously since the workshops.

## **Conclusion**

Overall the *Taking it to the Next Level* workshops appear to have been highly successful. As in previous years, the positive feedback and enthusiasm conveyed by participants on the day was carried forward and translated into improved communication and better working relationships between corporate parents and young people. Encouragingly, the workshops prompted local authority staff to critically reflect on their role as corporate parents, to identify actions that would help them fulfil their responsibilities and to be proactive about putting these into practice.

# Appendix A

**Figure A.1 Examples of actions planned by respondents**

## **Sharing learning or information from the workshop**

- Recreate this workshop in [our local authority]
- Feedback the findings of these events to our full CPP
- Introduce ideas from today to promote our pledge
- Feedback to CiCC members and CPP
- CiCC members from today to feedback to full CiCC points from today

## **Recruitment and retention of CiCC members**

- Locality based CiCC
- Recruit more members to CiCC
- To look at the membership of the CiCC and look at how we involve yp from different backgrounds
- Recruitment of new TCTF (CiCC) members
- Looking into getting some merchandise/branding for the CiCC to promote the work we do
- Review name of the group
- Establish junior council 11-14 age group
- Merchandise CiCC

## **Engaging and supporting children in care**

- Explore creative activities – eg dance, music, drama, art to express issues
- Bake off
- Add a name- CiCC (branding) (get hoodie)
- Information pack for new young people in care
- Reducing stigma for CiC
- Fund for looked after children to apply to help them achieve
- Compare our summer school
- Pulling together, update information around entitlements
- Aspirational strategy
- 1-1 consultation with all LAC aged 7-15
- Create drop-in for young people
- Discounted leisure and travel
- Life story work (find out if every young child has it) Ask our Head of Service
- Educational trips
- Making sure every young person gets the opportunity to do life story work
- Redevelop the pledge with a focus on education and aspirations

## **Engaging and supporting care leavers/preparing for independence**

- Training flats
- Independence cooking classes
- Review leaving care position and implement changes such as a) Maintain an IRO contract b) mentor support c) leaving care support network
- Price plan for living independently
- Employability workshops
- Passport to independence

- Taster house
- Empowerment booklet – including list of things you will need when moving out
- Bus pass for care leavers. Contracts with partners to include ap/ships for care leavers
- Talk more about life after care
- Incentivise young people who go the additional mile to look for work etc
- Improve apprenticeship opportunities
- Look into virtual house - housing
- Care leavers ambassadors for care leavers
- Look into a 'match 10' scheme for care leavers learning to drive
- Look into setting up a charity run by care leavers for children in care as mentors.
- Driving lessons 50% the cost young people /corporate parenting
- Skill groups, cooking, managing bank account
- Set up our care leavers charity
- Investigate work placement with LA
- Charitable trusts to support care leavers

### **Communication**

- Contact card
- Social work contact card
- Improve consultation with children out of [name of LA]
- For YP to take ownership of writing the newsletter
- Magazine by YP 4 YP
- Help design a leaflet for care leavers
- Devise a leaflet for care leavers about housing options and named contacts
- Improve communication form CLC

### **Communicating via technology**

- MoMo
- Elearning, design a leaflet
- Look into skype
- Try to involve/incorporate more technology in our work/how we communicate with our young people
- Virtual CiCC
- Instagram #stereotypes
- Film – life in care (Not Tracey Beaker)
- How we can develop virtual group (app idea)
- Social media- FB, Instagram, snap chat etc.
- Animation for promises
- Communication to yp ask for email, promote care leavers forum, CiCC, Facebook/virtual group
- Strengthen virtual CiCC
- Become virtual/social media
- Get more MoMo stuff to do more promo
- Young people's app
- Make film to promote the Promise to Workforce, Partners and Children

### **Engage other council services /partner agencies/ wider community**

- Discuss with senior managers how we involve children in private care homes

- More promotion for V4C and private home
- To appeal to keep IROs until 21/settled in permanent accommodation
- WY mentoring scheme... time within working week, time back in lieu
- Traineeships; find out more about this for our YP. Out of ones consultation
- Explore the potential of take over days – primary, secondary, college
- Walk through video – care homes- in partnership with Together Trust
- Continuing the work and further opportunities with the university and local colleges
- HE & FE taster sessions. Volunteering mentors

#### **Increasing the voice and role of CiCC in scrutiny/service evaluation/service development**

- Scrutiny function increased (Corporate Parenting Panel). Young people's versions of reports
- Talk more to young people about funds and budgets
- Review commissioning arrangements to see what we put in place for care leavers etc.
- Attend c/p panel to discuss health and wellbeing ideas
- Corporate parent and looked after children debate dinner
- More consulting of CiC for their ideas for what they want

#### **Funding / Resources**

- Social value element within procurement (give back)
- Cost saving
- Withdraw number of vouchers we give out
- Storyboard of work
- Make a plan for moving forward – a timeline
- Find out more about the 'trust fund'
- Guaranteed income of £100 pw for yp
- No young person is intentionally homeless
- Investigate topping up money to £100 pw incentive
- Review financial policy
- VAT on leaving care grant – evidence of practice
- Fundraising for residential trips Broader experiences
- Making sure every young person has savings while they are in care. Use holiday allowance if not used
- Travel to different countries – Raise funds

#### **Improving engagement of corporate parents and practitioners**

- Start a quarterly meeting for ch+yp and corporate parents. 45 mins MAX
- CiCC to attend the full council meeting, 4 times a year to report about that (above)
- Hold an event with officer and elected member, looking at greater involvement
- Make corporate parenting panel more accessible, to increase the voice CIC been heard [sic.].
- Corporate parenting –parenting challenge
- Keep corporate parents more aware of their responsibilities
- Holiday activity programs. Have SMT at CiC groups more
- Children's champions

- Develop corporate parents understanding of being a looked after child
- Training for corporate parents on what its like to be in care
- You are the parents, act as you would do for your own child- staying put, continuation of support e.g. children's homes, no council tax
- Explore the personal occupational plan with cross party corporate parenting group
- Matching PAs with yp through description and personality

**Involving and supporting carers**

- Design a training pack for foster carers and social workers in regard to CCC/CP
- Improving contact with family
- Foster carer training on education eg UCAS

**Collaborating / networking with other councils**

- Visits to other CiCC
- To seek out key contacts in local authorities where we have young people/children out of county so they have support closer to home
- Try and organise regional awards event
- Work partner councils to improve practice and policy
- Trips abroad - talk to (other LA)
- More interaction with other CiCCs across UK to share ideas