

Research  
Centre



# Corporate Parents and Children in Care Councils

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

### **Final report**

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## Acknowledgements

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Within NCB we would like to thank Kate Thomas and Michael Welsh for their help with data entry, and Amy Edwards for proofreading our final report.

# 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 two year project involved the design and facilitation of a series of dynamic regional events between April 2013 and December 2014.

The events 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 final report presents key findings from both years of the project, drawing on the following sources:

- Feedback forms distributed at regional events
- Three-month follow-up surveys for event participants.

Feedback forms, completed at the end of each event, enabled gathering information from delegates about their experiences and plans. Feedback from the first two events in particular was also used to refine the programme for subsequent events.

Three-month follow-up surveys allowed gathering additional data on the impact of the events, in terms of steps taken and changes implemented by Corporate Parents and CiCCs.

## 2. Regional events: initial feedback

This chapter focuses on participants' experiences of 17 regional events, focusing on strengthening Children in Care Councils, and exploring how Corporate Parents and CiCCs could work more effectively. Events took place between October 2013 and December 2014. Feedback forms were distributed at 16 of these events and action plans produced on the day were available from all 17<sup>1</sup>.

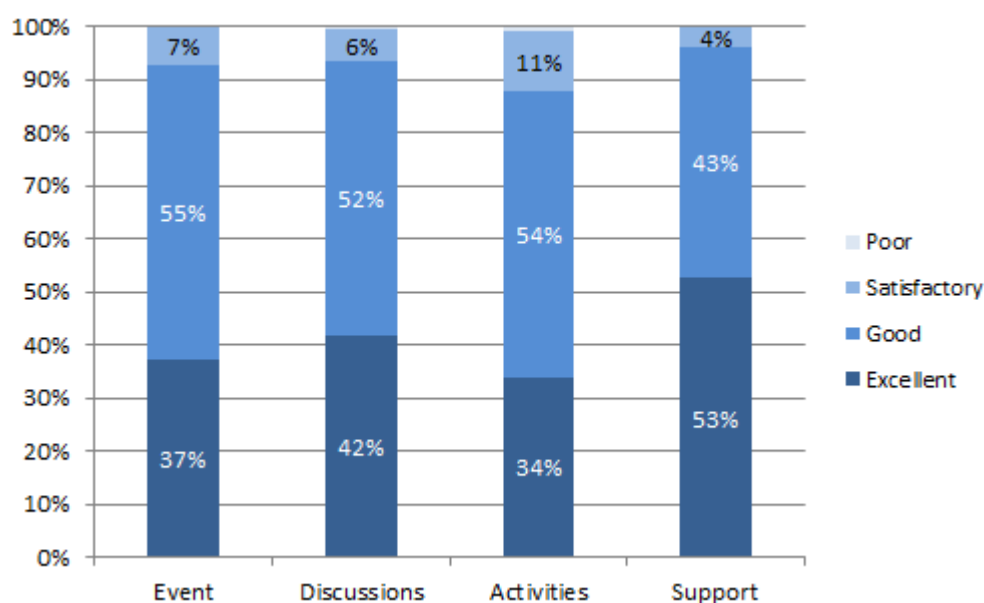
Overall, 463 feedback forms were completed, from 16 events across the country; in London (four events), Leeds (two), Manchester (two), Bristol (two), Birmingham (three), Newcastle (two) and Nottingham.

Respondents came from 81 different local authorities. The largest group (45 per cent) consisted of Children in Care Council members. Among the remainder were Participation workers (23 per cent), Lead or Elected members for children (13 per cent), Directors of Children's Services (1 per cent), and a broad range of others – including care leavers, children's rights officers, foster carers, virtual head teachers, assistant directors and service managers.

### 2.1 Quality of the events

At each event, respondents were asked to rate particular aspects of the day (i.e. the discussions, activities, and support from staff) and their experience of the event overall. As shown in Figure 2.1, each aspect was rated as either good or excellent by around 90 per cent of respondents, with less than one per cent rating any aspect as poor.

**Figure 2.1 Event ratings (N varies between 453 and 459)**



<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, feedback forms for a 17<sup>th</sup> event (in Nottingham) were lost in the post and so were not completed by delegates.

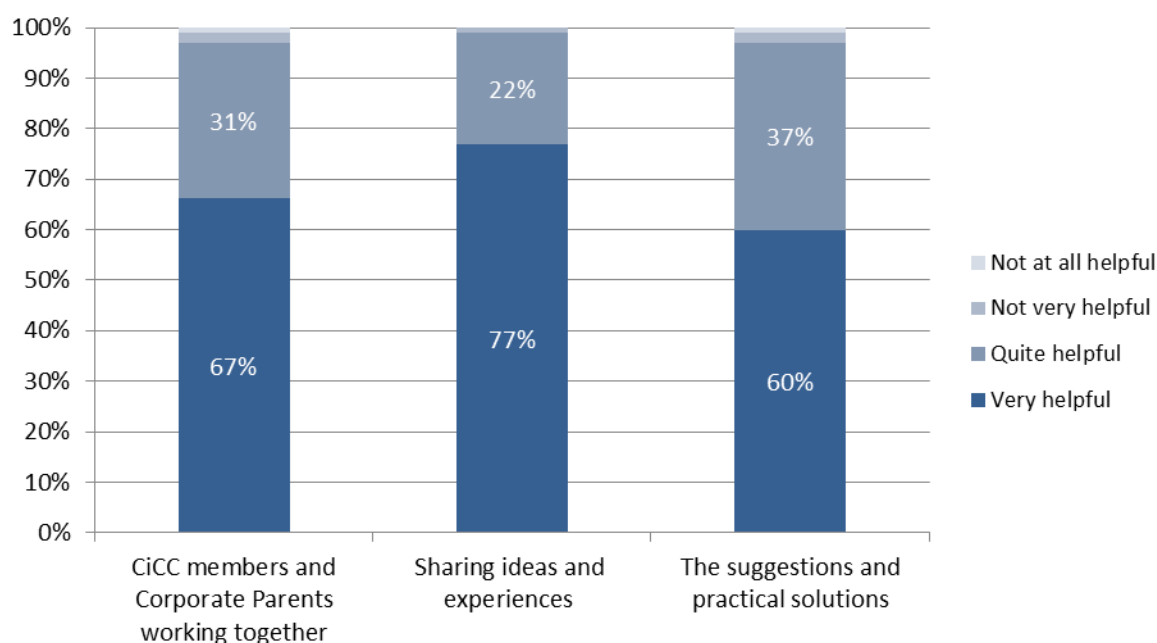
## 2.2 Helpfulness of the events

Respondents rated the helpfulness of three distinct aspects of the events:

- The opportunity for CiCC members and Corporate Parents to work together
- Sharing ideas and experiences with those from other Local Authorities
- The suggestions and practical solutions to challenges that were provided.

As shown in Figure 2.2, over 95 per cent of respondents rated each aspect of the events as either quite or very helpful. The most positive response concerned sharing ideas and experiences with other local authorities; more than three-quarters of respondents had found this very helpful.

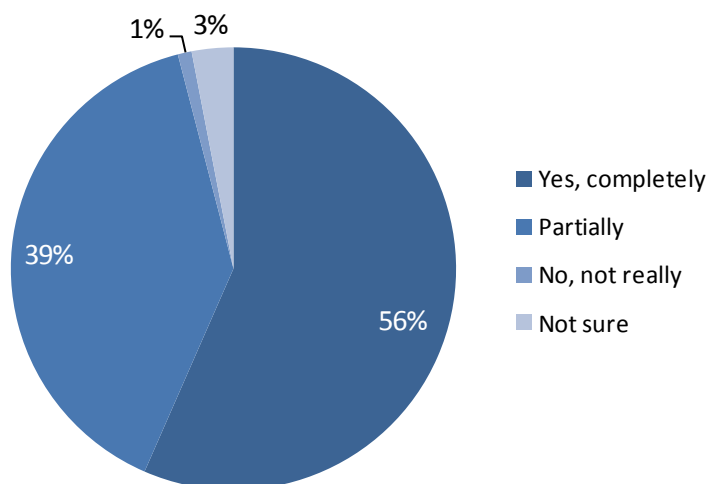
**Figure 2.2 Helpfulness of aspects of the events (N varies between 453-460)**



### ***Hopes and expectations about the event***

Delegates were asked what they were hoping to achieve by attending the event. Participants expressed similar views in Years 1 and 2 and commonly referred to exchanging ideas and experience with other local authorities or Children in Care Councils, with a view to improving things or solving problems. Simply meeting people from other areas, or networking, was also frequently mentioned, sometimes with a view to further collaboration. Some young people had wanted to share their views; in turn, a number of elected members and practitioners highlighted the chance to hear from a wide range of young people.

Year 1 respondents were asked whether they had achieved what they wanted from attending the event. More than half of respondents said that they had done so completely, and the vast majority of the rest had done so to some extent. Just 1 per cent ( $N = 3$ ) had not really achieved what they had hoped. (See Figure 2.3 below.)

**Figure 2.3 Extent to which respondents achieved their aims (N = 250)**

## 2.3 Impact on future plans

Three quarters of Year 1<sup>2</sup> respondents (76 per cent) said that they would do something differently, as a result of attending one of the events, with a further 17 per cent not sure – in part, this is likely to be because delegates needed to discuss plans further with others in their area. It may also reflect respondents' role and responsibilities – young CiCC members (55 per cent) were less likely than other delegates (88 per cent) to plan to make changes.

During the events, delegates worked to identify three actions which they would take back to their local authority. Those mentioned on evaluation forms or recorded on each area's Action Plans related mainly to the following areas (see Appendix A for a full list of the comments under each theme):

- Sharing learning or information from the event
- Recruitment, engagement and retention of CiCC members
- Engaging and supporting children in care and care leavers Communication between LAC and Corporate parents
- 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 LAs and their CiCCs.

<sup>2</sup> Year 2 respondents were not asked this question in their post-event evaluation form.

In several cases, respondents provided no more detail than 'funding', or 'sharing learning'. However, Appendix A provide examples of the more specific actions recorded by delegates on the day.

## 2.4 Further comments and suggestions

As highlighted in the introduction to this report, the evaluation forms provided an opportunity to gain feedback from delegates on the format and content of the event they attended. Particularly in the early stages of the event series, this feedback was actively used to refine the programme for subsequent dates.

### ***Best aspect of the event***

Year 1 participants were asked to share what they felt was the best thing about the events they attended. As mentioned in our interim report, the aspects most often highlighted – by all groups - were:

- Group discussions (sharing ideas, experiences, challenges and solutions)
- Learning about practice and arrangements in other areas
- Networking / meeting other people.

*'Discussing issues with other LAs. Hearing about what they're doing. Inspirational!'*

(LAC/ Leaving care manager)

*'Networking/ hearing the news of others especially the young people who were excellent ambassadors!'*

(Lead/ elected member for children)

*'Meeting other authorities. Discussed future joint working opportunities.'*

(Children's Participation worker)

A few others also mentioned:

- Expressing views and explaining their roles (typically CiCC members)
- Spending time with CiCC members
- Action planning
- Presentations
- Ice breakers (CiCC members) and 'lovely food' (CiCC members).

### ***Further comments***

Given the opportunity to comment further, many respondents simply added compliments about the day, praising the staff, programme and hospitality.

*'Fab - right length of time, right venue (i.e. in centre of country and by station) so could meet councils miles away, not just usual ones from the N. West, kept to time, kept focused, everyone had their say, & feedback great and recorded.'*

(Lead/ Elected member for children)



*'Way best event in years.'*

(Children in Care Council member)

*'Great event - will be using this model to host training events in-house.'*

(Children's Participation worker)

There were very few criticisms from delegates. As noted in our interim report, some of these related to the venue, catering and programme for the event held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2013 – issues which were addressed for subsequent events. One further event held close to Christmas (on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2014) also attracted some criticism due to the small numbers of people attending which participants felt adversely affected the atmosphere and the extent to which they could learn from other areas. One delegate felt that this event was less stimulating than another one earlier in the year, and suggested that it might have benefitted from an external speaker to 'inspire' delegates, and particularly the young people. At other events it was also noted that some representatives (for example, health professionals) were missing and that it would have been helpful to have them in attendance, to add their perspectives.

### ***Suggestions for future events***

Further suggestions for future events included those listed below. As noted in our interim report, a few delegates at earlier events suggested some changes to make the events more young-people friendly, or ice-breakers, for example, to encourage more mixing between young people and adults. None of the adults or young people attending later events made comments along these lines, except that a few delegates suggested giving young people a greater role in facilitating sessions:

*'It would be great if these sessions were run and delivered by young people.'*

(Children's Participation worker – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2014)

Other suggestions from delegates attending events over the last year concerned possible additions to the content, or amendments to their structure.

*'Incorporate some participation training for CiCC members and staff.'*

(Children in Care Council member – 13<sup>th</sup> December 2014)

*'Would have been good to have a round-up after the market place session.'*

(Lead / elected member for children – 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2014)

*'More time to network. Share ideas /brainstorm'*

(Children's Participation worker – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2014)

*'I would like the opportunity to prepare questions for other LAs on issues within our LA - this should have an agenda slot.'*

(Children in Care Council member – 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2014)

### 3. Follow-up findings

Invitations to complete online three-month follow-up surveys were sent to 213 delegates who had attended 'Taking it to the Next Level' events and consented to further contact. A further 128 surveys for CiCC members were sent out to participation workers to pass on, with prepaid envelopes for their return to NCB. Altogether, 125 responses were received from adult delegates, with 20 from young people; 59 per cent of the former but just 16 per cent 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 (51 per cent), Lead/ elected members (19 per cent) and a broad range of others, including:

- Directors /Assistant directors of children's services
- Service managers/ Commissioner/ Heads of Care
- Chairs/managers/members of Corporate Parenting Panels and strategic leads for Corporate Parenting
- 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 workers and social work / leaving care team managers
- Borough councillors
- Foster carers.

#### 3.1 Information sharing and networking

##### *Information sharing*

Asked whether they had shared any information from the event with colleagues, 95 per cent of respondents to the online survey said they had done so. As shown in Table 3.1, just over three quarters had fed back to CiCC members, and seven out of ten had shared information with senior managers. Nearly two thirds had spoken to colleagues in their own teams, with fewer talking to (other) elected members, social workers or staff in other teams. Several respondents mentioned sharing information with others, including Corporate Parenting Boards or Panels, Directors of Children's Services, Commissioners, foster carers and news providers for the sector (e.g. Together News).

**Table 3.1 Targets of information sharing (N = 125)**

Role	%
Members of the Children in Care Council (CiCC)	76
Senior managers	70
Colleagues in your immediate team	61
(Other) elected members	46
Social workers	28
Colleagues in other teams working in a similar field	24
Other	6

### ***Further networking***

Thirty two respondents (26 per cent) said that they had since contacted people they met at the event, to share or learn from good practice.

Of these, nineteen were participation workers who had contacted their counterparts in other areas to discuss subjects including:

- Bringing together their respective CiCC members
- Social media policies and children in care council websites
- Holding a CiCC Regional Residential trip
- Work done with their own Children in Care Council
- Positions within their own Children in Care Council (e.g. Ambassador role)
- Apprenticeship schemes for CiCC members
- Accreditation awards for young people.

Likewise, two managers, a social worker, a corporate parenting board member and two rights/advocacy workers had contacted attendees from other authorities to discuss what works well with their CiCCs. Three Lead/ elected members had also contacted other authorities to learn from their good practice, or 'dynamism', and to discuss progress in their own areas. One assistant director had contacted attendees from other areas to discuss their own Children in Care Council pledge.

## **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 event. Although 34 per cent were unsure, more than half (52 per cent;  $N = 65$ ) felt there had been improvement– and the vast majority of these respondents felt that the event had played a part in this (83 per cent;  $N = 54$ ).

Many respondents outlined how communication or engagement had improved, as a result of the event. As indicated by the examples in Box 3.1 below, they mentioned giving young people more control of their participation and referred to greater trust and growing levels of confidence. Some referenced making greater use of technology to improve communication while others mentioned holding events or setting up new arrangements to bring corporate parents and the CiCC together, or to help young people's voice to be heard by more people, more often. In some cases, respondents referred to more direct conversations taking place between young people and managers or elected members. In other cases, the event had prompted a review of professional practice around communication and engagement.

**Box 3.1 Improvements in communication/ engagement with CiCCs****Improved confidence, feedback and greater trust between young people and corporate parents:**

- Further strengthening of links and relationships with our young people and elected members- seeing confidence build and trust increase.
- Clear communication pathways developed with the CiCC and corporate parents.
- Giving young people more control of their participation.
- The young people are developing sub groups for different the children, the LA are not so threatened by the young people and see the common problems and concerns.
- The focus on putting together 3 action points which had to be agreed between young people and adults' means that they had a reason to talk to each other since the event and other work has sprung up from these conversations.
- The mapping exercise provided material for a presentation from the CiCC to the corporate parenting board.
- Encouraging CiCC to see improvements their work has achieved in service delivery.
- Young people who attended have more confidence.
- Relationship with young people who attended improved trust, engagement.
- Looking at [creating] a 'co' or 'shadow' chair of the corporate preening board. Young person on each work stream of the corporate parenting board.
- Listening more to the children and taking their concerns more seriously.

**Clear evidence of corporate parents acting on the views of young people:**

- We have moved the venue for our looked after children meetings to somewhere more suitable for the young people – after consulting with them.
- We have recently revamped our children in care council under new leadership. There has been a great deal of consultation with young people and other local authorities.
- Developed our BIG conversation programme further, elected members working more closely with our CiCC, reviewing and refreshing the corporate parenting strategy.

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

- We have issued the LAC council with I pads and laptops.
- Greater use of electronic communication and initiating purchase of smartphones for social workers/personal advisors to make sure they can communicate easily.
- Have discussed apps, Facebook and other forms of communication.
- We have voice and also little voice improving the communication with our LAC.
- MOMO ['Mind Of My Own' consultation app] has been purchased and will be implemented.

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

- Corporate parenting impact groups have been established with young people involved in each. The CiCC has been prepared for and took part in a presentation to the members' scrutiny panel. Consideration is now being given to a corporate parenting post to improve the link between CiCC and SW and leaving care teams.
- We held a listen up panel with social workers, partners and young people.
- More emphasis on the young voice.
- Members of the RMA had an opportunity to attend the Parenting Advisory meeting to talk with councillors. Also the assistant director has attended their sessions as well.
- Maintained regular newsletter, but also ensured these are sent to staff and councillors, which was an idea that came from the event, so all are aware of the work of our CiCC.
- Regular meetings with children's groups.

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

- I now attend the CiCC meeting and have arranged for them to meet with HOS.
- The head of service met with the young people to discuss some issues raised.
- Increase in meetings CiCC are having with managers outside of the corporate parenting group.
- I have been with CiX at other events since and communicated with them.
- I (service manager) have since spoken directly to two young people in relation to their care when I, in the past, have only worked through their social worker.
- I (lead member) will be getting the CiCC's views about what should be discussed at Corporate Parenting [board] when they have representatives present.
- Consultation with the council (of young people) was directly undertaken by elected members who had attended NCB events.

**Review of professional practice and local authority policies:**

- Developing standards of social worker practice.
- Half day seminar was carried out with social care staff to assist them in understanding the child's voice and the importance of listening and engaging our young people in decision making. Feedback from this morning was positive and hopefully we will measure what difference it has made in a few months.
- It gave us models of improved engagement which were shared with senior managers and members.
- Prompted ongoing discussion with head of service and DCS and conversations with LAC about how we could do more.
- There is now a review being undertaken regarding how our council engaged with LAC and the corporate parenting resources.
- I (lead member) now chair the corporate parenting board and I am redesigning the boards to meet the needs of children in care in my area

**Generation of ideas that could be brought back to young people:**

- It has given me ideas that I can bring to the young people

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

- The DCS and myself (participation worker) went to IRO and fostering team meetings to promote the CiCC and to ask for their support to recruit new young people.
- We have had more uptake in the numbers of members within the group.
- We now pay members for attending meetings and have a large committed group.
- Adjustments to accommodate the needs of care leavers.
- We have introduced a fortnightly evening drop in for our care leavers that are unable to access day services.

Seventeen out of twenty young people who responded to the paper-based survey also told us that communication between the CiCC and local authority was now either 'good' or 'very good'. Two young people were unsure as to the quality of communication and one rated it as very poor.

Six of the young people felt communication had improved since the event, saying either that corporate parents were more involved, or that CiCC members had spoken with foster carers, to help improve working relationships. One young person described the value of face to face discussions with 'those with the power to make change.' Another felt that corporate parents were now more likely to listen to and value the input of young people, and to provide a quicker response. Eleven of the young people who responded to the paper-based survey were unsure whether communication had improved while three young people felt that it had not (Responses to subsequent questions indicated that, for some, this may reflect that it had been good in the first place).

**Reaching new audiences**

Just under two-thirds (65 per cent) of respondents 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*' events. Most commonly cited were councillors (41 per cent), senior managers (30 per cent), campaigning organisations supporting young people to express their views (6 per cent) and MPs (3 per cent). Others included Corporate Parenting Boards, frontline social workers, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), designated teachers for children in care, a city council chief executive and broader audiences through events and press coverage.

Just over a third (35 per cent) of the young people who responded to the paper survey told us that views of CiCC members had been shared with more people, since the event – through presentations, events and outreach. A further 55 per cent were unsure whether this was the case while 10 per cent of respondents did not feel that the views of young people had been more widely shared.

**Responding to CiCC views**

Around 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 included actively seeking young people's views on processes such as placement planning, providing young people with regular and timely

updates, and exploring new ways of exchanging information. A number of respondents told us that young people in their area had been given opportunities to share their views with a broad range of staff through one off events designed to give the CiCC a greater say. Others explained that regular discussion fora had been established through standing agenda items and routine meetings. Some staff also implied that, since the event, the CiCC themselves had been communicating more, which may have contributed to staff having greater understanding of, and ability to respond to, their views.

### **Box 3.1 Changes in the ways Corporate Parents respond to CiCC views**

#### **Actively seeking young peoples' views on particular processes:**

- We are approaching CiCC to provide information and updates on or placement planning process.

#### **Quicker response times and regular update:**

- The Chair of Corporate Parents is quicker to respond to the CiCC.
- CiCC now getting service updates to ensure they are involved in decisions being made by teams and not just responding to them.

#### **Events and meetings which bring cooperate parents and the CiCC together**

- CiCC held an evening event which was attended by elected members, foster children officers [and] lead cabinet members.
- Greater direct involvement - two senior managers have attended recent meetings to get the feedback and ideas directly.
- We have had two events when our Children in Care Council youngsters have presented to councillors on how to be better Corporate Parents. We have a meeting coming up with just the councillors to discuss how we can [take] their ideas forward.
- The chair of CiCC was introduced to full council and the mayor is putting on various events for the children, including picnic on the lawn at the town hall and a mock council session when children can be the mayor and wear his chains.

#### **Creating regular forums for discussion:**

- CiCC to run Corporate Parenting Panel twice a year.
- CiCC now have a standing agenda item on the Corporate Parenting Board
- One of our OCYPC members attends our meeting with corporate parents on a regular basis.
- The CiCC members attend corporate parenting forum and this is a departmental setting attended by partner agencies, councillors, and senior managers. The feedback from all parties is that communication has improved and young people feel listened to.
- We have now held our first 'Question Time' style event where members of CiCC could ask a panel of professionals questions and participate in discussions around the care and support they receive.
- Young people attend corporate parent meetings; agenda at the CiCC meetings to correlate with corporate parent meetings

#### **Exploring new ways of exchanging information:**

- There is a council (the corporate body) which aggregates the issues raised from the voice and influence of young people. This is published in a digest of information for young people and staff.

- Young people wish to have information made available online. Listening to the other CiCC, who have their own website, we are looking into this.

**Young people communicating more with staff:**

- Our CiCC have communicated more with our social work teams and their workers.

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

- Budget for CiCC; involving younger children.
- Interaction between young people in and leaving care. Young people who aren't part of the RMA being part of consultations about the services which they receive.

Half of the twenty young people who responded to their follow-up survey said they felt that CiCC members' views had been taken more seriously since they attended the event. A further eight young people were unsure while two disagreed that this was the case. One young person who disagreed stressed that working relationships had always been good.

**Barriers to improving communication**

Among the 14 per cent of LA respondents who were not aware of any improvement in communication or engagement with the CiCC, over two-thirds (71 per cent) said that it was already effective, with the rest citing barriers of distance, time and resource constraints, as well as disruption due to service restructuring and, in one case, disagreements between the CiCC and senior managers.

### 3.3 Working arrangements and relationships

Asked whether working arrangements between the CiCC and Corporate Parents had improved since the event, 44 per cent of LA respondents said that they had ( $N = 55$ ), with 30 per cent unsure. Of those who *had* seen improvements, over two thirds (67 per cent) felt the event had made a difference.

As set out in Box 3.2 below, some provided examples of how their experiences of working with the CiCC, 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, training and expectations. A number of respondents referred to the fact that barriers were being broken down and that working relationships were now 'less tokenistic'. Others mentioned that the '*Taking it to the next level*' events had raised the profile of local CiCCs and underscored the responsibilities of corporate parents.

**Box 3.2 Improvements in working relationships**

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

- Attendance at each CiCC meeting by service leader responsible for child in care, fostering and leaving care teams. Training provided to young people to represent views at scrutiny panel. Funding to be identified for corporate parenting officer. Young people to be present at 9 corporate parenting impact groups.



- Having our Assistant director attend the event and doing joined up work with the Role Model Army.
- The CIC will be sat next to the Chair of the Looked After Children's scrutiny committee.
- We now have young voice representation on the CPC.

**Relationships established and barriers broken down:**

- CiC recognise me more often and we have good conversations.
- More understanding both ways.
- The young people approached the director and director of children services.
- A better working relationship all round and less tokenistic.
- Councillors attending conferences were keen to show the greater link with CiC's.
- Gave our elected member the confidence to push harder across the Council for LAC needs and voice.
- The Voice of the child is heard in different ways now not just through a board meeting.
- Young people have arranged to meet with CPP for fun days together to break down barriers and form better relationships.

**Revising procedures and expectations:**

- Listening to the youngsters talk about being taken seriously, making sure appointments are kept, and giving feedback to them are all areas that improved. For instance if an appointment has to be cancelled, social workers might now Skype to at least make sure some contact is made when it is promised.
- Revamp of CIC Pledge.
- Review of CP training with differential content dependent on level of contact with YPs.
- Setting clear pathways of communication between the CiCC and corporate parents.
- There is more focused work with CiCC and corporate parents. The main issue is what others - ie service leads - are doing within their service area to bring about changes in response to the messages.

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

- My Lead Member role means I have a strong voice and I expect that officers listen and we work together to get the best for LAC. The event highlighted what can be done and was a great way of being inspired!
- More elected members are aware of their role as corporate parents.
- Able to report back to fellow members and use it as yet another way of reminding them of their duties as corporate parents and how much the voice of our Children looked after is vital in shaping and improving the services we give them.
- Member attended the event and has cascaded messages to member colleagues.
- Raised the CiCC profile.

Among the 26 per cent who felt there had *not* been any improvements in working arrangements since the event, the majority (75 per cent) said this was because they were working well already.

Those who identified barriers to improvement cited:

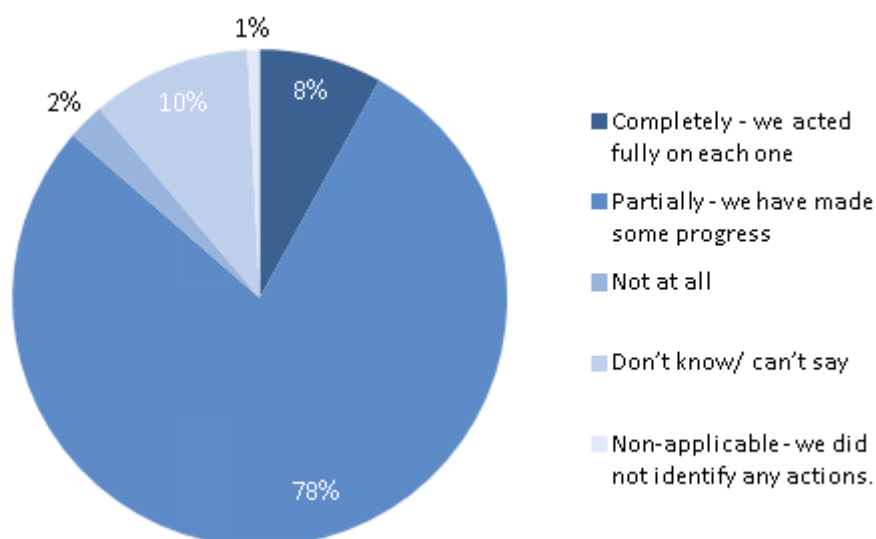
- (Lack of) engagement from councillors/ Corporate Parents
- Difficulties in young people gaining full access to Corporate Parenting Board meetings
- Lack of feedback from the panel about what the CiCC have been doing, or how they can work with the panel
- Limitations of the LA's corporate parenting structure – they have no Corporate Parenting Panel with which to engage.
- A shortage of time and competing priorities.
- The timing of corporate parenting board meeting; it is during school hours meaning that young people cannot attend.
- Disagreements between the CiCC and senior management.

### 3.4 Follow-up on planned actions

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which actions planned at the events had been put into practice, three months on. Figure 3.1 below shows that although just eight per cent felt the (three) actions had been fully implemented, the vast majority (86 per cent) considered that they had made progress.

Though some young people struggled to remember the original plans, 60 per cent of them were aware of progress having been made on particular actions. These included involving the CiCC in training for social workers and foster carers, planning creation of a junior CiCC, the provision of videos to alleviate anxiety for new entrants into care, and improving their mentoring programme.

**Figure 3.1 Extent to which action plans have been implemented (N = 125)\***



\* Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

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 those actions listed as having been taken at follow-up are set out in Box 3.3.

**Box 3.3 Actions which had been implemented at three-month follow-up****Sharing learning or information:**

- Shared information with Virtual head re Pupil Premium kite mark.
- Sharing good practice.
- 2 presentations to staff /elected members.
- As described seminar using the voice of the child.
- At senior officer level contact with colleagues to explore best practice.

**Recruitment, engagement and retention of CiCC members, including younger children:**

- CiCC has increased membership.
- To start up a younger version of the CiCC (in progress).
- Rewarding YP for attending meetings, training sessions and interviews.
- Asked LAC to put together a 'coming into care' guide.
- New participation officer in post, re-launched CiCC and increased activities to gain information from young people about how they see services and get their ideas and views about what can improve.
- Fortnightly evening drop in sessions, Celebration event and changing the time of Corporate Parenting panel meetings to better suit the young people who attend.
- Involvement of younger children.
- Making different arrangements to get views of our younger LAC.
- The young people wrote to the AD via CiCC to ask if could have a celebration event.
- We are all linked in to the development of the new children in care council.
- Designing hoodies.

**Improving outreach with looked after children (and their carers), including those in out of area placements:**

- Engaging with out of Borough LAC - reviewing methods.
- Visited residential placements, arranged to attend foster carer forums.
- Disseminating information across the LAC population.
- Engage with young people under the disabled childrens team. Invite the Disabled Children's team manager to VOICE.
- Trying to let all young people in care have a voice, especially younger children.

**Improving outreach with carer leavers:**

- Explored lunch club, ensuring we know Christmas arrangements for care leavers.
- Instigation of move on strategy for older CiCC members.
- Lunch club practiced at Xmas.
- To look at developing skype to engage with our care leavers.
- Worked with teams to look at where care leavers are spending Christmas and reporting this to Corporate Parenting Board. Started to train a young person to chair the care leavers group, which will lead on to her chairing the Corporate Parenting Board.

**Communication between LAC and corporate parents:**

- Communication (improved).
- The Director of the council visited the CiCC.
- Question Time has now been set up and we held the first event.
- Made improved links to principal social worker.
- More closer working (with CiCC).
- Young people attend the MCPG / Corporate Parenting Steering group meetings.
- We had an event which was well attended by many young people.
- Joint meeting with corporate parenting board and CiCC.
- Next corporate parenting meeting will be held at the place the CiCC meet and they will be given the first half of the meeting to discuss whatever they like.
- Our young people talked to the manager about new projects and there were taken to the CiCC and also back to the corporate parents and are now in action.

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

- Development of online information/ resources in particular as a way to engage LAC who live outside of the area.
- Website for LAC/care leavers / Consulting on social media.
- Using Skype, not making appointments during the school day.
- Greater integration with social media.
- MOMO [mind of my own] app being looked into. Had Joe from MOMO deliver a presentation at the last corporate parenting board and he met with IT people from the Council.
- Liason with other LAs, introduction of MOMO.
- Recruit more CiCC members.

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

- Improve communication with Voice.
- Formed links with other groups, planned events with manager, councillors and young people.

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

- Working towards YP completing Reg. 33's.
- Introduced the idea of young inspectors.
- We are currently looking into involving members of our CiCC in the Reg. 33 inspections of our residential units.

**Funding/Resources:**

- Budget for CICC.

**Reviewing young people's entitlements:**

- Reviewing how we pay young people their care leavers grant.
- Leisure passes for Care Leavers / Looking to introduce a leisure card for our CiCC.
- Raise the age limit of passport to leisure cards.

**Creating work experience opportunities:**

- Written report on employment opportunities for care leavers.
- Greater work opportunities for care leavers; review of financial support to care leavers in own accommodation.
- Involving as many councillors as possible in identifying work experience/job opportunities [for young people/care leavers].

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

- Completed a new pledge / re-launched the pledge.
- Outcomes from the event have been put into our pledge to improve practice.
- Pledge is being re-evaluated and redesigned.
- Review of current arrangements – ongoing.
- Created a better network and reengaged lead officers (visits with CiCC).
- LAC Champions - we have now set up a LAC Champions group, with membership from different teams working with LAC/ young people.
- Being able to report back on the positive way in which some of our ideas were listened to by other authorities has helped to raise awareness of how young people can make a difference.

**Collaboration with neighbouring Local Authorities and their CiCCs:**

- Attending regional events.
- Planned visit to a neighbouring CiCC / Meeting more regularly with another CiCC.
- Networking.

**Review of professional practice and local authority policies:**

- Looking at including LAC in designated teacher training.
- Looking at standards for social workers based on young people's consultations.
- Change set up of Corporate Parenting Committee.
- Developing a training programme for staff to be written and delivered by young people so they can tell them what it is really important to them and what makes a difference to them.
- New Corporate Strategy waiting to be approved.
- The issues we identified were long term ones which will be incorporated into new arrangements.

Those who had faced barriers in putting actions into practice were asked to explain the challenges. As shown in Box 3.4, these included resource constraints such as staff time and competing priorities, along with practicalities (such as mutually convenient meeting times and technological hurdles) and concerns about the safe and reliable use of new mediums of communication. 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, including young people in out of area placements. One respondent told us that local political tensions had acted as a barrier to putting actions into practice.

**Box 3.4 Barriers faced when seeking to put plans into action**

**Resource, capacity and time constraints:**

- Budgets! We are still working on that.
- Cost savings required as a result of central government grant cutbacks.
- Resources / staff capacity / continuity / time / competing demands.
- Time taken to agree actions and way forward, following completed review of corporate parenting and engagement of LAC.
- Business of social work team impacting on work with CiCC events and activities.

**Practicalities:**

- Sometimes difficult to arrange timings for meetings.
- Convenient times for all / Meetings during the day are difficult for YP to attend / (CiCC) session times being evenings, with professionals working days.
- Not taking up young people's time too much, especially near exams.

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

- (Difficulty) encouraging young people to attend.
- We know we need to get more of our children looked after engaged with our CiCCs. One of our 3 CiCCs is planning to produce a short film about the CiCCs and how important it is to join in as you can make a real difference.
- One of the young people who attended the event has had a turbulent time recently and has not been as involved in the actions as we wanted her to be.
- Temporary disengagement with a young person identified as a future chair of the corporate parenting board.

**Ensuring the CiCC remains age-appropriate:**

- Reluctance to leave CiCC.

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

- Engaging all young people.
- Various placement types and spread of placements makes it difficult to ensure communication reached LAC young people.
- Ensuring how one or two young people are able to represent the views of our wider group of LAC and care leavers so agreed actions are representative and appropriate is a challenge.

**Instilling corporate parenting mindset throughout the local authority:**

- Getting support from local authority staff.
- Ensuring all social care staff are aware of the CiCC focus.
- Getting staff to understand its not about judging them.
- Struggling to get useful people / the right people at the LA regarding work experience for CiC.
- Our current CiCC arrangements need strengthening and are currently being reviewed in order to strengthen relationships with corporate parenting board.

**Local politics:**

- Political changes led to tensions between the CiCC chair and the lead member.

**Concerns around the safe and reliable use of use of new means of communication:**

- Technology: video conferencing trialled with elected member meetings and found not to be reliable enough at the moment to use with young people. Want to be sure it will work 100% of the time before we go down this route.
- Looking at safe ways to communicate.

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

Finally, respondents to the online survey were asked to tell us about any other plans or changes which had been stimulated by attendance at the events, and which had not already been mentioned among their original planned actions. As highlighted by the examples in Box 3.4, some stressed that not only had the event given them ideas, but it had also helped them to gauge their own performance in relation to other areas and helped staff to remain focused and motivated. Several respondents strongly reiterated the messages from feedback forms immediately following the event – i.e. that it had been interesting and helpful to hear about activity and achievements in other areas, and that they would welcome more similar events in future.

### **Box 3.4 Further plans or changes stimulated by the events**

#### **Further specific plans or effects of the events:**

- I am hoping that the 'Total Respect' training may be introduced to our LA. I fed back to our next CPP and have since done a write up of many of the ideas I had noted from discussion on the day. It will take time, but I am sure that there will be an opportunity to build on these in the future. Thank you for organising the day - it was done exactly the right way with our CLA at the heart of it.
- A number of actions are being developed from this event around young people being more involved and having more of a say in their placements etc.
- Looking at having 'agenda days' for specific age groups.
- Looking at University accommodation costs.
- MoMo app and similar - will be investigating how we can make better use of technology to communicate with young people.
- We have a big event of our own coming up shortly very similar to yours - the idea came from one of your events.
- We are now looking at developing a celebration event and working closer with other CiCC.
- Accrediting young people for being part of CiCC.
- It has encouraged us to continue with innovations from last year and made us more confident to explore social media options for connecting our young people, confident that other authorities have been able to do this.
- Plan to develop further work and use role of principal social worker to aid CiCC.
- Renewed contact with our older CLA who are in independent living but still need a voice. Introduced, by utilising councillors' contacts, a range of work experience and even offers of jobs for our older CLA.

- The council have been clearer about their expectations and have a designated worker for a set time each week to aid the CiCC with any communications



between the LA and CiCC. This has enabled the CiCC to push forward with their plans, getting things right first time and really feeling listened to.

- Helped us input placement breakdown as key point of issues at CPP and CiCC meeting.
- To network with other CiC councils - young people are meeting at several events.

**General positive feedback:**

- It was interesting to see what other LA are doing.
- It has given us ideas to help improve and develop what we have already done.
- The event was excellent at providing food for thought.
- Still early days but I hope so. An annual event or other follow-up would be good.
- We need to ensure our DCS/ Lead Member attend your next meeting for CiCCs.
- Stimulated a lot of discussion and was thought-provoking.
- Networking/ discussions helped us to see what works well with others.
- It has helped staff top remain focused and keep participation high on the local authority agenda.
- The event had a very positive effect on the motivation of our CiCC chairperson and this had lead to a more proactive group.
- Re-vitalised our regional efforts.
- Attending the event was positive for motivating our CiCC and it also gave them some more ideas on how they can promote change in the local authority.
- I like the fact that I've had the ability to gain ideas from other workers, it was a great way for information sharing. We have planned to do some tri-borough working with two other local authorities.
- From sharing best practise the CPO was made aware that our LA is doing well in several areas compared to other LAs, when he thought we were doing badly.
- It convinced me that the changes we are making are a move in the right direction.
- It was helpful to hear from young people and share ideas which will be considered as part of plans.
- Made more councillors aware of their roles.
- It was encouraging to share with colleagues and see how [our council] compared in terms of our work with Children in Care.



## 4. Summary

NCB, in partnership with A National Voice, was funded by the DfE to hold a series of regional events between April 2013 and December 2014. The events 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 events, 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 events – from start to end of the programme, over two years. 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
- Suggestions and practical solutions to challenges that were provided.

Three quarters of respondents said that they would definitely do something differently, as a result of attending the events. Planned actions focused on:

- Sharing learning or information from the event
- Recruitment, engagement and retention of CiCC members
- Engaging and supporting children in care and care leavers
- Communication between LAC and Corporate parents
- Improving engagement of corporate parents and practitioners
- Involving and supporting carers
- Engaging other council services /agencies/ the wider community
- Increasing the voice and role of the CiCC in scrutiny / service evaluation
- Funding / resources
- Improving engagement of corporate parents and practitioners
- Collaboration with neighbouring LAs and their CiCCs.

### ***Follow-up***

Findings from the online survey provided evidence of Corporate Parents putting plans into action. The vast majority (95 per cent) described sharing information from the day, while around a quarter (26 per cent) had engaged in further discussion or collaboration with their counterparts in other areas, after meeting at the events.

Around half (52 per cent) of LA respondents felt that communication between the CiCC and Corporate parents had improved, and just under two-thirds (65 per cent) felt that, since the event, CiCC views had been brought to a wider audience. More than 44 per cent said that working relationships had also

improved, over two thirds of whom attributed this in part to attending the event.

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

The vast majority of LA respondents (86 per cent) said that they had made progress on actions agreed at the events, although fewer (eight per cent) had implemented each one in full at this point. Barriers and challenges were highlighted, including resource constraints as well as practical or technological hurdles. However, several respondents highlighted that it was 'early days' and that they were hopeful of making further progress in future – aided by the stimulation and motivation provided by the events, and the connections they helped to develop.

Feedback from young people generally reinforced the positive picture painted by LA respondents. For example, half of the twenty CiCC members who responded to the paper survey felt that their views had been taken more seriously since the events and 60 per cent of them were aware of progress having been made on particular actions.

### **Conclusion:**

Overall the *Taking it to the Next Level* events appear to have been hugely beneficial. 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.

The events successfully functioned as a forum for exploring how corporate parents and CiCCs could work together more effectively. In addition to this, the feedback provided highlights the extent to which the events served to reenergise local authority participants with regards to their role and responsibilities as corporate parents.

# Appendix A

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

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

- Feedback from today: positive communication & look at achievements.
- Share good practice info with corporate parenting panel.
- Feedback to all young people - sharing of good practice.
- Share learning with CiC nurses.
- Meet with head of service to explain ideas & outcomes of event.
- Raise ideas of training flats to senior managers.

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

- Website to increase participation of all LAC who live outside the borough.
- Virtual membership.
- New name for CiCC.
- Consultation on developing CiCC leaflets.
- Recruitment drive to recruit more members.
- Offer incentives to young people / Free bus pass / Get jumpers / hoodies.
- Offer Leisure Cards/facilities to members of CP, CiCC.
- Junior CiCC / Link senior and junior CiCC.
- More activities / Organise a fun day / social/ celebratory event for CiCC.
- Day out for CiCC, for members who have attended 3 meetings.
- Link it to LA leisure facilities, but must join youth council & CiCC.
- Christmas party for CiCC, staff and members.
- Survey of CiCC members' interests.
- Develop representation from each district.
- Video conferencing for young people's meetings, with support and training.
- Transport: elected members bring young people and support them to be involved.
- Say no to over-consultation, or develop wider participation.
- Reward CiCC members for involvement in training and interviewing.
- Double numbers of ambassadors.
- Publicity / Make bigger effort to reach out to young people.
- More activity based consultation.
- Plan soft play events for younger children.
- Visiting residential placements, visit children placed out of area.
- Encourage young people to go out to children's homes to get new members.
- Recognise CiCC achievements more regularly.
- Move the meetings to different venues.
- Renew CP board membership/timings/how to engage CiCC/ young people more in the Board.
- Target under 12s / Target young males.
- Free book / website for CiCC.
- Art project.
- Look at ways to increase LACC memberships.
- Invite guest speakers to CiCC.

**Recruitment and retention of CiCC members (cont.)**

- Get more young people involved in CiCC.
- Buddying up to support young people in attending CiCCs.
- Facebook group or forum, get more input before meetings/in between meetings.
- More regular meetings.
- Recruitment of new CiCC members.
- Arrange meetings exit for longstanding CiCC members.
- Electing a new chair for CiCC.
- Elect a dedicated chair and vice chair.
- Group make the agendas.
- Young people more involved in planning and running meetings.
- Enable the voice of disabled C.C to be heard more effectively.
- Invite disabled children
- Invite disability worker to attend.
- Different communication approaches to those with ESL.
- Do more outreach to young people rather than rely on them coming to meetings.
- Reaching young people that are hard to reach.
- Termly visits to specialist provision/schools.
- Broader range of young people involved in CiCC (age, ability? Etc.)
- Get a broader range of young people's opinions.
- Find more permanent meeting place.
- Meet in different venues.
- Have more male-friendly activities.
- Target males through creative projects.
- Due to rural nature of area, exploring some outreach ideas.
- Put information in mailouts to all young people in care with the Who Cares Trust magazine.
- Engage better with care leavers.
- Young people to invite other people to the CiCC events.
- Host a CiCC event (like this - led by young people).
- Peer advocacy / Mentoring - care leavers supporting younger CiCC members.
- Arrange meeting for longstanding members to look at options and exit strategies.
- Challenge CPB about what their role as CP is and adapt meetings to suit young people more.
- Participation event / CiCC and young people conference.
- The Big Vote for CiC priorities.

**Engaging and supporting children in care and care leavers**

- Holiday/Christmas lunch for care leavers.
- Find the 16% of LAC who do not engage or attend reviews.
- Improve consultation with LAC / Develop work with care leavers.
- Look at UASC (unaccompanied asylum seeking children) group.
- Engage with LAC Out of Borough.
- Work experience for care leavers / children in care written into contracts.
- Celebration events/ achievements etc. foster carer awards, children awards.

**Engaging and supporting children in care and care leavers (cont.)**

- Independent living skills course.
- Xmas hamper for children in care.
- Gas & electricity / winter fuel allowance for care leavers.
- Investigate cheaper energy deals for CiC (independent living).
- Out of hours support.
- Computers & wifi.
- Achievement awards.
- Making sure all care leavers have somewhere to go on Christmas Day.
- Explore lunch club idea.
- Consider the role of ambassadors for looked after children and care leavers.
- Ambassador scheme.
- To do more to help LAC into employment.
- Find out why young people can't interview FC before moving in.
- To be able to allow young people to visit placements before moving to the home.
- Managing independence training to be developed.
- Lifeskills group (keeping afloat model).
- One Stop Shop – Job centre.
- More apprenticeships for care leavers.
- Care leavers support hub.
- Raise ideas of training flats to senior managers.
- Older young people's mentoring younger CiC/Fc's 16+.
- Increase our leisure card age to 25.
- Look at external awards for young people in care/care leavers.
- Engage better with care leavers / Ideas to target 16+.
- Provide service for care leavers so they can learn essential life skills.
- Pursue accreditation mechanisms for young people.
- Transfer of activity skills to presentation skills.
- Employability / Employment opportunities.
- Apprenticeships- renew and consider.
- Health passport.
- Consideration to be given to developing 'drop ins' at office (out of hours).
- Tester/trainer flats, 3 days/1week/2 weeks, gradual process of independent living.
- To implement 'staying put'.
- Review staying put policy and make it meaningful.
- Leaving care provision.
- Explore use of a self-advocacy app (MOMO: Mind of my own).
- University preparation packs for young people.
- Clear staying put policy.

**Communication**

- Feedback to CiCC.
- Improve communications between professionals and young people.
- Act on exclusive language used in formal meetings excluding participation.
- Better communication between CiCC groups and CiCC groups and managers.

- Add promise priorities to LAC paperwork.
- Investigate further benefits of MOMO, without replacing contact.
- Develop website for CiCC.
- Look at our terminology and resources for looked after children and care leavers.
- Care leavers website.
- Increase use of social media and What's App.
- Explore use of Skype.
- More social media, better web access / newspaper / Skype.
- Look at 'Coming into care' guide.
- Update welcome pack for children coming into care.
- Facebook page for CiCC.
- DVD for placements.
- To explore using social media for information.
- Redesign a better looked after children's leaflet.
- Review publicity material/leaflets/booklets/welcome pack/logo.
- Developing a magazine for young people.
- Finish CPB strategy young people version.

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

- IROs to build stronger links with CiCC.
- Attend a head teachers meeting and do a presentation about helping CiC.
- Presentations to designated teachers and head teachers by CiCC.
- Link with area action partnerships to encourage more localised involvement.
- Meet with housing providers.
- Host a similar event to this with heads, councillors and social workers More awareness of our work.
- Set up phone in on local radio station.
- Raise profile of CiCC with housing, education and public health to ensure they are involving children and young people in decisions that affect LAC and care leavers.
- Corporate parenting roadshow.
- Widen the 'audience' for corporate parenting.
- Housing – tightening link.
- Contact public health to talk about how they can be more actively involved with children in care/leavers.
- Meet with housing providers to develop a contract guaranteeing homes for young people.
- Prepare report to council on apprenticeships.

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

- Scrutiny function increased (Corporate Parenting Panel).
- Young people's scrutiny group/board.
- Develop link between CiCC and corporate parents board.
- Young people to attend corporate parenting board / committee.
- Elect a co-chair member for the corporate parenting panel/ meeting.
- Young people to take agenda items from CiCC to CPSG.
- CiCC to help set children's champion group agenda.
- Feedback from CiCC to corporate parents.

- Change way we run corporate parenting panel.
- Incorporate young people's voice in supervision, appraisals etc.
- Young people's involvement in fostering and adoption panel.
- CiCC review interview process for corporate parents.
- Youth inspection of services.
- Ensure CiCC is supported to engage with and challenge CPB.
- Lead member, HOCS & young people to meet to discuss new ideas to see how implemented.
- Involvement in fostering panels.
- Make voice of child (re: child protection and participation) mandatory.
- Parenting panel run by CiCC.
- Young people and elected members to take part in takeover day.
- Inviting scrutiny to our CiCC.
- Implement App through CiCC, including training FC's, SWs, LCPAs etc.
- Interviewing Social workers.
- Integrate YPICC into everything we do including; training foster carers, interviewing for posts.
- Create a group with people who work in children's homes and young people in CH.
- Set up a young inspectors committee.
- Young people to interview foster carers for placements (set up a committee).
- Young people inspecting the children's homes.
- Mystery shopper in participation.
- More involvement of young people in foster carer training.
- Improving young people involvement in fostering recruitment and panels
- Commission the LILAC project.
- Young people on a panel to help review.
- Interviews for foster carers.
- Explore the potential for young people to develop questions for foster panel.
- Involve young children in the recruitment of foster carers.
- Young children should inspect children homes to see where other children live.

#### **Funding / Resources**

- Set delegated budget for young people.
- Identify / consider / review the options for funding the CiCC.
- Increased bid for resources (cash and in kind).
- Consider creating community interest company for CiCC.
- Recruit Participation Officer.
- Meeting with CP and CiCC to link them better together Improve resource for YPICC potentially including developing YPICC apprenticeships.

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

- CiCC and CYP in care conference invite representatives from each team to attend.
- Chair and Corporate Parenting role more defined.
- Increase elected member role / strengthen training for elected members.
- Get corporate parents, directors and all social care staff actively involved in CiCC.
- Work closely with CPB and develop action plan.
- Manager for disabilities to come to CiCC.

- Meeting with decision makers to move ideas forward.
- Push promotion of CiCC with practitioners and managers.
- Include standard item on select committee reports and agendas to consider the impact of actions on LAC and care leavers.
- Create stronger links with council members.
- Every LCC report to include cp under implications sector etc.
- Invite more elected members to CiCC / challenge elected members to join in.
- Clear membership of CP Board to include partners.
- Links to improvement.
- Assign a (participation) 'champion' (officer/ member) in each SW team.
- Contact cards for social workers / Encourage an "Emergency Contact Card".
- Challenge area managers or SW teams in how best to get SW on side.
- More face-to-face contact with foster carers/social worker.
- Informing social workers of the importance of keeping young people in mind.
- Next CiCC conference to invite social workers to attend.
- Have a CiCC presentation/ role play at a social worker conference.
- Get more social care staff attending CiCC meetings.
- Social workers to promote CiCC during visits.
- Set up 6 monthly sessions for young people and staff to share positive experiences of being looked after.
- CiCC take over the agenda for corporate parenting panel.
- Training for elected members around corporate parenting.
- Meeting with CP and CiCC to link them better together.

#### **Involving and supporting carers**

- Working with foster carers directly to promote service / hold joint events.
- Participation team to undertake visits to foster carers.
- Car sharing club for foster carers.
- Young people to give feedback to carers after they have left & vice versa.
- Check if we have an established 'buddy' system for new foster carers.
- Look at the involvement of foster parents to transport CiC to events.
- Transport / Obtain foster carer car sharing/ car pool.

#### **Collaborating / networking with other councils**

- Create relationships or links with/ visit other CiCC in the region.
- Recognise other councils' achievements to develop ours.
- Listen to other boards.
- Invite other councils (young people & staff) to our centre and our annual LAC achievement event.
- Arrange to meet up with other CiCC – share good practice.
- Visit neighbouring council and see how they work to review our practise.
- Join the regional group to link to other councils.