

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

<b>Board:</b>	Corporate Parenting Board
<b>Date:</b>	13 March 2024
<b>Title:</b>	Children In Care and Care Experienced Adults Councils and Participation Update
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

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### **Purpose of this Report**

1. This is a joint report from the Participation Lead and the Children in Care and Care Experienced Adults Councils.
2. This report is for information.

### **Recommendations**

3. That the Corporate Parenting Board note the contents of the Children In Care and Care Experienced Adults Councils and Participation Update report.

### **Part 1: Progress against Participation Action Plan**

4. Following the report taken to CPB in November 2023 we are now putting into action the activities and events we discussed.

### **Feedback Fortnight (WC 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> March)**

*Capturing and responding to feedback from our children and their parents/families living at home*

What's going to happen?

- Events across relevant Districts and Services
- Coordinated approach to capturing feedback using a new 'Shout App', MS forms and focus groups
- Meet your Directors and Councilors opportunities
- Response to feedback: You said, we did – this may be a video for example available for all families to show we're listening and responding to what we've heard

### **My Life My Future Month (Mid June – Mid July)**

*Capturing, working together with, and responding to feedback from our children in care and our care experienced adults*

What's going to happen?

- As Feedback Fortnight above, plus
- The whole month will be planned and co-delivered with the CIC and CEA Councils.

### **Care Leavers Week**

As previous years, this well-established event is led by CL Teams and we'll integrate our new feedback tools and the CEA Councils. Last year, the participation lead for the councils attended events in person to talk directly with young people about the council and about priority areas to gain feedback.

### **Challenge Cards**

In Spring 2024 we are introducing a challenge card process, for example 'START, STOP, CHANGE'. When the idea has enough support (i.e. 4 votes for example) that 'challenge' is sent to the Corporate Parenting Board who will respond directly to the young person.

### **SHOUT feedback App**

Throughout 2024 we are trialing the SHOUT feedback app. This year we want to target our questions during the 3 events, with a centrally coordinated App so we can

- Ask a few questions well, rather than lots of questions over the year
- See all the feedback in one place to identify themes
- Build a baseline to track responses over the years
- Publish what we've heard, and what we're going to do about it.

5. In introducing these activities and events (alongside the work happening locally and within the new Councils) we will 'supercharge' our participation and provide far more opportunities for young people to meaningfully contribute towards the development of their service – and more routes to respond to that feedback. We also will share the action plan with the Councils so that they are able to contribute to the strategic direction of travel.

## **Part 2: Work and feedback from the CiC and CEA Councils**

### *Young people's views about engaging with the Corporate Parenting Board*

Young people told us how they want to work with the CPB. Based on this feedback the following changes are being introduced.

Hearing and responding to the voices of young people

- A pre-meet between the Chair (and any others) and the CIC/CEA Councils before every CPB. Young people have requested the following format
  - o Video call preferable
  - o Weekday evenings after 5:30/6pm
  - o Half hour/hour meeting time no longer
  - o Send out a rough agenda for meeting so members can prepare themselves
- CIC/CEA Councils will produce a summary for each CPB of their views and work they're doing (this document is the first of these summaries)
- Motiv8 will coordinate the Challenge Cards which will be introduced in the Spring. Challenge cards enable young people to raise issues they'd like to start/stop/change and CPB will need to action and respond to them.

- CPB members will be involved in the key participation events (feedback fortnight, MLMF month and CL week) plus local district and service events.

#### Make up of CPB

- Feedback from Council members as our co-design day was – “why does CPB have to be made up of only Councilors?” “Why can’t it be a broader group with wider range of membership including young people, adults with care experience, staff with care experience”. We are taking forward this feedback via a review of the CPB Terms of Reference.

### **The Councils**

6. The Children in Care (CIC) and Care Experienced Adults (CEA) councils came online in the summer of 2023. We currently have 19 members of CEA Council and 13 members of CIC Council. Of these we have a core group that are really keen to engage in any events in person and within working groups. The rest of the members give their feedback if they feel passionate about the subject and information is shared regularly with them if they wish to participate, for example sharing details of the Coram Voice event. We have adapted the approach to the Councils that everyone in Hampshire is part of the Council but it’s up to the individual what they want that participation to look like. For example, they could be in regular meetings to discuss priorities or they may wish to just send feedback in when they feel they need to. This way we can ensure a diverse cohort on the Councils and everyone gets a chance to share their opinion and feedback.

7. The following areas are being explored by our Councils throughout 2024:

#### *Addressing stigma*

The Councils identified this as a key priority area for them. They have been working with Motiv8 to create and share life stories on social media. Further developments may include creating resources with young people to share in schools. The Councils have started sharing their stories on the stigma of being in care and using this as a tool to share their stories on our social media pages so other young people can relate, feel empowered and educate themselves if they haven’t experienced being in care. Members of the Councils are creating a core working group to meet once a month to start to explore ways which stigma can be reduced in schools as they explained this is where they experienced the most stigma. One of these resources is nearing completion and is awaiting final review from the young person who has contributed to this. There will be a link to share at the CPB.

#### *Benefits and access for Care Leavers*

The Councils are helping HCC to understand what benefits and opportunities care leavers would benefit from, and helping us to work with partners to put these in place. Care Leavers on the Council have been clear that care leavers would like an increased awareness of the resources and benefits in the community and this will be part of the work of the Councils. They are working closely to discuss what they were offered to see any differences and exploring other benefits that would be useful for other care leavers.

#### *Recruitment of Foster Carers*

The Councils shared they are keen to get involved with the recruitment of foster carers. Due to commitments like work, school or college they've suggested setting up a meeting to explore key questions they agree on which could be introduced into the interview process. This is a recently identified priority and Motiv8 will follow this up with the service to check what information is needed.

### *My Life My Future Month and awards*

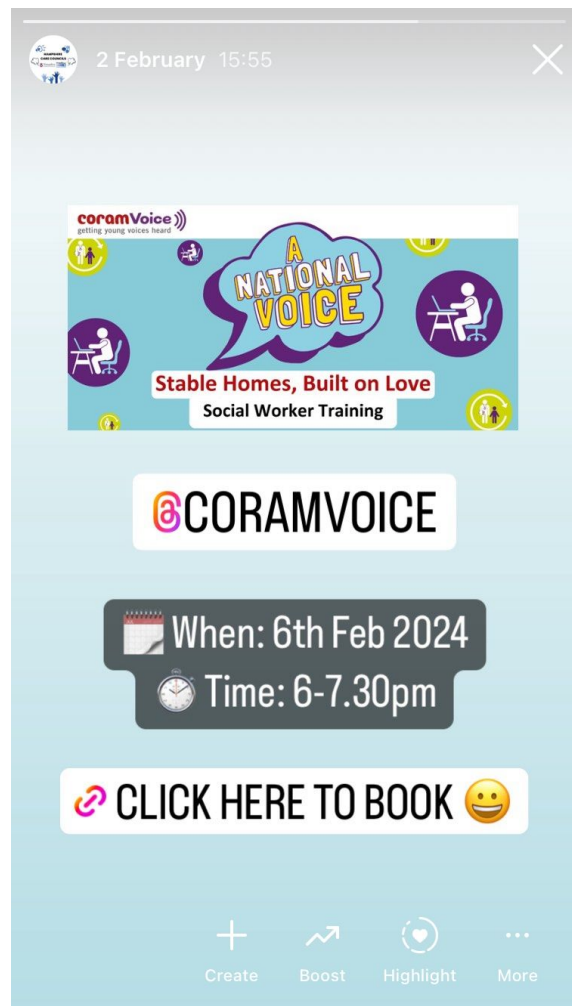
The Councils will play a significant role in planning and delivering the MLMF month and awards. We are in the early stages of setting up a working group within the councils whom are passionate about this and want to work together to come up with ideas to support MLMF.

### *Reaching all our children in care and care leavers*

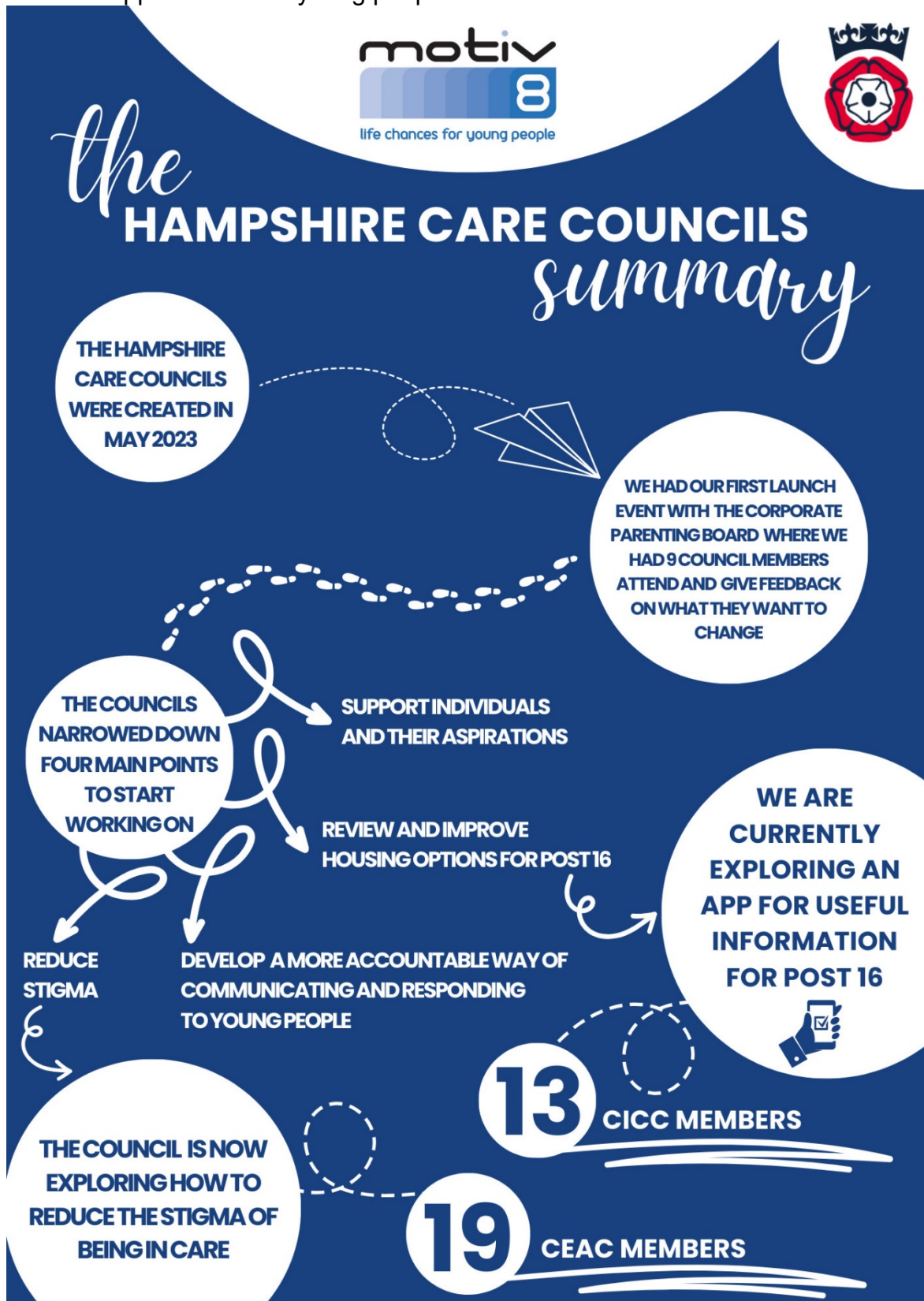
Another priority for the Councils is to make sure we reach as many of our children in care and care leavers as possible, this includes children living out of county, those with disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

### *Social Media*

The Hampshire Care Council Instagram page has a total of 70 followers and are following 44 relevant pages. We have been researching Become charity social pages to keep up to date and share information that would be useful for our Hampshire Care Councils. We shared an event we attended over Care Leavers



week at Mayflower Theatre and we had likes from a number of other services and comments from Estranged and Care Experienced Students (EaCES) page. Our top content on the page is posting on our stories and sharing events like Coram Voice which gave the option for young people to book directly onto the event to increase opportunities for young people to access.



## **Consultation and Equalities**

8. The Participation Action Plan is designed to provide further opportunities for consultation with children, families and staff. Equality impact was considered as part of the procurement of the CIC and CEA Councils and is an ongoing consideration in the development of our recommendations.

## **Climate Change Impact Assessment**

9. There are no climate change implications to this report.

## CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION

### Links to the Strategic Plan

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	Yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	Yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	Yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	Yes
<b>OR</b>	
<b>This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because: This report is for information only</b>	

### Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

**The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)**

Document

Location

None

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

An updated EIA will produced as part of the recommendations from this project.

### **Equality Duty**

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment:**