

Title:	Care4Us Council Annual Report Summary, April 2018 - March 2019
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Care4Us Council

Barnsley's Care4Us Council is a group of children and young people in care and care experienced young people who come together to share their ideas and experiences whilst representing the voice of other children and young people in care and those who have experienced care from Barnsley.

The purpose of the Care4Us Council is to ensure that children in care and care experienced young people have age appropriate platforms to voice their opinions, ensuring that their views are heard and acted upon when possible.

Staff from the Targeted Youth Support Service coordinate and support the group and their peers and help facilitate opportunities for the members of the group to be able to work with their Corporate Parents and other key decision makers to influence services that they receive.

Work undertaken during this period

In 2018 The Care4Us Council had the opportunity share their views and represent other children in care and care experienced young people when they played a key role in the Ofsted inspection of Barnsley Children's Social Care services. The young people spoke to inspectors about their lived experiences of being in care, looking at negative and positive aspects of their own personal situations. The inspectors findings are quoted as;

'There is an active and vocal children in care council (CiCC), Care4Us, which has worked hard to influence service development through its annual 'takeover of the service event' and on such areas as The Pledge, peer mentoring, recruitment for foster carers, presenting to the Corporate Parent Panel and developing documents for reviews.

Some of the other work that the Care4Us Council members were involved in included;

- The production of the NHS health assessment video
- Meeting with Mark Riddell and Barnsley young people's views included in his report
- Rebranding of the Care4Us Council publicity
- Re designed the 'Your Review' Tool
- Re designed the 'Welcome Pack' for children in care
- Takeover Challenge 2018
- Annual Celebration Awards Event

The group also participated in several regional work streams which included attending the regional seminar along with some of their Corporate Parent's. The seminar had identified 5 key topics for debate and each participating area had to choose one topic as their priority with a view to deciding on a single 'regional' priority.

The topics of debate were:

1. Challenging Discrimination – Sheffield
2. Mental Health – Barnsley
3. Access to family (improved contact) – Leeds
4. Equal Support for care leavers post 25 – York
5. Communication (between services) – East Ridings

Barnsley Care4Us Council members chose and delivered their presentation on Mental Health with confidence and clear understanding. Each group had five minutes in which to deliver their presentations after which a voting process took place to decide the winning subject. The vote concluded that Barnsley's Mental Health topic would be the overall priority for the Yorkshire and Humber regional campaign. This was a real positive outcome for Barnsley's young people, raising their confidence in presenting and taking part in thought provoking discussions.

The Care Leavers Hub launch at Regent Street took place on 28th October 2018. The Hub is fast becoming a key venue in promoting the Local Offer to care experienced young people and hosts drop in events with partner agencies and young people. Members of the group enjoy and feel safe in the new Hub environment as it promotes a more welcoming and comfortable feel to the group sessions. The group looks forward to developing this space and promoting its use further in 2019.

The Care4Us Council continues to go from strength to strength and the members are continually developing new skills and confidence. Members have taken part in planning events, developing and reviewing consultations and contributing to service improvements.

The Care4Us Council members are keen to participate in future work that allows them to further improve and develop services for young people in Barnsley whilst also taking part in regional and national work which allows them to showcase their commitment, skills and knowledge across the Country.

What's next in 2019

- Support a rolling website review / updates of the Care4Us Council information, events etc
- Introduction of Care4Us Council Facebook page
- Promote The Pledge and its purpose to Children and Young People in Care throughout 2019/20
- Support a rolling review of the Pledge via the use of a smart survey, Facebook poll's, user satisfaction and review meetings
- Promote the Local Offer and its purpose to Care Leavers in 2019/20
- Support a rolling review of the Local Offer via the use of a smart survey, Facebook poll's and user satisfaction
- Support and influence joint development of Regents Street & the Care Leavers Hub
- Drop ins to be established at more secondary schools/academies to reach those young people who find attending a monthly session difficult
- Contribute to and participate in Safeguarding Week Launch
- Contribute to and participate in the Annual Mayors Parade and Pride Event with Barnsley Youth Council
- Continued support to the Esmee Fairbairn project with Barnsley Museums and members of

Barnsley Youth Council

- Planning and development of Takeover Challenge
- Annual celebration of achievements event
- Involvement and participation in all relevant youth consultations and activity e.g. Make Your Mark Ballot, Annual Youth Audit, National democracy week
- Build links with Barnsley Youth Council and promote joint work to ensure that children in care and care leavers voice are truly represented in a variety of decision making processes
- Children's Social Work Matters (CSWM) Presentation
- Planning, Design and Production of the Hub Mural
- Yorkshire & Humber Regional Residential