

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 13th November 2017
Title of report: Peer Mentoring Scheme

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Director of Resources? Is it also signed off by the Assistant Director (Legal Governance and Monitoring)?	Elaine McShane 03.11.2017
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Erin Hill

Electoral wards affected: ALL
Ward councillors consulted: NIL
Public or private: PUBLIC

1. Purpose of report

To update Corporate Parenting Board in regards to the peer mentoring scheme for care leavers.

2. Summary

Part of the transformation challenge award funding allocated to Kirklees Council was to develop a mentoring scheme to young people making the transition from care.

From September 2016, the Leaving Care Service had been working with a group of older care leavers to look at what mentoring could like for care leavers in the local area. Eight young people attended our initial focus groups and identified that care should not be a label, that it was important for young people to get the right help at the right time, that all young people should have someone to talk to, someone who doesn't judge and understands confidentiality.

Since that time, we have held a number of focus groups and discussions with young people around mentoring and understand that this means providing support to "someone like me", not necessarily offering advice, but assisting that person through listening, being available and role modelling.

Discussions also took place in regards to where mentoring could take place. The young people initially involved with the focus groups identified the need for a space specifically for the scheme, after considering the success of spaces such as Young Dewsbury the group where keen to look at a

space in Huddersfield which was available to looked after children and care leavers where they could access support in a comfortable environment. No 11 had been identified and approximately 30 young people were involved in the consultation and design of the space and provided advice on what facilities should be available and subsequently working in partnership with the service to open the space.

Of the initial 8 young people who identified an interest in becoming a peer mentor, training commenced over the summer with 6 young people identified. We have 4 young people who have nearly completed the training which is being delivered by partners from the Base. It is envisaged that a further training program will take place early in the new year as other young people are now interested in participating and training as mentors.

As a result of discussions, the trainee peer mentors will be based at No 11 and have already started supporting other young people using the service. We have already seen some success with the scheme, particularly in regards to raising confidence and self-esteem and improving engagement of young people with the service. We envisage that young people may request peer mentoring support by dropping in, additionally, we expect that social workers, residential staff will be able to identify looked after young people who may benefit from support. The scheme will initially be based at No 11 whilst peer mentors are training and there is access to support and guidance as required from other staff members.

It is envisaged that in addition to offering a designated peer mentoring space at No 11 and in line with what young people are telling us, we have developed an apprenticeship and internship which would allow peer mentors to be available more flexibility and for young people to be the first point of contact at No 11 rather than a professional. (Personal Advisors and a Social Worker are in always in the space with other partners). We are looking at recruiting two apprentices across the service which will be funded through the transformation challenge award. These posts have been shared with the leaving care service and the level of interest is high.

3. Information required to take a decision

Information to be considered.

4. Implications for the Council

It is hoped that the peer mentoring scheme will :

- Increase young people's self-esteem and confidence;
- young people feel better supported & manage their accommodation and tenancy;
- Ensure that young people are linked to the local community and resources and a network of support;
- Compliment the life skills program being delivered in residential units, foster placement and supported accommodation young people making the transition from care.

Funding from the apprenticeships will come from the Transformation Challenge Award budget.

5. Consultees and their opinions

6. Next steps

Information to be considered.

7. Officer recommendations and reasons

Information to be considered.

Peer mentoring scheme to be endorsed by Corporate Parenting Board and Corporate Parents.

8. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

9. Contact officer

Belinda Cashman, Interim Service Manager Leaving Care Service – 01484221000 email:
Belinda.Cashman@kirklees.gov.uk

10. Background Papers and History of Decisions

11. Assistant Director responsible

Elaine McShane, Head of Social Work