

2nd December, 2021

Northamptonshire's Children Trust

The Trust has had 2 Ofsted visits. They have had a Ofsted visit to the Fostering service which is now registered as a Independent Fostering Agency. The out come of which has not yet been publish. It is fair to say that the transition between a fostering service within a councils and the Ofsted requirements of an IFA is great, so there is more work to be done in this area. The Trust also had a MV from Ofsted about children in care 16+ and Care leavers. The final Ofsted letter has not yet been published for this visit. The Trust are also now waiting for a YOS inspection and also an inspection of the Adoption service which is now a Voluntary Adoption Agency. The two Councils and the Trust are currently in contract negotiations for 2022/23.

You will all have heard that our joint DCS Cathy Hadley will be leaving us at the end of January. I would like to thank her for all the work she has done whilst in our County. Cathy has. Been with us for just over 2 years, during that time we have become two Councils and set up a Children's Trust and worked very hard to make sure that Children's Services's is now well on the improvement journey. We wish her well with her new position near to her home

Education

The Councils will be due a SEND inspection on the Autumn of 2022 and work is underway with partners to consider current performance and to develop a self assessment and action plan. The work is being supported by an experienced SEND consultant and all partners are engaged and attend a SEND Accountability Board. Work is also underway with the Parent Care Forum to ensure they are fully involved in the work. It is also planned that the Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliance will undertake a peer inspection of the SEND provision in the spring.

Children have been working with the Afghanistan families and ensuring the provision of education for children. School placements have been found for all children however there are challenges around the continuous movement of the children from the hotels to permanent homes as well as the initial funding from the DfE which has been initially for 3 months.

Last week I attended the Youth Summit at the Guildhall Northampton, please see attached report

The #NorthamptonYouthSummit was set up three years ago with a meeting of 8 youth providers.

We became a steering group and the first thing we did was to reach out to other youth providers.

We had our first collaborative in June 2019.

From that evolved the ideas on how to support youth work development-

1. A Youth Centre (Motion passed at NCC and NBA).
2. Accredited courses at the uni- there is now a youth and community MA
3. An annual youth led youth conference. We have just delivered the third annual conference.

4. Continued networking of all youth providers. NBA took over the networking and have now passed it to VIN.
5. A youth weekly radio show called Free2Talk radio-broadcasts on Thursdays.
6. We continue as a steering group- L2L, The Lowdown, Free to Talk, NAYC, Springs Family Centre, CYPN, Right Resolution, Peak Empower, Sport for Fitness.

This years #NorthamptonYouthSummit

NAYC play a lead role, working with other youth groups, to identify young leaders and work through with them the design and content of the day. Covid permitting, this includes a weekend residential, many hours of workshops in the Guildhall and lots of pizza.

This year we had 15 young leaders, from different parts of the town, working together, to deliver the day.

Outcome for 2021.

The stalls set up the day before the conference to allow young people at school/college/ and statutory services to come and see what is on offer in the town. Covid meant we had to limit the number of stalls, so from a potential 45 stalls we had 28-first come first served. They represented an amazing mix of services and resources and the young people really enjoyed spending time at each stall.

Schools and statutory services and the stall holders themselves, all fed back how exciting and how encouraging it is to see such a range of provision.

Covid also meant we had to limit the number of schools bringing 10 young people each.

We were delighted with the schools that did attend. All their youth were fully engaged in every aspect of the day and gave us some fabulous feed-back.

Guildhall staff were fabulous and really helped us design a safe environment for everyone.

The Free to Talk radio show broadcast all day under the amazing stewardship of Mark Dean, with young people interviewing each other, and being asked their opinions on a wide range of topics.

The day began in the Council Chamber and the conference was opened by the Mayor. She talked to the young people about her role, about the role of Councillor. She invited debate about any recent concern. The issue raised was the discriminatory and the perceived discriminatory experience of young Black people in relation to the police. Solutions were asked for. Answers given were, training for the police, body cameras for the police, more CCTV. The Mayor invited the youth to consider becoming Councillors and to consider speaking at council meetings. Two youth have agreed to speak at the next Full Council.

The young leaders delivered 2 workshops twice, am and pm. These were on Healthy Relationships and Cyber bullying. Feed back from the young people attending was amazing.

The day ended in the Chamber and Cllr. Fiona Baker talked to the young people about her role and the importance of hearing from young people first hand. She gave out the certificates.

Ideas for developing the conference for next year were:-

- To have more workshops.
- To include a workshop on physical health as well as mental health.
- To have a workshop at the conference for the teachers.
- To run youth led workshops for parents (Not necessarily at the conference).

Many, many, thanks to the young leaders, to Zoe for her amazing facilitation of the process and to Becky, Leanne, Lucy, Jenny, James and Mark for supporting the young people throughout and on the day. Thanks too to the Mayor, Cllr. Rufia Ashraf, and to the Guildhall staff.

Councillor Fiona Baker

Cabinet Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills.