

Report of the Strategic Director, Place to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 18 January 2021

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Subject: Department of Place Corporate Parenting Report

Summary statement:

The Department of Place provides support and activities for Looked After Children and young people across a wide range of services. This report provides information on this work and seeks feedback from Panel members on areas for further development.

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Portfolio:
Children & Families

Overview & Scrutiny Area:
Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Department of Place provides support and activities for Looked After Children and young people across a wide range of services. This report provides information on this work and seeks feedback from Panel members on areas for further development.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Activities are presented below by Assistant Director area as both specific work relating to Looked after Children and young people and general provision affecting all children including Looked after Children and young people.

2.1 Economic Development and Housing

Joint working arrangements in place with Children's Services to ensure young people pathways are clear and that Looked After Children are supported effectively.

- The revised Social Housing Allocations policy places young people leaving care in the top priority band as too are foster carers and adopters (previous policy placed them in the second band)
- Working with Children's Services to ensure that all private sector accommodation used for children in care is compliant with housing standards

General provision affecting all children

- Close working with Adults and Children's Services to ensure appropriate support provision is developed and commissioned particularly Housing Related Support
- Close working arrangements and protocols with Bradford Nightstop
- Provision of adaptations for children and young people with disabilities also supports their safety and stability in their home lives, as adaptations will allow them and/or their carers to continue living in their home.
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2.2 Neighbourhood and Customer Services

The Youth Service provides targeted and universal open access provision to support the mental, emotional and physical wellbeing of young people across the district. In the capacity of 'corporate parents' Youth Workers build and maintain voluntary relationships with young people who are looked after children. These relationships are built at a community level and seek to ensure that young people are less isolated and more connected with their peers. In addition, Youth Workers continue to present opportunities to help enrich young people's lives such as Area Opportunity Funding to remove barriers to social mobility and well being activities to help build healthy lifestyles such as cycling, cooking and promoting independent living skills.

- Facilitated by the Youth Service, looked after children and care leavers have been actively engaged in the recent work to support young people's mental wellbeing through Covid lockdown and local and national restrictions.
- Covid Young Ambassadors who include LAC young people are engaging with LAC and young people across district to ensure that district response reflects and takes on board the contributions and concerns of the districts young people, providing them with 'voice and influence' and a tailored approach.
- Breaking the Cycle team is actively working 1-1 with some LAC in the work around exploitation and serious organised crime.
- Youth Workers have made visits to most of the children's homes to work directly with young people who are LAC and care staff to do awareness raising around serious organised crime, gangs, and general criminality.
- A number of young people who are LAC also visit open access provision.

General provision affecting all children

- The Parks Service maintains parks, recreation grounds and children's play areas, providing a conducive environment for formal and informal play activities.
- Street Cleansing and Council Wardens work to create a safe and clean environment, promoting civic pride and participation in community wellbeing initiatives.
- Domestic abuse and ASB services support vulnerable families and individuals and supports action that helps people to be safe and feel safe.

2.3 Sport and Culture

- Free gym membership to the Council's Clubactive sites is available to looked after young people. The current scheme is available to young people leaving care aged 16 plus. The Scheme has been extended to include a companion to accompany the young person, and will also extend to junior gym membership for looked after young people of 14-16 years of age. *(Due to COVID restrictions this offer will be limited at the current time)*
- Adventure Activities Development Team work with Looked after Children and Care Leavers.
- Occasional Adventure bookings from care homes or specific groups of Looked after Children
- Looked After Children access our Multi Adventure and Holiday Courses
- A team from Leaving Care entered the Dragon Boat competition and trained at Doe Park
- We have taken the Climbing Tower to the annual Care Leavers event for several years
- We loan waterproofs, boots, sleeping bags to Looked After Children going on residential visits
- BASECAMPS are promoted to LAC Services and the Sports Development Unit liaise directly with LAC staff to facilitate bookings *(No basecamps were delivered in 2020 because of Covid restrictions)*
- Bradford Aquatics put looked after children in foster homes or care homes are placed immediately or put to the top of the waiting list
- Sports Development have accommodated LAC young people as volunteers working on sports activity sessions to improve employability

- (Sports Development will inform LAC Services in 2021 when they are again able to offer volunteering opportunities. This offer will be linked to the recommencement of Base Camps and the Sports event calendar)
- Bradford Theatres encourage access to the arts for looked after children and young people via a ticketing scheme offering them (and their foster families if applicable) free or greatly reduced price tickets to productions at the Alhambra Theatre and St George's Hall (subject to producer agreement and availability.)
- Volunteering opportunities at St George's Hall and work experience opportunities at The Alhambra Theatre. *(Theatres are currently closed due to COVUD19 restrictions and this will be available when the Theatres reopen)*

General provision affecting all children

- Playable Spaces Strategy adopted with £6.5m funding approved
- Start Programme, RSC Learning Performance Network, RSC Associates Schools Programme & RSC Associate Theatre Partner *(Currently not available due to COVID restrictions)*
- City of Film supports the delivery of film literacy across schools in the district to improve general engagement in learning and increased levels of literacy more specifically. Family Film Festival on Big Screen

Museums & Galleries

- All our 4 museums: Cartwright Hall, Cliffe Castle, Bradford Industrial Museum and Bolling Hall have free family areas, where everyone can play read and draw as well as spaces for eating packed lunches. Cartwright Hall has a new Family Friendly Gallery (gallery 5) which invites everyone to enjoy, explore and share ideas. Bradford Industrial Museum are working with 'Compassion for Mums Well-being', Providing mums with children some assistance and quiet spaces within the galleries
- Child-led learning is promoted in the schools offer and especially in the Art & Science of Noticing; these ideas then inform new programmes and displays.
- Bradford's Cultural Offer is promoted in the museums to Families and Schools of the District. Our free well established Family offer at weekends and during the school holidays is fun, creative and well supported. We also use these activities to support district wide events such as Bradford Children's Festival in City Park, and events in collaboration with Parks like Explore Keighley June 2019.
- Cartwright Hall host a regular Young Open exhibition, with an open entry to all 0-16 year olds from the District. Other displays of children's work take place for specific projects to celebration good work. Lilycroft Primary School's work on the significant local individual Miriam Lord is presently exhibited in the learning room at Cartwright Hall. Family display of stories took place in Cliffe Castle Museum & Park for families to support the summer reading challenge in 2018 – a link with Bradford Libraries. Bolling Hall gets regularly transformed by their local school, Bowling Park into a film set for Jumanji or Alice in Wonderland, Hansel & Gretal or a Knight School.
- We run a series of Take Over Days in our Museums where children from both primary & secondary schools learn about the workings of our buildings. In addition a number of home educated groups also work with us. We also offer support work placements. *(Currently not available due to COVID restrictions and Museums being closed)*

Libraries

- Bradford Libraries offers a range of services for Under-Fives, Children and Young People. Many of these are suitable for looked-after children or we can tailor on request to help with specific needs. Please contact Christinea Donnelly Development Officer for Children and Young people christinea.donnelly@bradford.gov.uk or Susan Brewster-Craig, Development Officer for Early Years - susan.brewster-craig@bradford.gov.uk
- Libraries for Under-Fives, Children and Young People
- Books for Under-Fives, Children and Young Adults
- We have an extensive children's book collection - fiction, non-fiction and graphic novels, with new books arriving daily in all of our libraries. Children can request books for free and we love to have book suggestions from children and young adults. We also have dyslexia friendly, large print, and audio books.
- Under-Fives, Children and Young People Library Tickets
- Under-Fives, Children and Young People have their own library ticket and children under 16 don't pay fines on overdue books. Children can borrow up to 25 items and can renew books online as well as in person or over the telephone.
- **Summer Reading Challenge**
- This is an annual national scheme to encourage children from 4 to 11 years to read for enjoyment throughout the summer holidays. It offers incentives to collect and on completion the child receives a certificate and medal to recognise their achievement. All our libraries offer the Summer Reading Challenge from mid-July to mid-September and we have an extensive number of free activities and events over the summer to support the challenge. We can support children's homes and care homes to participate in the challenge.
- Information about the challenge and all our summer events can be found on www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries as well as in our Summer Reading Challenge events booklet, available in all our libraries, City Hall, Information
- Shops and other public services. It is also available to download from our website.
- **Summer Reading Challenge Young Ambassadors**
- We offer young people between 13 and 21yrs the chance to volunteer as a Young Ambassador, to support the Summer Reading Challenge and summer activities. The scheme offers the opportunity to develop confidence, skills and social-interaction with other young people, families participating and the library staff. For further information, contact the Development Officer for Young People.
- **Bradford Libraries Rhyme Challenge**
- This challenge encourages families to learn rhymes together to promote early language acquisition and communication skills. The challenge sees under-fives and their parents learn five rhymes and receive a certificate. The rhyme challenge can be taken as a group in the library or in a childcare setting during Sept - March. Groups receive a pack of resources for up to 30 children. Groups can also be entered for the Rhyme Challenge Awards which take place each year in July. Individuals can take the challenge online at

www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries For more information on the challenge contact the Development Officer for Early Years.

- **Bookstart**

- Bookstart is a national free book-gifting programme. The programme is delivered in Bradford by the Library Service. Bookstart gives free books to every child in England and Wales at two key stages before school, as well as free packs for children with additional needs, tips and guidance on reading together, resources and activities, and much more.
- The packs are gifted via the following routes:
- Bookstart Baby Pack – Gifted via Registrars at registration of birth
- Bookstart Treasure Pack – Gifted via Childcare Settings during year the child turns four . Bookstart Additional Needs Packs – Contact Development Officer for Early Years

- **Bookstart Bear Club**

- This is a library incentive scheme for children five and under to encourage book sharing and regular library use throughout the year. All libraries offer the scheme and children can collect incentives such as a baby Bookstart bear, book bag, board books, picture books and swim vouchers.

- **Bookstart Bear**

- To help promote books and reading a Bookstart Bear costume is available for loan to groups. Please contact the Development Officer for Early Years for further details.

- **Regular Storytimes & Rhymetimes**

- We offer a range of regular storytimes or rhymetimes on a weekly basis in our libraries. All are welcome. Sessions are free and usually include stories, rhymes and a small craft activity. Information on specific local library provision can be found on our website www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries or at your local library.

- **Holiday Activities**

- We offer a variety of free school holiday events and activities aimed at all ages. These include author and poet visits, art and themed workshops, theatre and storytelling performances and craft activities. Information on forthcoming events can be found on our website www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries, at your local library, and the local press. We also post on Facebook and Twitter.

- **Home Educated Reading Group**

- Open to all families or those who are home schooling. The group meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month from 11am - 12noon at Keighley Library. All welcome and caters from 5 to 16 years.

- **Class Visits**

- All our libraries welcome class visits. We can offer your school and nursery a standard class visit which includes library tour and story time or we can tailor your class visit to your needs. Look out for our special National Curriculum linked events offered to schools. For class visits contact your local library or the Development Officers for Early Years (nursery visits) or Young People (school

classes). We are happy to tailor visits by children's homes or care homes or specific groups.

- **School Events**

- We offer a variety of events open to schools throughout term time. These include author visits, art & themed workshops, theatre and storytelling performances as well as supporting reading initiatives. Information on forthcoming events is usually sent to Schools and listed on Bradford Schools Online. We also host events for specific groups and would be happy to cater for children's home and care homes if appropriate.

- **Story Sack Loans**

- We offer a range of story sacks for loan to groups. A list of story sacks is available from the Development Officer for Early Years.

- **Cultural Partnerships & Events**

- Art Works are delivering the 2nd of a 3-year project, working with Unaccompanied Young Asylum Seekers. The theme is making yourself heard and they are working with local poets and rappers with the young people.
- Creative Routes work is with residential home staff and young people aged 13-18. Go Higher have funded this project specifically for underrepresented groups in Higher Education. They have been exploring how creativity can open up space and opportunity for meaningful discussion, and have worked with a printmaker, poet, film maker, willow sculptor and land artist over the last year.
- Dance United Yorkshire (DUY) delivers intensive contemporary dance and performance projects (5-6 weeks) which target vulnerable and disengaged young people between 14 and 19yrs. Projects have been running in Bradford since 2006. Across 15 years, DUY have had referrals from the youth offending service, Pupil Referral Units, Social Services and mainstream secondary schools. The projects bring young people together (approximately 20 per project) from a range of backgrounds and circumstances. Some of the young people will be 'looked after', in foster care or Leaving Care.
- The Events team have delivered a large number of diverse events and activities e.g. Bradford Festival, Illuminate Bradford, Summer fun days, Christmas activities all of which have been free to access. The programme is widely marketed across the Bradford District and the team have targeted schools ensuring each child receives flyers/programmes etc
- Bradford Council's "Response" scheme was aimed at the arts sector. As part of the pilot scheme, arts groups for grants of between £500 and £1,000 to develop ways to connect with isolated people, through means such as podcasts and streaming services. One of the projects funded was run by Bloomin Buds Theatre who delivered arts and crafts parcels to the doorsteps of those in need for them to complete during this period of self isolation. The packs are aimed at children and adults including activity packs and adult colouring in.
- The 'Our Street Gallery' is a 12-month project transforming the district's streets into a canvas. The first Episode consisted of over 50 images capturing moments and feelings of 13 to 18-year-olds from all backgrounds stuck at home during the coronavirus pandemic. The photographs were taken for Through Our Lens, a project led by Shipley photographer Carolyn Mendelsohn. In collaboration with Bradford College, she mentored more than 40 young people in photography..

2.4 Planning Transport and Highways

- Lead in creating safe and healthy places across the district.
- To encourage care leavers and young people to take up apprenticeships which would include a college education and job opportunities

General provision affecting all children

- Design and deliver safer roads across the district.
- Building control ensures safe buildings for children across the district.
- Develop and implement Planning policies that improve the lives of children.
- Contribute to an air quality plan that improves the health of children.
- Provide more quicker and attractive bus routes using clear air zone emission compliant buses
- Upgrade active travel (cycling and walking) infrastructure and provide active travel planning support for healthier lifestyles
- Provide blue and green infrastructure in development to improve the quality of life and health of children.
- Provide access to countryside, biodiversity and recreation through the work of Countryside Services and the Rights of Way Team.
- Provide opportunities for children to cycle and walk across the District.

2.5 Waste, Fleet and Transport Services

General provision affecting all children

- The Waste Service contributes to a safe and clean environment engendering civic pride and community well-being.
- PTS provides an efficient and safe system of transportation to vulnerable children and adults which enhances their quality of life.
- The Licensing Service through its statutory functions protects the young and vulnerable from age related and potentially harmful activities.
- The Emergency Management Service has an overarching role in protecting and safeguarding all residents to ensure their safety.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 None.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 All activities and actions outline in paragraph 2 are funded from within existing Department of Place Service budgets service

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 If there are no significant risks arising out of the implementation of the proposed

recommendations it should be stated but only on advice of the Assistant Director Finance and Procurement and the City Solicitor.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 No legal issues arising.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Not applicable.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

No implications.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

No implications.

7.6 TRADE UNION

Not applicable.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Actions outlined apply across the whole District and there are no specific ward implications.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

Activities and actions outlined in paragraph 2 are intended to improve outcomes for Looked after Children.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

Not applicable.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 None.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The views of Panel Members are sought on the range of activities and actions outlined in Paragraph 2 of this report and on areas for further development.

11. APPENDICES

None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.