REPORT FOR: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date of Meeting: 15\textsuperscript{th} June 2016

Subject: INFORMATION REPORT - Leisure and Cultural Activities for Children Looked After

Key Decision: No

Responsible Officer: Chris Spencer, Corporate Director People Services

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Christine Robson, Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

Exempt: No

Decision subject to Call-in: No

Wards affected: All Wards

Enclosures:
- Appendix 1 - Participation Co-ordinator 2015/16 Calendar
- Appendix 2 - Evaluation Form for Young People
- Appendix 3 - Youth Development Team activities
Section 1 – Summary

This report sets out information relating to the leisure and cultural activities for Children Looked After.

The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to note these plans, and offer their support to these activities.

Section 2 – Report

As Corporate Parents Harrow Council needs to ensure that Children Looked After have access to a range of Leisure and Cultural activities which enhance their knowledge, awareness, and skills as they transition into adulthood. As Children Looked After and Care leavers often have had difficult pasts and some trauma in their early years, leisure and cultural activities can enhance their self esteem and assist the development of their emotional health and their ability to form positive relationships.

Harrow’s commitment to support Children Looked After pursue leisure and cultural activities is referenced in the following documents:

- Harrows Pledge to Children Looked After
- Harrows Care Leavers Charter
- Harrows Foster care Charter
- Harrows Fostering Payment Document

The Pledge to Children Looked After outlines Harrow Council’s commitment to Looked After Children and is a written promise of how the council will support and care for each young person. This includes a commitment to support each young person pursue a hobby and an interest. This pledge is given to each CLA and is also published on the Council website. The Pledge was agreed by the Corporate Parenting Panel in 2012.

The Care Leavers Charter outlines the principles and promises the Council makes to Care leavers including a commitment to support their leisure and cultural interests. This was updated in 2015. The Foster Carers Charter was launched in 2014 and outlines the support and commitment that Harrow Council will give to Foster carers to enable them to care appropriately for children in their care. This includes a reference to supporting hobbies, leisure and cultural activities.
The Foster carers payments documents outlines the expectations regarding how foster carers payments should be spent including an element to be spent on hobbies, leisure and cultural activities.

Leisure and Cultural activities are also provided by schools. For Looked After Children these can also be discussed as part of the Personal Education Plan. The Virtual School has also provided some additional activities and supported individual young people pursue activities through the pupil premium.

Harrow Beyond Limits group for Looked After Children meets regularly and the Participation Officer has arranged a range of group activities through out the year. See attached calendar of events. They have all been well attended between 6 to 20 Children Looked After and Care leavers. These have included roller blading, ice skating, climbing, bowling, horse riding and Archery, Trampolining and Martial arts. Trips have also been made to Cirque du Soleil, football at QPR and England at Wembley, and cookery courses and restaurants. The feedback from these events has been very positive with young people noting their thanks for these events and activities being provided. Young people’s views were gathered from evaluation sheet s given out after each activity. This includes a questionnaire which will help us to plan future events.

There has been discussion regarding possible summer activities which are currently being explored. These include:

- Middlesex County Cricket apprenticeships
- Work experiences with local organisations
- Opening Doors Work experiences through the Virtual School
- Volunteering in Local shops
- National Citizenship Challenge
- Volunteering Event at Merchant Taylor School
- Barbecue at John Lyon School
- Careers workshop

CLA and Care leavers also have free access to gym and swimming at Harrow Leisure Centre and Northolt Leisure centre which has been very popular and well received.

The Youth Development Team have a range of activities which Children Looked After and Care Leavers have engaged with. See attached flyers for May half term 2106 and previous activities provided in July/August 2015.

Harrow Children Centres provide a range of service for pre school children and young mothers including different forms of play and sensory activities.

Language is Not a Barrier provide a range of activities for UASC and meet weekly at the Gayton to offer support and help to young people where there are language and cultural barriers to engagement.
Risk Management Implications

No risks identified

Legal Implications

These functions are part of our statutory responsibilities as Corporate Parents towards Children Looked After and Care Leavers.

Financial Implications

The costs of these activities are funded from existing budgets which are:

- Fostering budgets- (foster carers payments)
- Virtual school - (pupil premium)
- CLA and Care Leavers Budget.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

A range of cultural and leisure activities are a way of ensuring equalities are promoted for Children Looked After and Care Leavers and their individual and identity needs are addressed

Council Priorities

These activities are consistent with the Council priorities of protecting the vulnerable and building a better Harrow. Children Looked After and Care Leavers are a vulnerable group and require the support of the council. Through this support we also build a better Harrow.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

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<tr>
<th>Name: Jo Frost</th>
<th>Date: 1st June 2016</th>
<th>on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: Helen Ottino</td>
<td>Date: 1st June 2016</td>
<td>on behalf of the Monitoring Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ward Councillors notified:</td>
<td>YES, as it impacts on all Wards</td>
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<td>EqIA carried out:</td>
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<td>EqIA cleared by:</td>
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## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:**

Peter Tolley Head of Service Corporate Parenting  
020 8736 6943  
[Peter.Tolley@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.Tolley@harrow.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:**  
NONE