

## ***Taking it to the Next Level: Corporate Parents & Children in Care Councils be inspired – Challenges and solutions sheet 1***



### **The Challenge: Recruiting children and young people to join the children in care council and keeping everyone interested when they are involved**

Some suggestions and ideas from children in care council members and corporate parents

- Have a range of different options to participate and join in, for example have two separate councils for older and younger members; a junior in care council and older in care group. You could run a leaving care group, and also have a virtual council for those who can't or don't want to come to face-to-face meetings.
- Have information about the children in care council (and how to join) in the welcome pack for children and young people newly looked after. Produce regular newsletters; and use a children in care council website to help with promotion.
- Corporate parents, IROs, social workers, advocates, foster carers and residential staff can also promote the children in care council.
- The purpose of the children in care council has to be clear, giving young people a reason to come and get involved. Be clear on the benefits.
- Have a clear plan of work with discrete projects for the children in care council to carry out.
- Make sure that all children in care are made aware of the difference they and the children in care council have made. Feedback is really important.
- Support young people to attend, for example arranging transport. Consider the location and time of the meeting. What would help young people to attend?
- Use social media to keep in contact - text, Skype, Facebook, Jammer social network. Have interactive tools on the website such as Survey Monkey - it can be done safely and securely.

- Run events and activity days for children in care.
- Have food and refreshments at the meetings.
- Make sure that the children in care council is 70% fun and 30% work.
- Make sure there are also activities that are about being young, not just about being in care. You could do activities like cooking, ICT, drama, singing, sport or adventure days. Make use of the local authority youth or leisure facilities. Creative activities help young people to learn new skills and build confidence.
- Give young people the chance to meet other children in care to build peer support, learn from each other and swap ideas.

