THE TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE®

Stronger Foundations for "Making a difference. Growing and Evolving Together": A Process Evaluation of the re-launch of London Borough of Havering Children in Care Council

Commissioned by London Borough of Havering

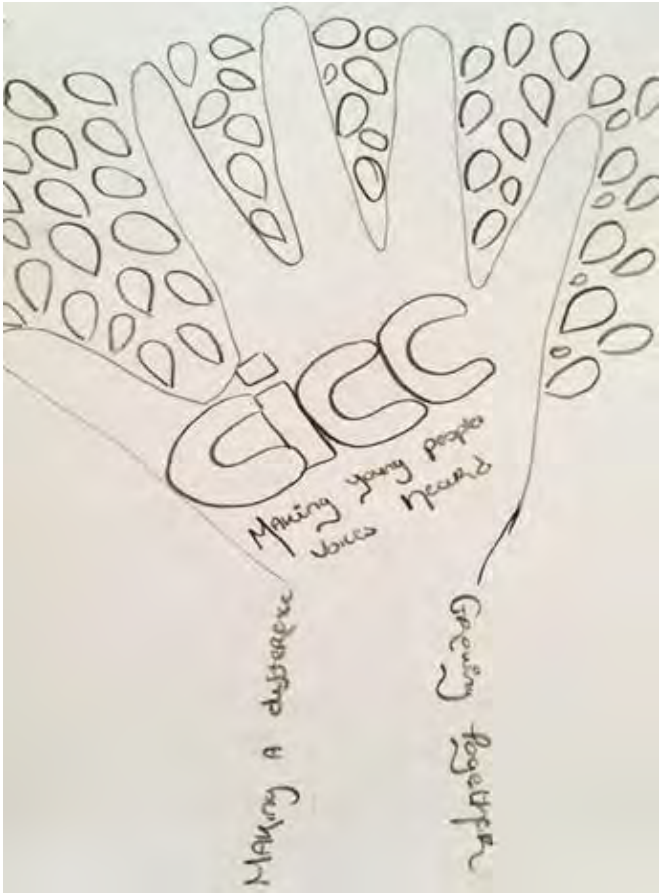
December 2015

Dr Sadie King
The Tavistock Institute
30 Tabernacle Street
London EC2A 4UE

T *+44 (0)20 7417 0407*
F *+44 (0)20 7457 0566*
E *s.king@tavinstitute.org*
W *tavinstitute.org*

A report by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. Sadie King & David Lawlor.

Evaluation participants:
Vanessa Strang Service Manager of Fostering, Adoption and Placement Team.
Helen Potter Participation Assistant. Sarah Parry Consultant
Isis Thomson Documentary Maker. Dreadlock Alien Performance Poet.
Nuala Harrington, Manager Fostering Placements Team
Sherry Kirkman Manager 12+ and Leaving Care Team
Paul Tinsley Virtual Head teacher
Elizabeth Laight, CAHMS Consultant
Chris Irving,Lead Youth Facilitator
Councillor Gillian Ford Corporate Parenting Board
Alison Fox Foster Carer
Carol Balfe Team Manager – Fostering
Deborah Branch Practice Manager Permanency Team
Elizabeth Laight CAHMS Specialist LAC Clinician
Councillor Gillian Ford Corporate Parenting Board
Gail Lopez Independent Reviewing Officer
Dr Jane Clark Specialist LAC Clinician Havering CAHMS
The Founding Members of Havering CICC.



Contents

1. Summary 3

2. Key Issues 4
   - 2.1. The Havering Context. 4
   - 2.2. Why the LBH re-launched its CICC 4
   - 2.3. What Havering needed to know: 5

3. Approach and Tools 6
   - 3.1. How? (Process Evaluation) 6
   - 3.2. Why? (Theory of Change) 6
   - 3.3. Thinking and Doing, Doing and Thinking (Action Learning) 6
   - 3.4. What is important for the children and young people? (Well-being Impact Assessment) 7
   - 3.5. How to know if we are going in the right direction (Creating an Evaluation Framework) 8
   - 3.6. Capturing the Voices (A podcast for dissemination) 8

4. How London Borough of Havering Re-launched its CICC. 9
   - 4.1. Theory of change 9
   - 4.2. Activities 11
   - 4.2.1. Resources 13
   - 4.2.2. The Re-launch event 13
   - 4.2.3. The Pledge in Havering 14
   - 4.2.4. Participation and Engagement 17
   - 4.2.5. Building resilience. 18
   - 4.2.6. Ongoing council wide strategy. 18

5. Corporate parents: Thinking and Doing, Doing and Thinking. 19
   - 5.1. Membership 19
   - 5.2. Key Themes 19
   - 5.2.1. The Pledge and accountability of Corporate Parents 20
   - 5.2.1. Accountability, access to redress and individual complaints 20
   - 5.2.2. Foster Carers 20
   - 5.2.3. Education 21
   - 5.2.4. Engaging Physical Health Services 21
   - 5.2.5. Mental Health 22
   - 5.2.1. Keeping a safe space 22

6. What is important for the children and young people? 23
   - 6.1. Key potential positive impacts on well-being identified by

corporate parents **23**
6.1. Key potential negative impacts on well-being identified by corporate parents **24**
6.2. What the young people said **25**
6.3. Well-being poems **26**

7. How to know if we are going in the right direction **28**

8. Capturing the Voices. **31**

9. Recommendations. **32**
9.1. Social worker engagement **32**
9.2. Strengthening the role of Participation Assistant **32**
9.3. Keep child centred **32**
9.4. Build the cross- council partnership and be outward looking **32**
9.5. Focus on building wider engagement **33**
9.6. Raise awareness of the corporate parenting agenda to Health partners **33**
9.7. Monitor outcomes **33**

1. Summary

The Havering Children's Services Plan 2015/2016 outlined a need 'to develop the Children in Care Council to an effective and representative voice for looked after children'. The Council invested in dedicated staff and senior leadership. The re-launch of the CICC was formally marked by a very successful event.

The re-launch was supported by the engagement of external expertise through the Mayor of London's Peer Outreach Team. The young facilitators were commissioned to provide relevant and meaningful activities to the Havering CICC members. This work gave the CICC a London-wide perspective and offered them access to wider opportunities and exposure to a diverse and vibrant community of young role models.

The re-launch team took a whole systems approach. This was activated through a multi-stakeholder Action Learning Set that provided the opportunity for cross-council learning and problem solving.

The Havering Children in Care Pledge was genuinely coproduced by the Corporate Parenting Panel and the members of the CICC. The 'living Pledge' is being taken forward by a working group tasked with embedding the Pledge in all council services.

The CICC facilitation style is evidence of a high level of awareness of the complex needs of children in care. The needs of the children are prioritised and the focus is on building resilience, supporting well-being in order to increase the capacity of young members to influence their services.

The role of 'Participation Assistant' should be re-evaluated as the CICC becomes more established. The facilitation of the CICC requires skills and experience that should be recognised formally in the post. The role requires reflective supervision and support.

The range of activities provided to the CICC are representative of national best practice. Although a core group has been established in the short time frame, there is some work to be continued in the identification of barriers to access and wider attendance.

Whilst engagement with Children and Adolescent Mental Health, the Education and Support Services and Fostering Social Work teams were very high there were gaps in engagement from physical health services and Children's Social Workers.

The Theory of Change of the CICC is robust and coherent. A Mental Well-being Impact Assessment identified key areas of potential positive and negative impact that should be monitored. An evaluation framework has been established that provides a template for the Pledge working group and the CICC to monitor their activities going forward.

Well-being poems and a podcast were created to support the voices of the young people and corporate parents that were involved in this evaluation. Link Tavistock website.

2. Key Issues

2.1. The Havering Context.

London Borough of Havering is one of the largest boroughs in Greater London covering 40 square miles, half of which lies in the protected Green Belt. Development has been mainly suburban. Havering has a population of 245,971. Havering along with Bromley is London's least ethnically diverse borough, however Havering saw the most dramatic increase in diversity between the 2001 and 2011 census of all London boroughs particularly in Black British, Asian and White Other categories.

Havering has an ageing population compared to other London boroughs (mean age 4.8 higher than London average). Growth in the number of over 85s has significantly contributed to this. The more diverse population of Havering are also younger, representing an increasingly diverse younger population of new people settling[1].

One in four jobs in the borough are paid below the London Living Wage. Havering also performs worse than the London average for GCSE attainment for pupils eligible for free school meals. It is one of only seven London boroughs in which the unemployment rate has increased between 2009-11 and 2012-14, from 5.9% to 6.5%[2].

In 2013 the number of looked after children by the London Borough of Havering was on average between 180-190. The current number at 2015 is 243. In 2013 the looked after population was 80% White British. In addition to the population of children who are looked after by the Council, there is a larger population of children who are placed in the borough by other authorities[3]. The Havering CICC is only accessible to the Council's looked after population and those that qualify for leaving care services.

2.2. Why the LBH re-launched its CICC

The intention to re-launch the CICC was set out as an action of the Havering Children's Services Plan 2015/16 'To develop the children in Care Council to be an effective and representative voice for looked after children' and contributes to the realisation of the vision and strategic priorities of the Young People's Plan:

VISION

Every child, in every part of the borough:

- *Gets the best possible start in the early years and is ready for school*
- *Attends a good school and experiences success in learning*
- *Feels safe at home, in their local area and at school*
- *Develops lifelong aspirations and grows up to be a citizen who contributes*

[1] *https://www.havering.gov.uk/Documents/Equality-and-Diversity/Demographic_and_Diversity_Profile_of_Haverings_Population_Jan-15.pdf*
[2] *http://www.londonspovertyprofile.org.uk/indicators/boroughs/havering/*
[3] *http://www.haveringdata.net/research/jsna.htm*

positively to the lives of those around them
- *Experiences the best possible health outcomes*

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:
- *Increasing the rate of children who live in poverty-free households*
- *Increasing the proportion of children at a healthy weight*
- *Improving the health, well-being and education outcomes for the most vulnerable children*

The re-launch was conceived of in the context of a changing borough, a need to ensure scarce services meet the needs of the most vulnerable, and in a way that is preventative and cost effective and in recognition that a new higher level awareness of the corporate agenda was need. However, primarily the decision to re-launch the Havering Children in Care Council was recognition that the initial implementation plan was not sustainable and that a whole systems approach was needed. The Participation of Children and Young People Participation Practice Guide 06 (published by Social Care Institute for Excellence[4]) outlines how organisations that demonstrate successful participation are those that recognise that it reaches 'beyond specific events to include a whole overarching approach'. The guide proposes that there are four elements, which need to be considered to ensure that a whole-systems approach is established: culture, structure, practice, review. London Borough of Havering team set about working through these key elements through an action learning style process evaluation.

2.3. What Havering needed to know:

The London Borough of Havering wanted to evaluate the early process of setting up their Children in Care Council in order to:

- *see how it can make statutory services more child focussed*
- *see how it can support the work of social workers*
- *understand the potential impact on the wellbeing of young people in care*
- *check that the process was implemented in accordance with the objectives of the project*
- *raise awareness of the corporate parenting agenda*

The evaluation will also provide a basis for:

- *the dissemination of the learning to other local authorities to share best practice and create networks of learning*
- *establishing a basis for future monitoring and evaluation*

[4] *http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide11/files/guide11.pdf*

3. Approach and Tools

3.1. How? (Process Evaluation)

Process evaluation is a 'theory of change' method. It focuses on the rationale, structures and procedures of an intervention. It explores 'how' and 'why' things happen rather than addressing the 'how much?' question of an impact approach. Process evaluation takes account of the fact that in the beginning of projects, the lines of causality are not necessarily clear. It can also influence for improvement and then track how the goals of the project may change as the interventions take place.

3.2. Why? (Theory of Change)

Evaluative research can be based on the theory of change underpinning the setting up of the service/organisation. Theory of Change (ToC) or the logic of intervention model maps out issues or problems a project hopes to address, actions being taken and how these will lead to the final impacts that it is set up to achieve. It provides a road map as to how the aims and objectives are intended to be achieved. In other words, it determines a theory or 'rationale' of how and why an intervention might cause an effect. This is then tested through evaluation & collecting data.

Below is a definition of the key components of ToC:

- *Context: the reason for relaunching Havering CICC*
- *Rationale: the theory or understanding as to why a fresh approach to the CICC will bring about improvement in the engagement of children and young people in care.*
- *Activities (or inputs/actions taken): target groups, partners, staff, what activities take place, resources.*
- *Short-term outputs: the immediate results of the relaunch.*
- *Interim outcomes: assessment of progress by participants e.g. learning, attitudes, motivations, skills, behaviour, actions, practice.*
- *Long-term impacts: ultimate aims and objectives of Havering CICC.*

The Havering CICC ToC was designed through discussion with the 3 primary stakeholders (the Change Consultant, the Head of Fostering, Adoption and Placement Service and the Participation Assistant or 're-launch team') this was then explored with a wider group of stakeholders (corporate parents) in the Action Learning Set.

3.3. Thinking and Doing, Doing and Thinking (Action Learning)

A facilitated Action Learning Set (4 meetings) comprised of 12 stakeholders was established and facilitated to support the ongoing learning of the evaluation and potentially be a model for implementing the recommendations. Action learning can be defined as a process in which a group of people come together to help each

other to learn from their experiences. The approach is cyclic, with action and critical reflection taking place in turn; to reflect at workshops, decide upon actions, attempt to enact these decisions, and regroup to reflect once again. The reflection is used to review the previous action and plan the next one.

Action learning is mostly used across different organisations. That is, the participants typically come from different situations, where each of them is involved in different activities and faces individual problems. Action learning uses some intended change as a vehicle for learning through reflection to improve the change process.

This was an ideal methodology for the re-launch of the CICC to bring together the corporate parents and begin to work on embedding a meaningful pledge across the whole council and its partners.

3.4. What is important for the children and young people? (Well-being Impact Assessment)

A Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment was adapted to suit the project resources and target group. Mental Well-being Impact Assessment (MWIA) is a diagnostic tool aims to orientate policy makers, commissioners, programme/project and service managers to consider in depth the wide ranging impact of proposals (from new services to implementing change) on the mental well-being of the target group[5]. The tool is a step by step process beginning with a desk based screening tool, and culminating with a full engaging multiple stakeholders together in a workshop that leads to coproduced action plans to develop the positive impacts on well-being and mitigate against any negative ones.

*Stage one of this was a depth screening process that took place over 2 days involving the re-launch team. The desktop Mental Well-being Impact Assessment (MWIA) screening tool has been designed to help people who are planning or providing policies, services, programmes or projects to begin to find out how they might make a difference to mental well-being. The process is designed to help people decide whether it's worth undertaking a more intensive MWIA involving a wide range of people: screening is the **first** stage in MWIA and is a reflection of the view of a small group of invited stakeholders but it can be a valuable standalone short assessment.*

Instead of the traditional formal full MWIA process the findings of this were then explored in a meeting of the ALS. Finally a well-being poetry workshop was designed for the young people. This was a participatory workshop where a performance poet facilitated a 'word harvest' and the writing and performance of poems based on the most important protective factors for well-being. Word harvesting involves the rapid choosing of words associated with a particular theme. The words were then used to create rhyming sentences to build up poems. In this way the young people were able to explore the concepts in an interesting and informal way through their own experiences and words.

[5] *http://www.tavinstitute.org/news/mental-well-being-impact-assessment/*

3.5. How to know if we are going in the right direction (Creating an Evaluation Framework)

It is important for the CICC going forward to be able to monitor its impacts going forward. This should be meaningful and manageable. This means that a simple evaluation framework should be designed for the CICC that is based on current understanding of key outcomes for young people, children in care, the priority impacts identified through the Theory of Change work and the Wellbeing Impact Assessment.

3.6. Capturing the Voices (A podcast for dissemination)

A sound piece for dissemination was created from recordings of interviews, reflections and recording of events. The sound piece can be widely disseminated. This method is intended to be engaging for young people, foster carers and all corporate parents.

4. How London Borough of Havering Re-launched its CICC.

4.1. Theory of change

A theory of change map was created. The key stakeholders demonstrated a clear and logical theory of change underpinning the CICC re-launch. Activities were clearly linked either directly to improving the well-being of engaged participants or the wider membership of the CICC or those that had impact on driving culture change within the wider organisation, improving the effectiveness of the corporate parenting roles.

It is important to hold in mind the scope of this evaluation and the early stage that the CICC is in. This is an action learning approach focused on process not impacts. What is being evaluated at this point is how Havering CICC re-launch is being conceptualised, resourced and managed, what are the kind of impacts that it should be monitoring in future and how engaged the CICC members are in these decisions.

THEORY OF CHANGE FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL

ISSUES

CICC is established as a statutory service but is underused. The voice of looked after children should be central to planning activities so that it can drive improved outcomes for children and young people in care.

ACTIVITIES

Relaunch fun day

Coproduce a meaningful Pledge

Inform and engage key adults e.g. foster carers and social workers.

Establish automatic membership of CICC for all of Havering's looked after children.

Coproduce guidelines and protocols for the CICC with the members

Implement a fun and meaningful programme of activities

OUTCOMES

Short Term Outcomes

Partner services actively engaged in the CICC re-launch

Clear programme of activities successfully implemented for CICC

A clear understanding of the key outcomes for the CICC is established and measures agreed.

Core group established regularly attending CICC sessions

New groups established for younger children and care leavers

An outreach programme to engage young people in CICC is implemented that successfully attracts members

Medium Term Outcomes

Improved awareness of statutory services of needs of young people in care

Social workers care plan for young people using knowledge gained through CICC

Members of CICC show improved confidence and wellbeing

Social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers and foster carers actively refer all young people to CICC

Young people attending CICC attain improved educational outcomes.

Young people in CICC with unmet health and mental needs are referred to services

Young people in CICC take up volunteering and apprenticeships

Long term Outcomes

Statutory Services continue to address the needs and improve service delivery

Young people in care have key outcomes equal to young people not in care

KEY

Well-being of young people

Corporate Parenting

Assumptions/pre-condition

CIC have greater incidence/risk of:

- *Mental health conditions*
- *Poor physical health*
- *Sexual exploitation*
- *Exclusion from mainstream school*
- *Poor educational outcomes*
- *Unemployment/ poor quality employment*

External factors

Funding restraints
More diverse and changing borough
More children in care

4.2. Activities

From May to September 2015 a number of activities linking to Theory of Change outcomes were successfully planned and executed.

Date	Numbers Attending	Activity/Aim of meeting	Immediate Outcome	TOC Outcomes short term(S) Medium term (M) Long term (L)
26th March	5	Meeting at Nandos for meal out. Aim to decide location, times and frequencies of CICC meetings.	Some new members of the group attended. Discussed venues and aims of CiCC. Agreed on venue – My Place. Agreed time to meet every week.	S
6th April	5	Start-up meeting/ Workshop to create ground rules and discuss roles.	Meaningful discussion on appropriate language and behaviour and shared responsibility. Created ground rules, guidelines and began to discuss roles in the CICC. 1 member volunteered to be secretary.	S
13th April	6	Session on branding design.	'Getting voices heard'. Designed brand with Council Communications team advertising material to all social work teams.	S
20th April	5	Continued work on branding.	Created tag line for the group 'Growing and evolving together'.	S
27th April	5	Planning for re-launch event Feedback on 'View Point'.	Decided to be referred to as 'the founding members' Changed information on re-launch advertisement. Contributed to consultation on 'View Point'	S
11th May	6	Re-launch planning.	Created Map for the event. Decided catering for the event. Created new group rules on speaking in turn.	S
18th May	7	New structured meeting with catch-up session at beginning. CICC core business. Activities extending into the youth club.	Reflection on skills they have, and skills they want to develop.	M
30th May	200 +	Re Launch event	High quality successful event (see section xx)	S
1st June	6	Interview question design for 'Head of Children's Services Post.	Following engaging discussion on what drives a candidate for this role questions were agreed and sent to the interview panel.	S
8th June	7	Session on ice breakers.	New member attended. Members requested to take turns at chairing the group. Members commented the proposed ice breakers were too childlike. Group agreed to continue work on structure of CICC meetings.	S
10th June	4	Head of Children's Services Interview Panel.	Successful participation of 4 young people on interview panel. Vouchers provided for reward and recognition.	S
15th June	6	Exercise exploring taking up CICC roles.	Session facilitated by Mayors Peer Outreach Team 'Tree of Power'.	S
22nd June	6	Defining new structure.	A new structure discussed and agreed Sessions run from 4.30 to 7.30 every Monday evening. Time split between	S

			1/ greeting/checking in and eating *2/Council business* *3/ Art/creative activity* *4/ Free time – games room*	
29th June	*6*	*Branding workshop.*	*Visit from 'Make Do' about branding proposal written from information collected on 30th May.* *Revised the brand according to CICC members input.*	*S*
		West Ham football coaching sessions.	*Three members of the CICC participated.*	*S*
6th July	*5*	*Reflection on progress.*	*Discussion on what has been achieved so far..* *Branding of CICC finalised.*	*S*
13th July		*Contribution to Council consultation 'People too'.*	*Members contributed to feedback on how young people access youth service.* *Birthday celebration cake for one member*	*S*
20th July		*Outreach strategy.*	*Discussion on peer outreach to build the CICC fed into outreach strategy.* *Need for advertising agreed.* *Discussion on food budget and decisions.*	*S*
27th July	*2*	*Informal meeting held because many unable to attend this session.*		
3rd August	*6*	*Discussions on: branding* *Education and Training.*	*Where we are.* *Success Tree! exercise to reflect on work achieved.* *Planning new AD Head of Children's Service visit.* *Suggested trying out different foods.* *Caribbean food and takeaway suggested.* *Discussion around education and further training.*	*S M*
17th August	*6*	*Exploring the role of CICCs.*	*Group clarified their understanding of referral in and out process to the group.* *Watched NCB video on CICCs and discussed being consulted, raising issues and advocacy.*	*S*
24th August	*3*	*Developing projects.*	*Discussed how the CICC can be effective by deciding on priority issues that affect all young people in care in Havering. Discussed Corporate Parenting Panel, Youth Parliament. Agreed visits by a member of the CPP.*	*S*
7th September	*4*	*The Directors Pledge.*	*Discussion of the Pledge and how it can be implemented.*	*S*
14th September	*3*	*Evaluation participation.*	*Informed consent and preparation for wellbeing poetry workshop by the Tavistock Institute.*	*S*
21st September	*3*	*CICC terms of reference.*	*Terms of reference agreed and discussion of the decision making process.*	*S*
28th September	*4*	*Preparation for City Hall event and new AD- Head of Children's Services.*	*Group met with project lead for the City Hall project.* *Letters written by the Children in Care Council to the new Assistant Director – Head of Children's Services.*	*S*
5th October	*3*	*Preparation for City Hall event.* *Monthly Report.*	*Group met with project lead for the City Hall project.* *Agree to focus on one Pledge point per quarter.* *Discussion on how to involve looked after children in Havering in the Pledge.*	*S*
12th October	*5*	*Preparation for City Hall event.*		
	6	*City Hall Event.*	*Attended City Hall event. Contributed to discussions. Played podcast made by Tavistock Institute evaluation. Answered questions about Havering CICC to audience.*	*S M*
		Care Leavers Group Launched.		
		Younger members Group Launched.		

The quality of the re-launch event was captured in the following observation[1].

The Mayors Peer Outreach Team are leading most of the activities. There are different rooms for different activities:

- Cake decorating room.
- Design your ideal meeting room.
- Preschool soft play and singing room.
- A games room with pool, table tennis, table football, games console and graffiti wall.
- A room for two feedback activities 'what does care mean to you' and 'design your ideal social worker'.
- The café has breakfast and tea coffee for all staff and is busy preparing the lunch.
- In the foyer there is a clown with balloons, nail painting, and a there is a circus troupe setting up in the stage (large room).

I meet "the youngest foster carer in London'" who is part of the Mayors peer outreach team. We chat. She says she lives in South London where her and her mother foster children. She said that she was very impressed that Havering are making the CICC a priority and relaunching it. She said that she would be going back to her Council and finding out about the CICC.

A young care leaver explains that he is very anxious about how he is going to maintain his involvement now that he is moving into his own accommodation and he is joining the army. Sally reassures him. I am impressed about how well the member of staff knows him. I also think about how long term staff, knowing the families creates layers and years of informal connection, love and involvement that are hard to capture and trace in evaluating an intervention.

Sally makes the point that Sam's involvement in the CICC raises an important question. As how do care leavers continue to access this support when their lives become busy as they move in to adulthood? The demands of adult life create greater need for this kind of support.

I chat to one of the Mayor's outreach team. She is studying sociology and her project supervisor was an

4.2.1. Resources

The CICC was re-launched in a time of austerity for local services, with pressure to cut costs and maximise available resources wisely and creatively. London Borough of Havering achieved this through a close partnership with the Youth Service. The co-location of services at the new community MyPlace Centre has created the opportunity for the youth service to work alongside the Participation Officer to create a safe, structured and fun environment with skilled facilitation.

The short-term investment in a part time specialist consultant was intended to support both the Participation Assistant and work within the structures of the Council to raise awareness and embed genuine engagement with a CICC. This also created new resources and opportunities that the Council will be able to take forward. For example, the commissioning of the Mayors Outreach Team resulted in high quality, trained facilitators, a plan of future activities and exposure to a wider and diverse group of role models. This resulted in five members of the group being invited to attend a City Hall event on outcomes for looked after children where they represented the Havering CICC re-launch experience.

The CICC that had formerly existed was led by a non-dedicated post with limited resources. The re-launch investment included a senior manager dedicating time and resources, plus a full-time Participation Assistant seconded from the Early Help Service dedicated entirely to facilitation of the CICC.

Investment in an action learning process evaluation created a corporate parenting thinking space in the Council. The different Council stakeholders invested a large amount of resource by enabling the participation of key staff in 3 hour long reflective meetings to share perspectives and create a shared understanding of the CICC role in improving Council responses to the needs of looked after children.

4.2.2. The Re-launch event

A re-launch celebration was arranged in May 2015 to raise awareness about the importance of the whole system (children and young people, foster carers, and all corporate parents) in improving the well-being of looked after children in Havering. The event marked a new beginning for the CICC in a new location with new

anthropologist. She did a study of White working class girls. She is collecting feedback from children on what is important to them on paper labels and tying them to a tree. A simple but powerful idea. Suddenly there is a burst of energy and noise. A flash mob dance organised by the peer outreach team, a local community arts and performance worker.

The next room I visit is 'Design your own social worker'. This is facilitated by a peer outreach worker too. He asks what care means to you, what you want to be when you grow up. One of the members of the CICC talks to me about acceptance "what is within is without" meaning self-acceptance is core. He writes this in his feedback on 'what care means to you' and puts it up on the board.

I speak with foster carers who have been fostering in Havering since 1983. The foster mother has recently recovered from a serious illness. They came with their ex foster daughter who is now living independently. The foster mum said the CICC will give the children and young people a voice. The young woman (care leaver) said she has been involved in participation in the past and she has loved it. She has given a talk to new foster carers about her experience of going through bad times and coming through as a successful adult. The foster mother said that children in care have an unfair bad reputation and many young people go through times of rebellion 'they don't look at their own children'. She told me that all the foster carers knew each other, especially if they had been around for a while.

Another young man on the Mayors peer outreach team said that he likes to work with young people and see the difference in their confidence and how through their work he can help them recognise their own potential and possibilities, "Everybody has potential."

The under 5s room is really high quality with a children's' entertainer who sings and plays with the children with puppets. The babies and toddlers are highly engaged with her or playing in the ball pit. A member of the CICC (young man) chats to me about the aims of the CICC. For him having confidence is a key concept. He explains that he has been bullied and that he is learning that their perception of him is not important. What is important is what he thinks about himself. He agrees to

resources. The event was extremely well attended and resourced with high quality entertainment combined with meaningful participation focused activities.

The attendance monitoring data recorded over 165 attendees:

- *65+ children in care*
- *45 foster carers*
- *Over 35 Havering staff*
- *20 staff and foster carers children*

The event was attended by fostering and adoption social workers IRO's and unfortunately only a few children's social workers. There was considerable support shown by the attendance of senior management and local councillors.

Many of the activities were led by the Mayor of London's Peer Outreach Team. This is a diverse group of young people aged 16 to 25 who influence the Mayor's policies and implement projects that improve the lives of young Londoners from disadvantaged backgrounds. As part of the re-launch the Peer Outreach Team were engaged in the Havering CICC as a project to provide support for activities over the next year.

Activities at the event included art work that was used to design the branding for the Havering CICC. The other feedback sessions on design of meeting rooms, social workers and 'what care means to me' were fed back to services or developed into future activities.

4.2.3. The Pledge in Havering

Good practice guidance for setting up a Children in Care Council (NYAS & NCERCC, 2008) outlines the importance of the 'Director's Pledge' shared by health, education and social care. This should be designed to be appropriate and meaningful for each borough to ensure that a CICC does not become a tokenistic body.

The Havering team designed a simple and meaningful Pledge working with the Corporate Parenting Panel

be part of the sound piece we proposed for the evaluation.
I go upstairs to get coffee. In the queue I meet the Assistant Director of Children's Services. She said the evaluation was important to give it endorsement. We chatted about the difference between process and impact evaluation and recent changes in adoption and fostering. She then introduces me the virtual head teacher. This role involves monitoring the school performance of all children in care in the borough. He said he had a lot of hope that the CICC would be a way of getting feedback for his service. Before he only had the Viewpoint survey.

I get lunch and sit down to eat with a social worker. She lives locally and has brought along her young son. She said the CICC event was good and she always comes to the events (used to be an annual fun day). She said that not all young people and children in care will be able to engage with these activities. They are all at different points in their lives Vis a Vis social services. Some may be angry at being removed from their birth families or other decisions that have been made about their lives. But that doesn't mean that they won't want to be involved next year or another time. She said the informal events were good for the children in care system because it was an opportunity for roles to be relaxed "I would have liked one of my young people to have been here today to see me as a mother, a human not just a social worker who comes to court".
I go to the cake decorating room. Two girls are in deep concentration with decorating their fairy cakes. I meet a local councillor in here. She makes an insightful comment "It's not just about what we think is right for young people, it's what makes them feel happy inside" I talk to her about the mental wellbeing impact assessment and she says it is really good idea. "Being happy inside is the most important thing" "it's not black and white". She said the evaluation will help the team to drive the CICC forward.

Its 1.30 now and some younger children are getting a bit over exciting playing in the lifts and bursting balloons. I go into the main hall where there are circus performers teaching plate spinning. A whole family is doing this and it's really sweet. Some older (young teens) girls are having their faces painted.
There is a soft play area and parents are clustering chat as activities appear to be winding down.

and the CICC members. At a focus group held at the start of the CPP meeting members and officers demonstrated a high level of commitment to the need for an empowered CICC and a Pledge that has meaning for all councils.

What do you hope to achieve/expect by setting up the Children in Care?

The panel members said they wanted to ensure the CICC was a transparent and safe place for children to hold children's services to account and influence policy. There was an intention to directly meet them and create a two way communication and help them take up leadership roles (for example by making connections with the Youth Parliament). They also hoped to better engage foster carers.

How will the CICC help the children of Havering?

It was felt that a well-resourced CICC would improve the identity, sense of belonging and confidence of the children and young people. So they would 'feel part of society'. It would be important that the CICC meetings were fun and exciting as well as business orientated. Ultimately the CICC and a living Pledge would lead to improved outcomes for children in care.

How will the CICC help staff in their Corporate Parenting Role?

The Corporate Parenting Panel said that outcomes depended on the ability of the different departments to understand their role and contribution to corporate parenting. It was important that the CICC held clear expectations across the council.

The panel members were asked to describe the CICC if it is working well and if it is working not so well.

A CICC working well would be where the children are engaged and there are consistent or growing numbers of children participating. There should also be evidence of inclusivity in terms of disability, and ethnicity etc. It was felt that a strong effective CICC would result in 'happier foster carers' because there would be a 'more responsive service'. A CICC working well would result in honest communication where the members are able to put issues forward confidently. It

The graffiti wall hasn't really worked. This is where people were supposed to give feedback on the event. A young man asks me for a game of table tennis. We play and chat about the CICC.

I wander round the rooms again before I leave. I see on the notice board for 'what care means for me' a post it with very young writing "no more hurting". The words pierce the upbeat atmosphere. I ask a member of the Mayors peer outreach team what they will do with the feedback now. He says they will take it back to develop more workshops with more depth. Suddenly a very energetic facilitator bursts in and asks "who wants to make a sound recording?" 3-6-7-8 year olds and their foster carers follow him like the pied piper. I follow too. We enter a purpose built sound recording studio and they record Happy by Pharrell Williams. More groups follow to record their singing.

will be a creative process, engaging the shy and withdrawn children as well as those with more skills and confidence. It will continue to engage with members into their adulthood. If a CICC is not working well it would be obvious in that there would be no engagement, no communication, "it just exists on paper", "children not involved."

What would you do if it were having difficulties?

This question created a discussion about the importance of monitoring progress through performance indicators (qualitative and quantitative). The importance of good facilitation and senior management driving a culture change was emphasised. Hearing the views of children, social workers and foster carers on the progress of the CICC was considered to be important.

The construction of the Havering Pledge

The CPP were facilitated to reflect on what a meaningful Pledge would be for Havering. The CICC re-launch team explained that the London wide pledge is very long and read more like a legal document. Havering is to have a pledge that is based on the 5 outcomes for children that is specific and simple to understand. "A pledge is a promise, a deep commitment. What promises could we make to the children of Havering?"

The panel then were engaged in a group discussion and pair work about what outcomes they would want for their own children and what they thought would be the basis of that happening from a corporate parenting perspective and what promises would need to be made to achieve these?

Examples of pledges by other Local Authorities were looked at. There was some discussion on what is the difference between a policy and a pledge. Can our pledge be linked to our strategies? There was discussion on the pledge "as being a heartfelt commitment that involves feeling". The panel then carried out an exercise in trios looking at other LA pledges with the task of agreeing 3 pledges that they liked for Havering. There was some discussion on the pledges versus a legal document – what are we committing the council to? From the trio work a vote took place and the meeting engaged in a lively debate.
Three facilitated discussions then took place at the CICC meetings. Participants were asked to think about what they thought was important and to review the Pledge draft statements from the CPP and the London wide Pledge. From these activities a final list of 5 Pledge points were agreed. The CICC members and CPP had almost identical ideas about what the pledge points should be.

1. **We will support you to succeed and achieve in all areas of your life**
2. **You will always have a voice and we will listen to you**
3. **We promise to accept you for who you are and to treat you as an individual**
4. **We promise to explain things to you both when we can and when cannot make the changes you want**
5. **We promise to act as responsible parents would and keep this in our minds when making decisions about your life**

4.2.4. Participation and Engagement

The Havering CICC relaunch team provided a range of relevant and fun activities for the CICC meetings. The Mayors Peer Outreach Team that provided the opportunity for outward looking and positive identity forming activities. Highlights in this short time period from March to September included involvement in the re-launch event, designing interview questions and being part of the interview panel for the new role of Assistant Director of Children's Services. Five members of the CICC also attended an event at City Hall 'Life Beyond Care'. This was hosted by the Peer Outreach Team in partnership with People's Palace Projects and Queen Mary University. Five representatives from Havering Council attended including an elected member (Chair of Corporate Parenting Panel) and the Assistant Director. The young people presented their evaluation podcast and responded to a question and answer session.

These activities involved skills and confidence building opportunities that authentically amplified the voices of children in care in the borough and wider. The quality of activities were in line with national best practice as recently evidenced in the evaluation of national regional events hosted by The National Children's Bureau on behalf of the Department for Education [6].

Foster carers were beginning to refer children to the CICC and it is planned that this referral mechanism is greatly strengthened. Social work teams, in particular the fostering team have been involved and there are plans to strengthen this relationship and involve IROs more directly.

In line with good practice[7], Havering have decided to create age specific sub-groups of the CICC to provide more tailored access and activities. The three groups are 12-17 year olds (the 'founding members' established at the time of the evaluation) held every week, a new 18+ Care Leavers meeting fortnightly, and a 8-11 year old group at a Children's Centre based in a different location once a month on a Saturday. From February 2016, the Participation Assistant will meet every child that comes into care to introduce the CICC to them and to give them a membership pack. All existing looked after children will be given a CICC welcome pack through distribution of this by the Independent Reviewing Officer at LAC reviews when appropriate, therefore ensuring wider distribution.

[6] *http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/1209723/cicc_evaluation_final_report_-_march_2015.pdf*
[7] *ANV (2013) CICC National Mapping Report 2012-2013*

4.2.5. Building resilience.

The CICC re-launch team co-produced with the members a structure for the CICC meeting that includes an introductory and 'checking in' reflective session named 'Hello and how are you?' This is considered very important in the context of the newly forming and a quite fragile group. Many London CICCs are comprised of older children, often care leavers, Havering wanted to be able to be inclusive of all its looked after children, so making a safe space where problems can be shared and a positive identity around being in care can be formed.

In this the Participation Assistant, consultant and the co-facilitating youth worker described how it has been important to draw on a range of group work skills and sensitivity to working with the realities of children in care. This is in no way a therapeutic group but the position of trust the facilitators are in with the vulnerable young people, and recognition of the inevitability of sensitive issues being raised in the course of being asked for their view has required considerable reflection on managing a safe space and building a resilient group that are able to represent the wide views of the looked after population.

The Havering team demonstrated a commitment to working with the needs of the young people as and when they arise. Confidential examples of difficult issues arising were discussed in the ALSs. In addressing this they have sought closer working with the CAMHS.

4.2.6. Ongoing council wide strategy.

The current plan to embed the Pledge and ensure the Havering CICC voice is genuinely heard and has impact is to drive this through the Children's Service Improvement Board. It has been recommended by the Re-launch team that a working group be established.

5. Corporate parents: Thinking and Doing, Doing and Thinking.

5.1. Membership

There were 4 monthly meetings of the ALS for 3 hours. The membership of the ALS represented a cross section of the Council and partners and one foster carer. The group recognised itself as representing 'corporate parents' of London Borough of Havering and in the first meeting set itself the primary task of 'Providing momentum, direction and energy to help the CICC to evolve and grow so that their voices are authentically heard so that the whole council will be a stronger corporate parent'. 'Evolve and grow' was a term taken from the core group of 'founding members' in their discussion of their purpose.

Three hours of time is a high level of commitment in a local authority and the membership and active engagement in this ALS is testament to the high level of commitment to the CICC re-launch. Most of the participants attended 2 or 3 of the Action Learning Set meetings.

Manager Placements Team
Manager 12+ and Leaving Care Team
Virtual Head teacher
Children in Care Council Manager (Consultant)
CAHMS Consultant
Lead Youth Facilitator
Councillor Chair Corporate Parenting Board
Foster Carer
Team Manager – Fostering Support and Development
Practice Manager Permanency Team
Participation Assistant
Service Manager of Fostering, Adoption and Placements

5.2. Key Themes

The group set its own agenda and engaged in wide ranging discussions reflecting on a material from the evaluation, updates from the Participation Assistant and expert led discussions (e.g. educational outcomes by Havering Virtual Head Teacher and mental health outcomes by a CAMHS worker). The quality of the discussions was reflective, rich and the group presented challenges and solutions. Traditional minutes were not taken and only key themes were recorded as a reminder of previous discussions. The group was facilitated by TIHR in a reflective style rather than chaired by a senior member of staff to emphasise learning and not performance. The group were able to have honest and difficult conversations about resources and gaps in provision and knowledge. Below is a summary of the

key themes.

5.2.1. The Pledge and accountability of Corporate Parents

The Pledge was discussed as being particularly important in bringing the work of social workers back to the core needs of the child. 'The child gets lost in the statutory requirements'. There was a constant theme cross cutting all topics of how to keep the Pledge alive in all services.

Whilst it was agreed that that the responsibility lies with the Corporate Parenting Panel there was a discussion around how to continue work in a reflective style. The Board discussions were perhaps a too a high level and a political structure to be able to have reflective discussions and tease out the barriers and enablers to an influential CICC.

The risk of the CICC becoming tokenistic was a constant theme. The difference between the 'language of need' and the 'language of politics' was raised as a barrier to genuine communication. The participants talked about how children and young people speak in a straightforward and direct way, which can clash with the culture of large public body. It was felt that continued learning about the quality of the Council's listening to the CICC was required.

5.2.1. Accountability, access to redress and individual complaints

The group discussed the need for realistic expectations and setting of boundaries. This was both in terms of the overall infrastructure of children's social care in Havering and the new roles for the young people. For services and the CICC there is a lot to learn about dialogue, the scope of conversations and power. The idea that 'the good parent (corporate) sets boundaries' was explored and that part of that meant that the CICC will need to learn about the difference between influencing and demanding. The group explored the role of the CICC in dealing with complaints.

Individual complaints need a process through the CICC. Complaints may often not connect with strategic issues that affect everyone. The point was made that even if this system is effective in dealing with an individual complaint, it is influencing systems change that is important. For example, one example arising from a CICC meeting was discussed in the ALS. This led to reflection on how a high turnover of social workers and high workloads are a threat to timely and appropriate communication of changes to young people.

This led to reflection on the importance of young people and children in care having access to a range of corporate parents that can advocate on their behalf. For example a trusted school staff member, youth workers, or the Independent Reviewing Officer in their continuous relationship with a child.

5.2.2. Foster Carers

The dependent relationship between the corporate parents and the foster carers was a reoccurring theme. With a foster carer in attendance at 3 of the meetings the

quality of the voices and their different priorities was audible. The foster carer was listened to in the group discussions but at times there was clearly frustration with systems that were unresponsive to the immediate needs of the children and young people. It was recognised in the group that when the corporate parent is weak the foster carer is less able to cope. The need to engage foster carers in the corporate parenting agenda is both practical in terms of getting young people information about the CICC and strategic in terms of including the voice of experience outside of the restraints of politics and organisational culture.

5.2.3. Education

The Virtual Head Teacher was highly engaged in the re-launch of the CICC and saw this as an opportunity to learn about the barriers the looked after child population experience and to engage the virtual school governors in problem solving these issues through the Education and Support service.

The ALS was used as an opportunity to share information with other corporate parents about the education outcomes and issues for children in care in Havering. There have been excellent results in KS1 and KS2 results this year but GCSES attainment for children in care in Havering remain poor. There have been great improvements in exclusion rates over the past four years both nationally and locally.

The group discussed accountability and the Pupil Premium. The voice of the child and the foster carer in those decisions was raised. The foster carer said that "we want the school to be accountable for what the money taken out on the child's behalf is spent on". The role of the CICC in this was discussed. The virtual head teacher said that the e-Pep could be updated with a field for the foster carer to sign.

There was a discussion about NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training between 16 and 24 years) in the LAC population. This raised the question of how to balance raising achievement and aspirations and for those not achieving government targets of 5 A-C GCSEs should there be more of an investment in alternative education providers, apprenticeships and training. The Education and Support Service now has virtual governors. This was seen as a forum where these ideas can be discussed and progressed.

5.2.4. Engaging Physical Health Services

In the first meeting it was recognised that the MWIA screening did not deal with Physical Health needs in enough detail and that the group would dedicate a session to how the Pledge could be embedded in health services and how the CICC could be both a means to include children and young people in care in health commissioning decisions and a way for them to access them through the MyPlace centre.

The location at MyPlace represents an ideal way to link health closer to needs and voices of young people in care. The centre includes health rooms and is a location for community health information and advice, particularly for young people.

Although health representatives were invited to the ALS they were unable to attend. Health inequalities for children and young people in care are a significant issue nationally and it is important that going forward Havering Council engage the Clinical Commissioning Group in the Pledge and re-launch of the CICC to address local issues.

5.2.5. Mental Health

A CAMHS worker led a discussion on how the service currently works with social workers to identify fragile foster care placements. They provide targeted and bespoke early intervention out in the community that would not be available through the usual referral processes where they may not meet the eligibility criteria.

The CAMHS representative expressed the service's commitment to working in this way with the boroughs looked after children and the possibility of establishing a referral pathway with the CICC. The group discussed the possibility of the CICC facilitators learning through collaboration and improving their skills and awareness of mental health prevalence of looked after children and early intervention needs.

5.2.1. Keeping a safe space

The Havering CICC involved young people who were vulnerable, not used to being heard and not in such a well-resourced and diverse setting as inner London boroughs. The aspiration of the Havering CICC was to involve all young people in care, not just the most articulate and able, to be open to challenging behaviour and vulnerabilities and to foster positive communication and emotional wellbeing. Havering CICC was conceptualised as a place where resilience is built, not only a place to comment on services, socialise and be referred to other services.

Food Translation

See, sometimes in life I don't mean to be rude,
Sometimes I don't like your food,
Sometimes it's not about the pay,
Sometimes I only meet one meal a day,
Sometimes I'm feeling hungry in my tummy,
Sometimes I just want some food, mummy,
Sometimes it's knowing when you're full,
Sometimes it's push and sometimes it's pull,
Sometimes a buffet, I eat it in 5 minutes,
Sometimes I got the bowl and I just jump in it ,
Sometimes I have porridge that's cold and hot, once I start I do eat a lot,
Sometimes I don't know when to stop, like when I open a bottle of the fizzy pop,
Sometimes I like loads of flavours but sometimes it's about eating behaviours,
Sometimes it's about improprieties; some people don't eat because they got social anxieties,
Some people eat for miles and miles, eating spaghetti with different styles,
Sometimes they eat toast with jam, I eat it differently depending on where I am,
Sometimes it's the food of the nation, I don't need the interpreter, I need some food translation,
Sometimes it's about nourishment, sometimes the potatoes are hard like cement,
Sometimes I just look and ask why, I'm not gonna' eat that family sized pie,
Sometimes, I don't mean to be rude but don't exercise my right to food,
Sometimes it's about me and you, no-one else can decide what you do,
Sometimes it's all about your voice, when it comes to freedom, it's freedom of choice.

6. What is important for the children and young people?

The MWIA was used to find out what could be the potential impacts of the new CICC on the mental well-being of the children and young people. It was important to find this out in order to measure impacts that were meaningful for the young people and the local service. After carrying out a screening process exploring evidence based protective factors for wellbeing, these were explored and refined by the Action Learning Set.

*The desktop Mental Well-being Impact Assessment (MWIA) screening tool has been designed to help people who are planning or providing policies, services, programmes or projects to begin to find out how they might make a difference to mental well-being. The process is designed to help people decide whether it is worth undertaking a more intensive MWIA involving a wide range of people: screening is the **first** stage in MWIA and is a reflection of the view of a small group of invited stakeholders but it can be a valuable standalone short assessment.*

6.1. Key potential positive impacts on well-being identified by corporate parents

In Havering the most important potential impacts on the wider determinants of wellbeing were local democracy, access to education and employment, their ability to challenge discrimination, and healthy eating.

For young people, especially those who are Looked After the opportunity to have influence in social and political arena is very powerful, transforming their experience of dependency and helplessness.

Education is widely recognised as having the ability to change life outcomes for children and young people. In Havering the educational achievement of children in care is below the national average. The close engagement of the Virtual Head Teacher and governor with the CICC has created an opportunity for change.

The CICC is conceived with open boundaries, automatic membership and engaged with London-wide activities. Havering is the least diverse borough of London, but in the younger age groups, this is changing. The CICC is seen as an opportunity to work with young people around diversity and inclusion.

Many Looked After Children have a difficult relationship with food, resulting from neglect and the impact of living in different homes with different norms around food. Through developing an understanding of healthy choices and exploring the relational aspect of food offering the possibility of positive long term relationship with food the CICC transforms possible health outcomes.

By sharing stories and building relationships with other young people in care it is possible to create a positive identity about being in care. This sense of belonging is a key potential impact of the CICC on the participants' well-being. This also supports self-esteem and the building of positive relationships.

The CICC is designed as a safe space where young people are supported through difficult feelings and situations. Facilitators have training in group work, are highly skilled and experienced in working with children and young people with a wide range of complex needs and are sensitive to the issues that children in care face.

Learning about how the council works could foster a realistic perspective on the relationship between the state and citizens and their ability to influence decisions for themselves and other young people. The CICC is a place where the participants can take up positive roles and learn about role behaviours and boundaries.

6.1. Key potential negative impacts on well-being identified by corporate parents

Positive impact can only happen if the CICC is not used as tokenistic tick box exercise for statutory or other engagement with young people in care activities. Abuse of this system may result in disillusionment and disempowerment that could have long term detrimental impacts on trust in official structures.

Having a sense of control is an important protective factor. However, they have been expected to be more independent in care than their peers not in care. It was therefore felt that it was particularly important to recognise the potential trap of allowing the CICC to become yet another demand on them to look after themselves.

It was important that the young people were engaged in positive explorative conversations about identity and diversity. For example, comments, or incidents that touch upon gender, race, disability and sexual orientation are an opportunity to challenge discrimination and stereotypes. For this reason it was considered that without ongoing quality supervision the CICC could become a place where prejudice thrives.

Will they listen to us?

I might as well talk to myself at the back of the bus,
I wanna know will they listen to us?
Claire always asked 'why am talking to myself'
Will my ideas be left sitting on the shelf?'
Mahar asked do they really care, while Jacob says nothing and just sits there and stares
To really listen to us they have to open up their ears
Maybe they will confront an avenue of fears
Each of us has a hidden personality
Live what you learn that's kinaesthetic existentiality
Just landed here words seem so strange
Just like a big issue seller asking for change
You not decided you just sit there and hover
I always knew you were never gonna bovver
You listen so much, you kick up a fuss
Shall we put advertising on the side of a bus?
Will you pick up my words like I pick up litter
Will you listen to me if I tweet it on twitter
When you listen when will you look
Will it be after 50 posts of Face book
You want to listen to me but you don't know who I am
I'll tell you in an instance on Instagram

Belonging

Roots are there to make you feel strong,
To keep you safe and to make you feel you belong.
Grounded, like concrete meets cement,
On the ground here right in the place I meant.
The place I live, the place I learn,
The place I loose and the place I earn.
Sometimes I belong to more than one place,
I warm towards the sunshine of a smile on my face.
I'm local, that's whats meant to be, accent is my vocal identity.
I belong to a place I know is there,
An area I know I'll find someone to care.
A place I can feel like a queen or a king,
Where I can have an opinion on Hav-er-ring!
Somewhere if I don't win, I know I won't loose,
Bolted on, anchored down, super glue and screws.
A place is part of who I really am.
Best in the west, veggie or ham. (context written after pizza!)

A potentially negative impact could be that the CICC is given the expectation of delivering support that is supposed to be core to social work and becomes a back-filler. If CICC is used in this way core life skills such as financial skills will be negatively impacted on and not improved. Boundary management needed in order to ensure that the young people do not get caught between systems resulting in their needs not being met.

Some young people are naïve to the political nature of the Council meetings and strategies. They may also experience discomfort around dealing with conflict and clear relationships. There is therefore a potential mismatch in communication styles as the nature of communication by the council is political and the language of communication from young people is need.

6.2. What the young people said

From a focus group of the CICC members young people said that they liked the facilitators and other members, they enjoyed the 'debates' and found the conversations meaningful. They believed what they said at the CICC had an impact. They reflected that a lot of work had gone on around communicating with each other and respecting each other's views "We do a lot of chatting and try to understand other people".

When asked what they would change about the CICC the main point was for the group to grow in numbers. They had some suggestions such as more trips and having music. They also had practical solutions such as advertising and separating boys from girls so that sensitive topics could be discussed without embarrassment.

When asked about the Havering Pledge their main question was "Will they stand by it?" They then talked about their position of disempowerment "We get moved around and have little choice" "We would like to not feel so powerless". For them this meant having more of say in decisions made directly about them. The young people did not give any indication that they had participated in the construction of the

Diversity

Spare me no pride spare me no pity,
We going under water to a diverse city.
Just like a red onion this place has layers,
Those on the subs bench and those who are players.
Echoes of 234 voices,
From Ford Fiesta to Rolls Royce's,
A rainbow of languages tripped off a tongue.
50% are old and 50% are young.,
A place where we recognise young and old faces,
A place where we tag strange and fond places.
There's a Hindu in Harold Wood
A Sikh in Harold Hill
A hundred running streams in a place where water's still.
So many pointers to the place where I am from,
All streaming into the river Ro,
We're East of East and were still East Enders.
Here we recognise a multiple of genders.
One happy family from a thousand kin,
Patchwork of colours not judged by your skin.

Jobs and training

I can be a climber at the bottom of Cheddar gorge,
Or I can design for Asda, because my name is George,
I could control my temper be an MMA cage fighter.
Or be the best cognitive psychological writer.
I could be a nail technician, peddling visions of beauty,
Or I could be a gamer answering my call of duty,
I may find a career painting pictures in the Arts,
Or I could be a surgeon, transplanting hearts.
I could be the new big thing, winner of X-Factor,
Or I could get rural, ploughing fields in a tractor.
I could be a salesman, a profit margin charmer,
Or I could be a queen who loves the latest drama.
I could be a dancer, a circus Milee twerker,
Or I could get a PhD- become a social worker,
I could be anything I want if I work hard enough,
Because it's not about the project, no it's all about the love.
If I knuckle down and do it, I could really reach my goal,
I can be anything, I know it! In my heart

Pledge, only that they were aware of it. They were instrumental to its design and several Monday evenings were used working on the initial formation of the ideas behind them. At each stage of its development there was continuous review with the CiCC members.

They said their aspirations for the CICC going forward were to expand membership, to be the basis for some kind of enterprise "to be a successful business" and to be a safe space for expression "to help release feelings".

6.3. Well-being poems

The next challenge was engaging the young people in a discussion on the key potential positive and negative impacts. A traditional MWIA workshop of small group discussions and action planning seemed too abstract so it was adapted into a poetry workshop as a way of exploring the impacts and amplifying their voices. The TIHR worked with performance poet Dreadlock Alien, who has direct experience of growing up in care. Dreadlock Alien facilitated 'word harvests' around the identified priority impacts: 'healthy eating' 'diversity' 'a sense of belonging, 'being heard' and 'jobs and training'. The word harvests, led to reflection and discussion on the topics. Five poems were then coproduced in interaction with the poet and the young people. The exercise aimed to capture the meaning of the topics (impacts found in the MWIA screening) to the young people.

Each poem speaks for itself. Here are the evaluators' interpretations of how the poems relate to the well-being impacts:

Healthy Eating: 'Food Translation' speaks of the complex social and emotional issues that eating becomes to a young person who has grown up in different care placements.

Being Heard: 'Will they listen to us?' raises questions about genuine active listening and the perception that the Council may not really like what they have to say, or if the 'corporate parent' really can know the individual 'hidden personality'.

The ending is humorous, asking 'shall we put advertising on the side of a bus?' and how being able to hear is dependent on being open to knowing the young people on their own terms 'I'll tell you in an instance on Instagram'.

A Sense of Belonging: 'Belonging' speaks of identity and sense of place. The poem mentions the importance of accents, coming from more than one place and the desire for roots and feeling safe and accepted.

Diversity: was born of wide ranging and enthusiastic discussion about aspects of discrimination and diversity that affect the population in care of Havering 'Echoes of 234 voices'. The poem refers to wealth and class, age, faith and gender differences and how these different rivers are 'All streaming into the River Rom'. The line 'we're East of East and we're still East Enders' reflects the MWIA discussion of how the CICC orientates the participants to feel part of a wider London community of young people.

Jobs and training: This is a humorous poem capturing a discussion about a wide range of careers that the young people may aspire to 'If I knuckle down and do it, I could really reach my goal'.

7. How to know if we are going in the right direction

This section identifies the key outcomes that the CICC should monitor. Outcomes were identified and refined through ToC, MWIA and Action Learning Set. These activities represent a robust delivery of the recommendation of the Good Practice Guidance for CICCs[8] to localise their baseline indicators. They are genuinely coproduced outcomes that represent a solid foundation for ensuring the CICC progresses and thrive.

Evaluation of the outcomes resulting from children and young people's participation is a challenge for many organisations. Some outcomes such as increased self-esteem are difficult to attribute to the intervention, and sometimes it is difficult to measure a long term impact early in an intervention.

The overarching questions for an ongoing evaluation of Havering CICC are:

- *Is there evidence that children and young people have been actively listened to?*
- *Is there evidence of change as a result of listening to children and young people?*
- *Does active involvement in the CICC lead to any improvements in key outcomes for looked after children?*

The first question can be monitored by the CICC in terms of their activities log that is already being kept. How many times the CICC are asked to give their views or participate in decision making. The quality or extent to which the 'listening' is 'active' is difficult to evaluate. The second question tracking evidence of change is a challenge for the CICC and a much wider 'corporate parenting' responsibility.

It is suggested that through the Pledge 'You will always have a voice and we will listen to you' all services are asked to provide evidence to the CICC of active listening and change. The burden of evidence should be placed on the services who approach or should be approaching the CICC for influence and not on the CICC to justify its existence.

The third question can be addressed through collecting quantitative and qualitative information directly from young people (survey of views) and the populations outcomes (data already collected e.g. on education attainment).

The following table is a suggested preliminary framework of key outcomes that Council Services and the CICC should base their evaluation on. They should be developed into data collection tools or collated from data already being collected from other mechanisms. It should be made clear how, who and when each piece of evidence is collected.

[8] *NYAS and NCERCC (2008) Good Practice Guide for Children in Care Councils*

Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Method	Service/Person Responsible	Time frame/ Date
CICC has been involved in strategic plans and outcomes for LAC	*The % of times members of the CICC have been represented at meetings where strategic decisions about looked after children are made.*	*Review minutes of key meetings.*		
Services respond to CICC involvement and give feedback	*The % of times that CICC involvement is responded to and decisions or forward plans feedback*	*CICC minutes/activity log.*		
Services change as a result of CICC involvement	*Case studies of service changes directly or indirectly influenced by CICC involvement.*	*Qualitative examples from interviews with services or minutes of meetings.*		
Improved outcomes for LAC in key areas employment, education etc. (long term)	*Improvement in existing KPIs*	*Existing KPIs*		
Improved outcomes for LAC in key in key areas employment, education etc. (medium term)	*Numbers of LAC and CICC members taking up apprenticeships, training or volunteering.*			
	Case studies of CICC members taking up apprenticeships, training or volunteering.			
Improved outcomes for LAC in key areas of health	*To be developed with health partners and to include healthy eating issues.*			
Understanding and practice of involvement of LAC has improved among LA staff.	*Staff awareness improves*	*Add questions to staff survey or survey all staff annually on intranet.*		
The CICC is thriving	*Stability or improvement in numbers of CICC attending meetings and events.*	*Attendance records*		
The CICC represents the diversity of the looked after children population of LBH	*Members attending meetings and events represent the population characteristics: ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age.*	*Attendance records*		
The CICC represents the diversity of the looked after children population of LBH	*Establish a baseline and continuous improvements in agreement to the statement 'The CICC is a place where everyone in care belongs regardless of ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability' Agree- disagree.*	*Survey of all children in care in borough. Compare those who have attending meetings/events with those that have not.*		
CICC members who are actively engaged have improved confidence, self- esteem and emotional wellbeing	*Establish a baseline and improve measures on positive identity and sense of belonging self-esteem/ confidence/ well-being Agreement that CICC meetings are safe to talk about feelings and problems*[9]*.*	*Survey of all children in care in borough. Compare those who have attending meetings/events with those that have not.*		

[9] *This is an extensive piece of work where LBH should seek expertise. The Young Foundation outcomes framework for young people is a good resource http://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Framework-of-outcomes-for-young-people-July-2012.pdf . However, outcomes measured should be bespoke, attributable to the CICC work and if using existing measure the service should be mindful that well-being outcomes for looked after children differ from children who are not looked after (e.g. http://www.coramvoice.org.uk/sites/default/files/Measuring%20Wellbeing%20FINAL.pdf)*

CICC members who are actively engaged are more aware of council structures and processes and feed empowered to make changes	*Establish a baseline and improve: e.g. Opinion on the CICC priorities for the coming year.* *Confidence in CPP and The Pledge* *Perception that voice is heard and acted upon (ask for example).* *Feeling valued in the role.* *Satisfaction with recent activities.* *Awareness of Council structures and processes.*	*Survey of all children in care in borough. Compare those who have attending meetings/events with those that have not.*		
Foster Carers and providers are aware of CICC and have positive views on its effectiveness	*Establish baseline and improve.*	*Survey of foster carers and providers.*		

8. Capturing the Voices.

Over the course of the re-launch period a number of voices where captured in tailored semi-structured interviews. These included corporate parent representatives, some of the children in care from the CICC and foster carers. This included recordings of singing taken from the activities of the launch event and a poetry event for the wellbeing impact assessment facilitated by DreadLock Alien who grew up in care and became a poet Laureate of Birmingham.

The aim of the pod cast was to address the need to raise the corporate parenting agenda. A report on a shelf is hardly ever read. A piece of sound with real local voices explaining the hopes and aspirations for Havering CICC we believed would be a powerful and cost effective tool for dissemination and inspiration.

The podcast can be downloaded from xxxxx

9. Recommendations.

9.1. Social worker engagement

Although the fostering service were engaged in the evaluation and the re-launch of the CICC there is still a need to better and more formally engage the children's social workers. The evaluation and the podcast should be used as a tool to raise awareness about this need. The Pledge should be incorporated into social worker supervision.

9.2. Strengthening the role of Participation Assistant

The role of Participation Assistant is key to building resilience and confidence of the founding members group and the two new groups (ages, and care leavers). The skills set of this post should be formalised in the job description (group facilitation, skills and sensitivity around working with children in care and knowledge of the care system).

The Participation Assistant should continue to receive supervision, she had and has monthly supervision plus additional supervision for any issues arising from the group as they occur.

The Participation Assistant should work with CAMHS to learn about LAC Mental Health prevalence, develop clear referral and early intervention protocols. In addition in the younger groups there should be an explicit agreement developed by the CICC on how painful experiences and difficult issues are linked back into the system. The young people should know when and how what is raised in the CICC meetings is communicated to social workers or foster cares in order to address their needs.

9.3. Keep child centred

The corporate parents should continue to recognise the capacity of the small group at present as limited and in the early phases. The group need time to build resilience and experience. They should be mindful of working with their needs and not the needs of the Council services to consult. They should be careful to build the confidence and resilience of the groups slowly, working at their own pace and keeping the work led by the young people.

9.4. Build the cross- council partnership and be outward looking

In order to ensure long term and continual support from all partners the Council should ensure the Senior leadership of both the political and service leads drive the mechanisms for listening to Havering CICC through the Children's Service Improvement Board and the working group that will be ensuring the Pledge is embedded in services.
It is recommended that this working group is self- facilitated (not chaired) as an

ALS (continuing from the process evaluation). This should be conceptualised as a learning space, narrative forming where services can learn from each other and surface different views. The group should report it work thematically and not be formalised by bureaucratic reporting structures.

The role of the youth service in co-delivery of CICC facilitation should be formalised and protected. The relationship with the London Mayors peer outreach team should be kept active. Liaison with other CICCs and active children in care/care leaver groups would also be beneficial in joining Havering CICC to a more London-wide identity and create opportunities for active citizenship.

9.5. Focus on building wider engagement

Havering CICC is in its early stages of re-focus and has achieved a very successful start with a clear rationale and plan of future activities. It now should focus on wider engagement through activating referral mechanisms of foster carers, social workers the Independent Reviewing Officer and exploring the potential of the current members to encourage wider participation.

Any logistical barriers such as timings and transport should be researched and addressed.

9.6. Raise awareness of the corporate parenting agenda to Health partners

It is a nationally recognised concern that the physical health outcomes for children in care are poor. This is because looked-after children are more likely than other children to have been physically abused, injured and neglected. They are more likely than their peers to have a learning disability or mental health condition. Their health needs are likely to have been neglected in early life. Although there are statutory guidelines when they come into care, there is often no clear overview of their health needs or history. Research shows that whilst they are nearly always treated for acute illness, chronic illnesses and dental care may be neglected. Havering corporate parents are well aware of these issues and raised the need to focus on physical health in the first meeting of the Action Learning Set. However, this remained a gap. Engagement of the CCG commissioners and the LAC nurse in the Havering CICC and the Pledge should be addressed immediately.

9.7. Monitor outcomes

The monitoring of outcomes is key to understanding and communicating the impact of the CICC. This should be a council-wide shared responsibility between the CICC and the corporate parents. Ideally an impact evaluation should be undertaken as part of the work of the Children's Service Improvement Board Pledge Working Group. Outcomes and impacts should be realistic and bespoke as recommended by this process evaluation (In particular drawing from the mental well-being impact assessment).