

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Purpose**

The Children in Care Council (CICC) was created to support Children Education and Families (CEF) services in:

1. Improving outcomes for all Children Looked After (CLA) and leaving care who are the responsibility of Thurrock Children Education and Families.
2. Improving and strengthening resilience of Children Looked After by having a forum whereby the Children in Care Council can be consulted on issues that affect the standard of care that they receive.

The Children in Care Council will consider:

All Children Looked After of Thurrock council both placed within the borough as well as those who are placed outside the borough (OBP), and Children Looked After who are placed within Thurrock's boundaries, who are the responsibility of other Local Authorities.

The Children in Care Council will have achieved these aims by:

1. Holding to account all parts of the council, its partner agencies to fulfil their statutory duties and responsibilities in relation to looked after children and care leavers
2. Monitoring the implications of Thurrock council pledge to all Children Looked After.
3. Developing effective health promotion and support to care leavers and is facilitated to hold health and social care to account for undertakings set out within the pledge.
4. Representation of Children Looked After on Thurrock Youth Cabinet
5. Receiving information from council officers and external partners in the form of consultations in respect of relevant issues for Children Looked After.

**Members and Chair**

The Children in Care Council meetings will be chaired by the elected chairperson/ duty chair and co-chaired by Open door Children in Care Council coordinator at appropriate times.

Chairperson – Elected young person of the Children in Care Council

Deputy Chair – Elected young person of the Children in Care Council

### **Members of the meeting**

All members of the Children in Care Council will attend meetings, any Looked After Child who wishes to join the Children in Care Council.

### **Council Officers**

Head of Service

Service Manager responsible for corporate parenting

Service Manager responsible for fostering and adoption services

Councillor portfolio holder for education and children's social care

Any other officer who is deemed appropriate to attend

The Children in Care Council meetings will be supported by Open Door Children in Care Council coordinator, Open Door staff and support workers from through care teams when required. All staff to ensure the full and effective functioning of the group and will not be members of the Children in Care Council.

### **Frequency and format of meetings**

The Children in Care Council will meet at least 12 times per year. Council officers and any other officers deemed appropriate will be invited to the Children in Care Council meetings at least twice a year and requested to attend further meetings when issues arise. The Children in Care Council meetings will be chaired by the elected chairperson. On the meetings where council officer and any other officers attend, these meetings will be co-chaired by the elected Children in Care Council chairperson and the Open Door co coordinator.

Corporate Director of Children's Services will responsible in responding to items raised at the previous meeting no later than one week prior to the following meeting of the Children in Care Council.

### **Decision making powers**

The Children in Care Council has no powers to make decisions, but may make recommendations to the Corporate Director of Children's Services and elected member of the Corporate Parenting Committee who will then feedback into the corporate parenting group and leadership team.

### **Code of Conduct**

1. Members of Children in Care Council agreed to represent the views and wishes of all children in care and care leavers to the best of their ability.

2. Members of the Children in Care Council agree to treat each other, workers and visiting adults with respect.
3. Incidents of bullying, sexism, racism or other non-inclusive behaviours during the Children in Care Council meetings will result in an instant exclusion from the Children in Care Council at the discretion of a team manager and elected Children in Care Council person.
4. Any reports or minutes will not be shared with third parties unless agreed by the chairperson of the Children in Care Council.