

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL

CONSTITUTION

DRAFT January 2020

Children in Care Council

The Children in Care Council work together to promote the views, values and opinions of cared for children and young people and to be involved in the planning and decision making processes on matters that affect their individual lives and the evaluation of services provided for them by Halton Borough Council. The Children in Care Council provide a safe space for children and young people in care to be listened to and help to achieve positive change. The Children in Care Council will work together to create a welcoming environment that encourages all to participate, share ideas and experiences. The Children in Care Council meetings will be chaired and ran by the Participation and Inclusion officer.

Aims

- To provide a safe space for children and young people in care to be listened to and help to achieve positive change
- To work together to create a welcoming environment that encourages all to participate, share ideas and experiences
- To provide opportunities for children and young people to be asked their views, to be listened to and taken into account
- To provide all children in care with information about the children in care council and raise awareness in adults about the needs of children in care
- To ensure that children in care, who live out of the area, have the opportunity to have their views and opinions heard
- To consult and work alongside the CICC to influence and develop policies and procedures and series that affect all Children in Care.

How will we achieve this?

The council will be represented by two groups, of different age ranges. There will be a junior council for members who are 8 – 12 years of age, a senior council for members who are 13+ years of age.

The senior council will meet on the first Thursday of the month. The junior council will meet on a Wednesday morning of the school holidays.

By ensuring that the members of the children in care council work on the agenda, based on the issues that are important to young people in care/leaving care.

By consulting with children in care on issues that relate to the design, delivery and evaluation of services provided for children and young people in care.

By establishing good working relations with the Children in Care Partnership board and the Corporate Parents, of which a rep from the CICC will always attend the board.

To ensure that all views and opinions of the Children in Care are taken seriously and acted upon by Halton Borough Council.

The Structure of the Council

The council is open to any young person between the ages of 7 and 25, who is in care/care leaver of Halton Borough Council.

There will be up to 12 members on each council at any one time, quorate 6 to effectively run a meeting.

Corporate parents will be invited to attend Children in Care Council meetings when issues arise that they would like to discuss

Each member is encouraged and supported in engaging in additional roles outside of the regular meetings.

All children and young people can bring a supporter with them if required.

CICC Members can stay on the Council for a period of 3 years. If there is over 12 CICC members, a waiting list will be implemented, to allow other CIC opportunities to join the CICC.

If a CICC member misses 3 meetings, the Participation and Inclusion Officer will telephone to see if the place is still wanted, if not, this place can be given to someone on the waiting list.

Structure of the Meetings

The senior CICC meetings will be held the first Thursday of every month. The junior CICC will meet on a Wednesday morning during school holidays.

The senior meetings will start at 4:30pm, refreshments will be provided and will conclude at 6:30pm.

The junior meetings will start at 10:30am until 1pm and refreshments will be provided.

The timings are set for suitability for young people to attend after school, college or work.

Transport can be provided where required.

The members have created their own ground rules for the meetings and these are to be adhered to. Anyone who is not following the rules may be asked to leave.

Bullying will not be tolerated.

One/two members will be invited to attend the Children in Care Partnership Board, this will alternate depending on demand from the members.

The Participation and Inclusion Officer will visit any interested new member at their home to discuss membership to the council and to ensure that there is an understanding of the commitment to the council.

The council operates within all Halton Borough Councils policies and procedures.

How decisions are made

Decisions will be made after discussion and formal voting.

In the event of a split vote, voting will then go to a secret ballot.

All members will respect the decisions made at the council, however in the case of a disagreement, the members can ask for the issue to be re-discussed at a later meeting.

Rewards and Incentives

Members will receive payment for contribution at the formal council meeting and any assistance required with transport.

Members may receive additional payment of £5 for hard work at the discretion of the Participation and Inclusion Officer.

Refreshments will be provided at every meeting.

No payment will be so great as to financially disadvantage any young person.

Non contributions or group disruption will result in non-payment.

Members may be rewarded for additional responsibilities or roles undertaken, at discretion of the Participation and Inclusion Officer.

Targets and Outcomes

The CICC will work towards a minimum of three targets each year. These will be based on the views of any child in care within the Halton Borough.

The CICC will be involved in the decision making process that relates to children and young people in care in Halton.

The work of the CICC will be monitored and evaluated through:

- Minutes from meetings
- The Pledge

Ground Rules

The members of the Children in Care Council have created the following rules:

- I will put my phone away whilst I am working
- I will not use headphones during the work part of the meeting
- I will be friendly and will welcome any new member
- I will not fight
- I will not mess around
- I will not make any silly comments
- I will not say things that may offend others
- If I make a mess I will tidy up after myself
- I will respect the venue

At the meetings, the group have decided that anyone who does not take part in the meetings, anyone that messes around or any unacceptable behaviour the following will happen:

- Member will receive a warning
- 1st strike, member will have reduced payment of £5
- 2nd strike, member will not be paid
- 3rd strike, member misses next meeting
- If it continues at next meeting then member will be asked to leave the CICC

What members will receive from staff:

- Support with topics
- Support with work

At each meeting these rules will be revised if applicable and amended accordingly.