

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Kirsty Fisher, Engagement and co-production lead for Our Children
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	27 March 2024

## YOUNG INSPECTORS' PROGRAMME

### 1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 To provide an update on the work of the young inspectors' programme.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 To review the information provided, identifying any recommendations for the programme or future scrutiny work.

### 3.0 Reason for recommendation(s)

3.1 To ensure scrutiny oversight of the programme.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered

4.1 None.

### 5.0 Council priority

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

### 6.0 Background and key information

#### 6.1 What is a Young Inspector?

A Young Inspector is a volunteer aged 16 plus who is care experienced and may have or is living in a semi-independent home. Young Inspectors support the quality monitoring of accommodation by visiting the homes where our young people live. They speak to the

young people living there, using The Charter Mark and their own experiences they assess the quality of the support they receive and most importantly how well cared for the young people feel.

## 6.2 How do young people get involved?

We are always on the lookout for future Young Inspectors. At the moment recruitment is mainly targeted but as the programme has become better known, young people are volunteering and are excited to get involved. We have also recruited during inspections visits the young people we speak to are often interested in the programme and get to see first-hand what is involved. We can answer any of their questions and then invite them along to a training session.

The short training session has been co-produced with our inspectors. All new recruits have to attend the session before they can come out on an inspection. We cover safeguarding and confidentiality as well as what to expect on an inspection visit.

## 6.3 What's good about being a Young Inspector?

These are some of the things our young inspectors have told us they get from being an inspector.

- Improved our confidence and self-esteem.
- Raised the quality of our semi- independent homes.
- Give us a sense of achievement and makes us feel proud.
- Learning new skills around communication, problem solving, information gathering and public speaking.
- Making a positive difference for other young people like me
- Training/development
- Rewarded for the work I do
- It is great to write about on my CV, employers are very interested in what I have done.

## 6.4 Activity and new developments

The Semi- independent Charter Mark has been co- produced with young people and is now used in all visits to inspect against. (See attached)

All our commissioned semi- independent providers have now been inspected and all but two homes have been awarded The Charter Mark. Feedback has been given to these homes and improvement plans developed together with provider on how they can achieve the Charter Mark.

Young Inspector's feedback is now going to be published and shared with workers and young people to help inform their decision making in finding the right home to meet their individual needs. A profile of each home and what they offer will be given to social workers and personal advisors to share with their young people, we hope that this will help to give them a better understanding of what that home has to offer as well as any charges they may have to pay, how good is the wifi, when the staff will be there, any

expectations of them and the homes unique offer etc.

## 6.5 Our Achievements...

Changes to house rules          Poor quality home no longer used

Front door keys given

More flexibility around meals and cooking

Giving young people the opportunity to share their experiences

Sharing of good practice          Reduced service charges and utility bills

Presented and held a workshop at a National Commissioning Conference

## 6.6 Future plans and challenges

- Extension of activity to include residential children's homes and inspection of Children Services internal provisions.
- Joint working with commissioning to embed the programme in to the Quality Monitoring Processes of all accommodation based services for young people.
- Young Inspectors to be involved with any tendering for accommodation in the future.
- Young Inspectors to continue to inspect our semi-independent homes.
- To embed the inspection outcomes in our home finding processes.
- Share good practice and continue to raise standards where our young people live.
- Reward young inspectors as paid sessional workers for their expertise and time.
- Create Lead Young inspector post to maintain current work and future developments to ensure programme embedded in our social work and commissioning practice.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

## 7.0 List of appendices

7.1 Appendix 8(a): Charter Mark

**8.0 Financial considerations**

8.1 None as a result of this report.

**9.0 Legal considerations**

9.1 None as a result of this report.

**10.0 Risk management considerations**

10.1 None as a result of this report.

**11.0 Equalities considerations and the impact of this decision for our children and young people**

11.1 Young people co-produce this work.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations**

12.1 None as a result of this report.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers**

14.1 None.