

	<p align="center"><b>Corporate Parenting Committee</b> 14 October 2024</p>
	<p align="center"><b>Report from the Corporate Director of Children and Young People</b></p>
	<p align="center"><b>Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools - Cllr Gwen Grahl</b></p>
<p><b>Bright Spots Survey</b></p>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	ALL
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	N/A
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	1. Bright Spots Survey 'Your Life, Your Care'
<b>Background Papers:</b>	N/A
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	<p>Nicole Levy Service Manager Quality Assurance and Learning and Development <a href="mailto:Nicole.levy@brent.gov.uk">Nicole.levy@brent.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Kelli Eboji Head of Service for Looked After Children and Permanency <a href="mailto:Kelli.eboji@brent.gov.uk">Kelli.eboji@brent.gov.uk</a></p>

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an analysis of the Bright Spots Survey 'Your Life, Your Care'. This is a survey of the views of looked after children and young people aged 4-17yrs.
- 1.2 This report will be presented to Corporate Parenting Committee on 14 October 2024 (See appendix 1).

## 2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Corporate Parenting Committee to consider the findings from the Bright Spots survey and agree the resulting action plan.

## 3. Detail

### **3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities and Strategic Context**

- 3.1.1 Coram Voice states that *“The Bright Spots Programme is a research and service improvement project run by Coram Voice. The Programme was set up to understand what is important to children in care and care leavers and share learning about what makes life good for them”*.
- 3.1.2 This activity contributes to all five Borough priorities through better understanding and responding to the holistic needs and views of care experienced children and young people.

### **3.2 Background**

- 3.2.1 Brent has, over several years, partnered with Coram Voice to complete the Bright Spots survey with care experienced children and care leavers.
- 3.2.2 Findings are split into two separate reports Your Life, Your Care (for those aged 4-17) and Your Life Beyond Care (for Care Leavers). To date, Brent has only received the completed report from Coram for Your Life, Your Care. This report therefore focusses on the plan for presentation of this report. Your Life Beyond Care is scheduled to be shared in November 2024.
- 3.2.3 Coram Voice created the Bright Spots Well-Being Indicators to put children’s experiences and voice at the heart of how they measure subjective well-being. The indicators are measured by the ‘Your Life, Your Care’ survey. The survey was developed from literature reviews, roundtable discussions with professionals and from focus groups and individual interviews with 140 looked after children and young people living in nine different local authorities. The survey identifies the areas where children in care are doing well and where things could be improved, providing an evidence base of children and young people’s experience and well-being to inform service improvements.
- 3.2.4 Between 1 March and 30 April 2023 and again between 11 October 2023 and 29 March 2024, all Brent children in care aged 4-17yrs were asked to take part in an online survey to find out how they felt about their lives.

#### **Summary of key messages from “Your life, your care” survey 2023-24**

- 3.2.5 Below is a brief synopsis of the response rate and the changes since the last report.
- 3.2.6 The survey was completed by 82 children in care, aged 4-17, presenting an overall response rate of 32%. There were three different versions of the survey tailored for different age groups: 4-7, 8-11 and 11-17. The response rate was 30% for 4-7 years, 50% for 8-11 years and 29% for 11-17 years. The results are presented across the age groups and individually for each group.
- 3.2.7 The report explains that “Bright Spot” indicates a ‘good news’ story – a positive aspect of practice. This indicates children and young people are doing significantly better than children in care in other local authorities, or

reports the same as, or higher, well-being than their peers in the general population.

3.2.8 The report states that 6 of the Bright Spots that were awarded in the 2020-21 survey were awarded again this year. These were: trusting your social worker, trusting the adults you live with, liking school, support for learning, feeling safe at home, and happiness with appearance.

3.2.9 In addition, an impressive additional 12 Bright Spots have been awarded this year. These are:

- Happiness yesterday (4-7yrs)
- Liking your bedroom (4-7yrs)
- Feeling settled at home (4-7yrs)
- Having a trusted adult (8-11yrs)
- Knowing identity of social worker (8-11yrs)
- Sensitive parenting (8-11yrs)
- Placement continuity (11-17yrs)
- Social worker continuity (11-17yrs)
- Access to nature (11-17yrs)
- Reason for care explained (11-17yrs)
- Sharing confidences (11-17yrs)
- Positivity about the future (11-17yrs)

3.2.10 The report also notes several other areas, which although not attracting a Bright Spot showed notable improvement since the last survey.

4-7yrs:

- Knowing the identity of your social worker (73% - 83%)
- Having an explanation from an adult for why you are in care (18% - 42%)

8-11yrs:

- Feeling that life is getting better (72% - 94%)
- Not feeling afraid to go to school because of bullying (69% - 81%)
- Happiness yesterday (75% - 81%)

11-17yrs:

- Feeling that family time is 'just right': Mum (25% - 36%); Dad (13% - 19%); brothers and sisters (30% - 38%)
- Spending time outdoors in nature (86% - 96%)
- Having an explanation from an adult for why you are in care (72% - 96%)
- Feeling the adults you live with notice your feelings (83% - 91%).

3.2.11 There were some domains within the survey which showed a reduction in positive response, meaning less favourable findings, which were:

4-7yrs:

- Having a really good friend (100% - 92%); Liking school (91% - 83%); Having fun at the weekends (100% - 91%)

8-11yrs:

- Feeling that family time is 'just right': Mum (46% - 27%); brothers and sisters (58% - 44%); Having a pet at home (41% - 31%); Trusting the adults you live with (96% - 88%); Feeling the adults you live with take an interest in what you do at school (100% - 88%); 'Always' feeling settled where you live (74% - 56%); Worrying about your feelings or behaviour (52% - 69%)

11-17yrs:

- Having a pet at home (31% - 19%); Feeling that life is getting better (88% - 74%); Getting chances to show you can be trusted (96% - 87%); Practising life skills (90% - 81%); Feeling afraid to go to school because of bullying (14% - 22%); Liking your bedroom (95% - 89%); Feeling happy yesterday – moderate-high (76% - 61%); Feeling satisfied with your life as a whole – moderate-high (74% - 62%); Feeling the things you do in life are worthwhile – moderate-high (79% - 61%).

3.2.12 A full summary of the report will be co-presented by the Participation team and members of Brent Care Journey's 2.0 at Corporate Parenting Committee on the 14 October 2024.

3.2.13 In addition the full report is attached to this report (appendix 1).

3.2.14 Children and young people in Brent Care Journeys 2.0 will review the findings of the report in a workshop. They will explore the findings to understand the views of their peers and use the data to think about potential solutions to some of the areas of development. This could be coming up with ideas for projects and initiatives to improve life in care for children and young people. The group will work with the relevant teams in CYP to feedback their recommendations.

#### **4. Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

4.1 The report, Your Life, Your Care 2023-24 (appendix 1), will be summarised into a PowerPoint presentation that will be jointly presented by the Participation team and Brent Care Journey's 2.0 at the Corporate Parenting Committee meeting in October 2024.

4.2 The presentation will include an *initial* improvement plan to address issues raised in the report.

#### **5. Financial Considerations**

5.1 In order to take part in both Bright Spots Your life, Your Care (4-17 years) and the Your Life Beyond Care (care experienced young adults) Brent paid Coram Voice a total of £15,500, £7,750 per survey. The cost incurred paid for the branding, the materials, access to the online survey, guidance on how to support young people through the process, detailed analysis of findings by

experienced research analysts; a full report and support with dissemination and service development.

## **6. Legal Considerations**

6.1 The Children Act 1989 and 2004 emphasises the importance of listening to children and taking their views into account when making decisions about their care. The Bright Spots survey aligns with the Children Act's focus on improving outcomes for children, the survey seeks to identify what works well and what needs improvement thereby helping to shape better services and support systems.

6.2 Article 12 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) emphasis that children have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them. The Bright Spots survey aligns with this principle by providing children with a platform to share their experiences and opinions.

## **7. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

7.1 At this stage there are no specific Equality implications.

## **8. Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

8.1 At this stage there are no specific Climate and environmental implications.

## **9. Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

9.1 At this stage there are no specific human resources/property implications.

## **10. Communication Considerations**

10.1 There will be further consultation work with care experienced children where findings from the report will be shared and key campaigns agreed to address areas of focus identified by the report.

**Report sign off:**

***Nigel Chapman***

Corporate Director of Children and Young People