

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> September 24 2009	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Corporate Parenting Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Speakerbox Update	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Strategic Director of Children's Services	

## RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. The Corporate Parenting Committee notes the work undertaken by Speakerbox to date, and comments on current progress.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. This report outlines the work undertaken by Speakerbox, and progress in implementing the workplan to date.
3. Speakerbox was established by young people to enable them to give a voice to all children in care, and those who have left care. The group has a workplan, and meets regularly to progress the plan, and identify new areas of work. They are supported by a Children's Rights and Participation Officer, and two additional apprentices are being recruited to help support the development of Children in Care Council. Particular achievements include: securing leisure cards for looked after children; participating in the recruitment of staff; mentoring social work students; producing a Speakerbox magazine; and holding officers to account, and helping to improve services for children in care.
4. All local authorities are required to put in place a Children in Care Council which will enable regular, good quality dialogue and involvement in planning and delivering services. It must also ensure that the Children in Care Council has direct links to the Director of Children's Services and elected Members.
5. The local authority should also have a pledge to children in care which should be developed as a key communication tool in partnership with children and young people. Young people should also have the opportunity to be involved in staff recruitment.
6. Local authorities must also ensure that children are involved in planning for their lives and in developing services. The effectiveness of these arrangements will be monitored by Ofsted through the new inspection regime. While Speakerbox fulfils many of the requirements of a Children in Care Council, it has working on building wider engagement of children by establishing two Children in Care Councils. One will be for children aged 8-16, and the second is for young people aged 16 and over.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance

8. Not applicable

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
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## LIST OF APPENDICES

No.	Title
-	-

## AUDIT TRAIL

*This section must be included in all reports.*

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Rory Patterson	
<b>Report Author</b>	Rory Patterson	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	14.9.2009	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	Comments included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No	Yes/No
Finance Director	No	Yes/No
List other officers here	No	
<b>Executive Member</b>	Yes	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Officer</b>	14 September 2009	