



## **Family Justice Young People's Board (FJYPB) Report to the Cafcass Board**

### **Recommendations**

1. The Cafcass Board is asked to:
  - i) Consider and where desired, ask for further information on the updates below:

### **Noteworthy updates since 6 February 2015:**

1. The Board met with the President of the Family Division, Sir James Munby on 15 May 2015 to discuss the National Charter, transparency, the outcome of Vulnerable Persons' Working Party (VPWP) report, and the outcomes of the 'children meetings judges' pilots. The judicial section of the National Charter will need further development dependent on actions taken in response to the VPWP.

An additional section is to be included in the charter on mediation. The Board will be meeting with all agencies again in June to review commitments to ensure they have been or will be implemented effectively.

It was also discussed and suggested by the President that the FJYPB should have a stronger role in judicial training, including working closely with the Judicial College to review training sessions, making a training video and looking the process for training of magistrates.

2. The Board are in the final planning stage for their third annual 'Voice of the Child' conference on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2015 in London. This year's theme is 'Effective Participation: Make it Happen-Make it Better'. Speakers already confirmed include the President of the Family Division, a circuit judge from Australia, and various representatives from the Family Justice Board.
3. FJYPB members have been involved in developing the two pilot schemes for judges meeting with children and young people in West Yorkshire and York & North Yorkshire (appendix 1 & 2). The Board has also contributed to training the judiciary and family court advisors in these areas. The final reports for both pilots are now complete and have been shared with Sir James Munby, the President of the Family Division. It has been agreed that the pilots will continue for a further six months (1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015) to include a third area (Brighton) and to be evaluated through the model office scheme to focus on outcomes and the additional cost to stakeholders of children meeting judges.
4. Cafcass have commissioned the FJYPB to support their Peer Review programme. The fundamental aim of each review will be to help Cafcass reflect on and improve the quality and impact of the services provided for children and young people. Members of the Board took part in the first peer review in A8 in May 2015. Members took part in FCA and Service

Manager focus groups, re-inspected local offices in the area and submitted their findings into the final AQR report.

5. A mid-way review (appendix 3) of the FJYPB court reviews for all visits conducted between May 2014 and April 2015 is now complete. The purpose of the court reviews is to allow the FJYPB to make findings and recommendations on how the courts could become more approachable and welcoming to children and young people, with a view to encouraging judges to meet with children and young people who are subject to family proceedings.
6. In April 2015, the Board carried out a poll in relation to FJYPB membership for members to vote on a retirement of 25 years old to be introduced and the removal of the 'Associate Board Member' title. The result showed that 75% of members agreed that a retirement age of 25 years old for Board members should be introduced and also that the 'Associate' title should be removed for those members who are over 18 years old. This means that all members are equally referred to as FJYPB Members. The FJYPB will work with and support members when they reach 25, now and in the future, to prepare them for their retirement from the Board.
7. The Board have been commissioned to devise a video that can be sent to all LSCB's about how children and young people can feel safe in family justice. The Board are currently planning the script for this and the video will be completed in summer 2015. The Board have also developed an LSCB newsletter which will be circulated to all LSCB's providing an update of what the FJYP Board has been up to and to continue to raise the voice of the child across all areas of the family justice system.
8. In April 2015, Board members were offered and participated in various training sessions including two British Youth Council led sessions which looked at the skills young people need to deliver on 'consultations' and another session which looked at the 'Media'. Board members have also been involved in 'presentation' training to provide extra support and the skills members need while on commissions. In June 2015, many of the Board members will also be taking part in another British Youth Council training session on 'Meetings', which gives young people the confidence to speak up and develop the skills needed to make the most of meetings.
9. In May 2015, a small group of FJYPB members met with Mike Coote, National Commissioning and Partnerships Manager, to provide detailed feedback on the new 'voice of the child' section of the Parenting Plan. The Commissioning team will now incorporate the Board's comments and suggestions into the final version.

**Jacob Willcox, Board Member**

**Sasha Thompson, Associate Board Member**

**8<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

**Appendices:**

1. West Yorkshire – Judge meeting Children Pilot report
2. York & North Yorkshire – Judge meeting Children Pilot report
3. Court Review Midway Report – April 2015