

## CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 2022  
6.00 PM

Engine Shed, Sand Martin House

### AGENDA

Page No

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point Members must declare whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, or other interest, in any of the items on the agenda, unless it is already entered in the register of members' interests or is a "pending notification" that has been disclosed to the Head of Legal Services

3. **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 24 November 2021** 3 - 12

Members to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021.

4. **Update from Foster Carers** 13 - 20

5. **Youth Voice Coordinator for Children in Care Council** 21 - 24

6. **Annual Health Report** 25 - 32

7. **Performance Report and Scorecard** 33 - 38

8. **Members Issues**

Members that are not part of the core CPC membership, but hold Corporate Parenting responsibilities, are invited to raise any issues they have with regard to the services provided to Children in Care.

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#### **Committee Members:**

Councillors: Ayres, Bisby (Chairman), Bond, Howard (Vice Chairman), Jones, Knight, S Lane, Robinson, Sainsbury and Yasin

Substitutes: Councillors: Bond, R Brown and Hussain

Further information about this meeting can be obtained from Karen Dunleavy on telephone 01733 452233 or by email – [karen.dunleavy@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:karen.dunleavy@peterborough.gov.uk)

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING (FORMAL)  
HELD AT 6:00PM, ON  
WEDNESDAY, 24 NOVEMBER  
AT THE ENGINE SHED, SAND MARTIN HOUSE, BITTERN WAY, PETERBOROUGH**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillor Bisby, (Chairman (Chair), Howard (Vice Chairman), Councillors Ayres, S Bond, Jones, Robinson, Sainsbury and M Hussain.

**Officers Present:** Nicola Curley, Assistant Director for Early Help and Children's Services  
Myra O'Farrell, Head of Corporate Parenting  
Ricky Cooper, Assistant Director, Regional Adoption and Fostering  
Fiona Van Den Hout, Head of Service Fostering and Supervised Contact  
Shalina Chandoo, Quality Assurance Lead  
Catherine York, Designated Nurse, Children in Care  
Dee Glover, Head of Virtual Schools  
Karen S Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer

**Also Present:** Mandy Nicholson, Foster Carer Forum Representative  
Jenny Winters, Foster Carer Forum Representative

**13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Yasin, Knight and Lane. Councillor M Hussain was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Yasin.

**14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

**15. MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 JULY 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**16. APPOINTMENT OF CHAMPION MEMBERS**

Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the revamp of Corporate Parenting Champion positions and the current vacant roles.

The purpose of the report was to ask Committee Members to agree the proposed Corporate Parenting Champion roles and to appoint to the vacant positions

The Assistant Director for Early Help and Children's Services introduced the report and asked members to consider and approve the revised corporate parenting champion roles and appoint to the vacant positions.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously), to approve the revised roles, and appointed to the champion roles and vacant positions as follows:

1. Support for Care Experienced Young People (Housing, Finance and Asylum Issues) - Councillor Sandra Bond
2. 0-25 Education, Employment and Training (including the Combined Authority and Partners) - Councillor Sainsbury
3. 0-25 Physical and Mental Health and Emotional Well Being – Councillor Robinson
4. Citizenship, Participation and Leisure activities – Councillor Howard
5. Placement Sufficiency and Effective Care Planning – Councillor Jones

## 17. **COMMITTEE START TIME FOR 2022/2023**

Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the preferred start time of meetings for municipal year 2022 to 2023.

The purpose of the report was to discuss and agree the start times for meetings from the beginning of the Municipal Year 2022-2023. The draft schedule of meetings would be agreed at Full Council on either 26 January or 2 March 2022. Members were advised, that the Children in Care Council (CiCC) had also been consulted in relation to the start times for informal corporate parenting meetings. Members were also advised that the CiCC preferred start time was 5:30 PM for informal meetings.

The Democratic services officer introduced the report and asked Members to consider and agree the start time of meetings for Municipal year 2022 to 2023.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members asked for consideration of the formal meeting starting at 6:00PM and the informal meeting 5:30PM in order to meet the CiCCs requests and that a balance was maintained for Councillors that were in full time employment.
- Members were advised that an alternative venue for the informal meetings was being explored.
- Members were also advised that the CiCC had requested that the informal meetings would be no longer than an hour long. Members commented that they would be mindful of the request and aim to keep meetings between one to one and a half hours long. Furthermore, technical items would be moved to the end of the agenda for informal meetings, which would allow the CiCC representatives to leave earlier if they so desired.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and agreed to the start time for formal and informal meetings.

### **AGREED ACTIONS**

Corporate Parenting Committee **RESOLVED** to that the start time for formal and informal meetings would be as follows:

- Formal 6:00PM
- Informal 5.30PM

## 18. **UPDATE FROM FOSTER CARERS COMMITTEE**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the work of the Foster Carers Committee.

The purpose of the report was to inform the Committee of activity undertaken by the Foster Carer Committee (FCC) and to update on fostering service developments and responses to the Foster Carer Survey.

Highlights from the update included:

- The resignation of Stephen Greene as Chairman of the Foster Carer Committee
- Exit interview for foster carers and a progress update
- Foster carer learning
- Consultation to additional foster carer payments which would finish on 7 December 2021.
- Skills levels for foster carers
- Communications event which received attendance from 40 foster carers.

The FCC Representatives and Head of Service Fostering and Supervised Contact Service presented the report and asked Members to note the update.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members commented that it was encouraging to see how well the foster carers support and peer to peer training had been received.
- Members were advised that the foster care training skill levels and accreditation operated from one to four and was in line with an appraisal system. Foster carers could choose how they wished to take part in the training and at what level they wanted to reach. There was an incentive for foster carers to move up the levels.
- Members were advised that the accreditation was submitted to an agency decision-maker for foster care services and a decision would be made on the evidence presented to them. The evidence would be presented in several ways such as feedback from the foster carer, supervising social worker, independent reviewing officer, child social worker and child in care.
- Members were advised that the foster service had to use an agency decision maker for accreditation as part of the regulations. The decision maker would be the Head of Service Fostering and Supervised Contact Service, and that these assessors understood the business.
- A level four carer would undertake a minimum of four years training and be experienced in foster care. There had been several learning and putting theory into practice opportunities that would count as evidence for accreditation. The training had fitted into day-to-day life, and therefore, this process allowed for more opportunity to provide physical evidence.
- Members commented about the Autism training and were pleased that these learning needs were covered. Members were advised that the Virtual School were involved in how the training was set for foster carers.
- Peer to peer support would take place in the form of a mentorship support programme. The mentorship programme was currently being reviewed to work across Peterborough and Cambridge and had included support from experienced foster carers. Some of the foster carer mentors also gave talks at training sessions. In addition, the foster carer mentor support programme also supported foster carers in times when allegations had been made against them.

- Unfortunately, some children in care had come to an unplanned end of their foster carer placement. The service was working to understand what had gone wrong by exploring the events leading up to the unplanned end to a foster placement in order to stop it happening.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents.

### **AGREED ACTIONS**

The Corporate Parenting Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report. It was also agreed that the Head of Service Fostering and Supervised Contact Service would provide Members with the figures of how many people engaged in the specialist learning need training, including Autism.

## **19. UPDATE FROM THE YOUTH VOICE COORDINATOR ON BEHALF OF THE CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the work of the Children in Care Council and the outcome of their discussions at meetings and events organised. Members also received a YouTube presentation of the recent children in care artwork exhibition.

The purpose of the report was to update Members on the Children in Care Council activities and participation services.

The Youth Voice Coordinator introduced the report and asked Members to note the update and raise any queries they had with officers.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members commented that the artwork submitted was of an incredible and mature standard, given the ages of the artists.
- Members were advised that the original artwork would stay with the artist, and scanned images would be taken. In addition, some artwork would be used by PCC staff for goodbye cards. The Participation service was also exploring the possibility of displaying the artwork at the Vine and Sand Martin House for next year.
- Members commented that each time the update report was presented to the Committee, there were different activities attended such as youth voice conference and youth clubs and commended the CiCC and the Participation team on their commitment to exploring a range of activities for children in care to attend.
- Members were advised that the youth clubs and events were easy for the children and young people in care to access.
- Members were advised that there was a profile form to complete for all Members who wished to attend the Children in Care Council. Members were also advised that the Corporate Parenting Champions had been asked to complete a profile form, as the CiCC had wanted to learn more about their Champions.
- The young recruiter's initiative had started in May, and the Participation team would report on how many recruitment sessions had been attended by the young people. The young recruiter's involvement had influenced 25% of the job interview. The Participation team would go through the job descriptions and skill requirements with the young recruiters. Some of the young recruiters had reported that they had benefited tremendously from the process.
- Members commented about the artwork submitted by children and young people in care, particularly one piece that was reminiscent of how some communities lived.

In addition, there was another art piece that had featured colouring and listening to play lists. Members also commented that activities were being explored with the music hub for children and young people in care and that this should involve the new Champion for Citizenship, Participation and Leisure activities.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report.

### **AGREED ACTIONS**

1. The Corporate Parenting Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report.

## **20. ANNUAL REPORT OF PETERBOROUGH VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN IN CARE 2019-2020**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the Annual report of Peterborough Virtual School for Children in Care 2019-2020.

The purpose of the report was to inform Members on the activity of the Virtual School (VS) and the educational outcomes of Peterborough's Children in Care (CIC) for the academic year 2019/20. It reflected on achievements and identified areas in need of development to achieve the best outcomes for this vulnerable group. Data contained in the report was for Children in Care who had been in the care of Peterborough City Council for a year or more on 31 March 2020.

The Head of Virtual Schools introduced the report and asked Members to note the report and raise any queries they had with officers.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members were advised that there had been a slight increase in the number of children given a fixed term exclusion from school since reopening to all pupils. Covid 19 had exacerbated the situation as children were used to working in small bubbles with a lot more support whilst schools were closed to all pupils. As classroom numbers increased, some children had found it difficult to cope with larger class sizes and having to share support. In addition, Members were advised that there had also been a small number of children that had displayed extreme behaviour and that the team were working with schools to improve children's skills and confidence and data would be provided in the next annual report.
- Members were advised that primary literacy for a child that needed one to one support, had remained in mainstream schooling and an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), which included an intense support programme, was initiated.
- Members were advised that the outdoor learning school, which was funded by the Pupil Premium Fund (PPF) had included set up costs of buildings, staff training, employment of an outdoor learning lead, and ongoing improvement costs. Members were also advised that they could visit the outdoor learning facility by appointment.
- Members were advised that there had been administrative costs to budget for during the holiday period, which was also met by PPF.
- Members complemented the Head of Virtual Schools for the ongoing work to support the learning needs of children and young people in care.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report.

## **AGREED ACTIONS**

The Corporate Parenting Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### **21. REPORT ON WORK OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE FOR THE CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2020-2021.**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to an annual report of the work of the Corporate Parenting Committee for the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee.

Members were also advised of an error on the report, which should have stated 2020–2021 and not 2019–2020.

The purpose of the report was to advise the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee of activity carried out by the Corporate Parenting Committee in the municipal year 2020-2021. Members were also provided with an update on a recent positive focused Ofsted visit.

The Head of Corporate Parenting introduced the report and asked Members to agree that it was a true reflection of the work conducted by the Corporate Parenting Committee in 2020-2021

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members were advised that there had been a slight rise in children with three or more accommodation placements, however some were waiting for adoption or moving on to other accommodation post 18. There had also been some learning undertaken from placement breakdowns and the challenges which had presented.
- Members were advised that there had been recommendations from a recent Ofsted focused visit, in relation to children and young people out of the boundary placements. However, in some cases there had been more specialist placements required to accommodate some children and young people with additional behavioural or learning needs. Monitoring out of the boundary placements would occur through a meeting during which support services would be held accountable to ensure the appropriate level of support was being provided for every child and young person in care.
- Members were advised that the service had been preparing for the Ofsted focused visit, and there was a good outcome. Although the recent visit had not resulted in a score, a plan had been produced following the visit and that the team would continue to work on tasks in preparation for a future visit.
- Members were advised that the work on the post Ofsted plan would continue, and these would be scrutinised by internal mechanisms. This would also include performance information, reports from the quality assurance services, case alerts, audit reports as well as several checks and balances from commissioning colleagues. Members were also advised that feedback had been obtained from children and young people in care in relation to their care plans, social workers and services received. A complaints report was also fed into the checking process and measured against national and regional figures.
- The Passport to independence, monitor for success was reviewed in at a recent transitions meeting. Work on the pathway plans had been scrutinized to ensure actions were being carried out and issues were being addressed. Care Leavers coming up to 18 had suitable accommodation arrangements, however, there had been a challenge for CLs aged 19, 20 and 21. There was funding from the DFE to tackle the post 18 issues to prevent homelessness.



- Members were advised that as the passport to independence scheme was new, the success impact would start to show in nine months' time. In addition, Members were also advised that the cohort which experienced accommodation issues had not received the benefits of the passport to independence scheme.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to agree the report submission to Children and Education Scrutiny Committee, subject to the addition of information in relation to the independent care review.

## **AGREED ACTIONS**

The Corporate Parenting Committee **RESOLVED**:

- I. That the annual report was an accurate reflection of the work of the Committee over the last 12 months;
- II. To submit the annual report to the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee for noting as per the Corporate Parenting Committee's Terms of Reference;
- III. The report would include a further explanation on the outcome of the independent care review. The additional information would be circulated to the Corporate Parenting Committee Members once the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee report had been updated; and
- IV. The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee report date would be corrected prior to submission.

## **22. MEMBERS ISSUES**

Members that were not part of the core CPC membership, but held corporate parenting responsibilities, were invited raise issues they had in relation to the services provided to Children in Care (CiC).

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) that there were no issues to raise.

## **23. PERFORMANCE REPORT (PLACEMENTS OF CHILDREN IN CARE AND SCORECARD**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to performance data for Children in Care and Care Leavers.

The purpose of the report was to update Members in respect of the numbers of children and young people being looked after by the Council as of September 2021 by providing a breakdown of the types of placements in which they were living. The report also provided information about the age, gender and ethnicity of those children and young people. Members were also advised that caseloads were a little higher than preferred.

The Service Manager Corporate Parenting introduced the report and asked Members to note the contents and raise any queries with officers.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members were advised that the number of children and young people in care of 361 was considered a lower number compared to the target figure of 370. Figures lower than 370 were considered the right figure for children and young people to be in care statistically. A lower number could raise concerns that children and

young people that needed care were not receiving the appropriate support they needed. The numbers of children and young people in care for Peterborough had ranged between 366 and 380, which was considered stable.

- Members were advised that there were several children and young people placed in schools outside of Peterborough, and some of the education establishments were not all graded as good. This had distorted the performance figures for education.
- Members were advised that reason the figures for health standards were low, had been because there were different approaches with data collection for children and young people in care and those coming into care. It was also advised that there had been some challenges with staffing and timing issues with health assessments conducted. Furthermore, the figures showed that there had been slippage with the 20 day health check requirement for children and young people in care and in some cases this had happened on day 22, however, their needs had been met.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report.

### **AGREED ACTIONS**

Corporate Parenting Committee **AGREED** to note the report and that:

- I. The Head of Corporate Parenting would explore the inclusion of a broader and pictorial target indicator to be included within the performance reports to demonstrate that the number of children and young people in care was reflected in a more meaningful way; and
- II. The Assistant Director, Regional Adoption and Fostering would explore whether a performance report could include numbers of children and young people in care that were waiting for adoption but had not been placed.

## **24. PERFORMANCE REPORT (HEALTH)**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report on the performance of the health needs of children and young people in care.

The purpose of the report was to update Members on the performance of Initial Health Assessments, Review Health Assessments and the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire. The report provided an overview of the Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) activities to ensure robust monitoring and quality assurance systems were in place to meet the health needs of Peterborough's children and young people in care.

Members were also advised about the data for health assessments and that this had been separated out for the children placed in Peterborough and then out of Peterborough. The data had also explained the reasons why a health assessment had been conducted later than the 20-day requirement.

The Designated Nurse, Children in Care for introduced the report and asked Members to note the contents and raise any queries with officers.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members were advised that the timescale for health assessments could not be changed as this was a Government requirement. There were many reasons why the 20-day requirement had elapsed, and these had ranged from referral date to the complexity in which a child or young person had arrived in care. There had also

been some staff shortages experienced, which had contributed to the lateness of health assessments.

- Members were advised that support for mental health referrals had been assessed, on a case by case basis and there was no priority service. There had been mental health support through United and some foster carers that were trained. Members were also advised that the United service could direct the children and young people in care to access a range of mental health services in a more robust way.
- Members were advised that there were improvement processes in place for the return of SDQs and this could involve training for foster carers across Cambridge and Peterborough to explain the importance. The returns had improved since appointments were being held face to face and the service area was able to ask foster carers to complete them at the time of the assessment.
- Children and young people with complex needs had different health questionnaires and would have their needs assessed through their EHCPs.
- Members were advised that questionnaires for children and young people in care that were placed out of area were recorded separately. It was the responsibility for PCC to obtain the SDQ returns.
- As the SDQs returns and dental appointments were an issue, particularly for children and young people in care outside the area, the Committee could write to the Department for Health to express their concerns.
- The Foster Carer Committee Representative commented that the SDQ health assessment return issues could be raised as part of the foster carer mentoring service.
- The Foster Carer Committee Representatives raised concerns over the insufficient dental service for children and young people in care and that some were waiting over a year for treatment. Members were advised that there was a mechanism in place to highlight severe dental support for children and young people in care in order to escalate those cases.
- Members were advised that the concerns in relation to health services, which included dental services for children and young people in care were also being highlighted in regional meetings.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents and agreed recommendations and actions in relation to SDQ returns and dental services for children and young people in care.

## **AGREED ACTIONS**

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report and raised the following recommendations and action points:

## **RECOMMENDATION**

A proposal was received by Councillor Jones, which was seconded by Councillor Bisby, and the proposal was **AGREED** (Unanimously) as follows:

The Committee recommended that a letter would to be written on their behalf to the National Health Service (NHS) England to highlight the concerns raised at the Corporate Parenting Committee meeting about:

- I. The shortfall in the current NHS dental provision for children and young people in care, and ask how it was planned to resolve this nationally and support the local regional efforts to mitigate the issue; and
- II. The national management and prioritisation of initial health assessments and Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) for children placed outside of

their home Local Authority and ask them to explain how this longstanding issue would be addressed.

The following actions agreed included:

- I. The Assistant Director, Regional Adoption and Fostering would highlight issues in relation to the return of SDQs at the foster carer mentoring meeting, with the view to raising awareness through the mentoring programme.
- II. The Assistant Director for Early Help and Children's Services would highlight the dental appointment concerns raised with the Department for Health.

## **25. WORK PROGRAMME 2021 - 2022**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the work programme for 2021/22.

The purpose of the report was to enable the Committee to discuss its objectives and priorities for 2021/22 and highlight any further areas for consideration.

The Chairman introduced the report and asked Members to highlight any areas of work they wished to be included in the work programme.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members commented that it would be beneficial to the work of the Committee to provide detail about the sustainability of placements of children and young people in care with a report to focus on increased tariffs, placements outside of Peterborough, caseloads for social workers and health services and what impact that had on foster carers.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and agreed an action in relation to the theme of the next foster carer report.

### **AGREED ACTIONS**

The Corporate Parenting Committee **RESOLVED** to note the work programme and agreed that:

The Foster Carer report in March 2022, would be themed to focus on health and other issues such as increased tariffs, placements outside of Peterborough, caseloads for social workers and the impact these had on foster carers.

CHAIRMAN  
End meeting 8:06pm

<b>CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE (FORMAL)</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 4</b>
<b>16 MARCH 2022</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Report of: Charlotte Black	Charlotte Black, Interim Executive Director, People and Communities, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Councils	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Lynne Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Skills and the University	
Contact Officer(s):	Fiona Van Den Hout, Head of Service Fostering and Supervised Contact	Tel. 01223 518739

## REPORT FROM THE FOSTER CARER COMMITTEE

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>FROM: Fiona Van Den Hout</b>	<b>Deadline date: N/A</b>
<p>It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes the content of this report</li> <li>• Raise any queries they have with the lead officers</li> </ul>	

### 1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to the Corporate Parenting Committee

### 2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform committee of activity undertaken by the Foster Carer Committee and to update on fostering service developments and in response to the Foster Carer Survey.

2.2 This report is for the Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.4.4.6 To monitor the quality of care delivered by the City Council and review the performance of outcomes for children and young people in care.

(e) Monitor the ongoing commitment to providing support, training and clarity of expectations to foster carers to achieve excellent and high quality care.

2.3 This reports to the Children in Care Pledge by focussing on respect for children in care and care leavers

### 3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
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## **4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

### **4.0 Overview**

This report has been prepared to update the Corporate Parenting Committee on participation activity with Peterborough Foster Carers, and to provide an overview of development activity within the service.

4.1 The Peterborough Foster Carer Committee (PFCC) Annual General Meeting took place on 03 December 2021, where Foster Carers elected the following representatives into the following roles:

Mandy Nicholson, Chair of the Peterborough Foster Carer Committee, Glen Crossland, Vice Chair, Sue Stepney, Secretary, Lynne Bailey Treasurer, Andrea Hughes Events Lead.

4.2 Committee members have a wealth of fostering experience between them, and the service is looking forward to working closely with the Committee over the coming year to ensure the voice and views of Peterborough Foster Carers is central to plans for service development.

4.3 The PFCC held its first meeting of the new Committee on 21 January 2022. The following matters were raised:

- 1) Some Foster Carers have reported experiencing issues with transport, particularly instances where taxis have not been provided for children's appointments, it is unclear as to whether these have been booking or resource issues. Foster Carers has been advised to raise any issues directly with the Fostering Team Manager, who will discuss them with the child's Social Worker and/or with the Transport Department. A review of all transport arrangements for Children in Care is currently underway and the Fostering Team Manager is working closely with the Transport Team to resolve issues. It is recognised that driver shortages are impacting on service delivery, the Transport Team is working with the Independent Visitor Service to hopefully recruit more Volunteer drivers.

Further improvements are expected with new Transport Software, which is currently at procurement stages. This project will select and implement a new system to replace the current systems used by both CCC and PCC transport teams. The new system is expected to:

- Offer an online portal for social workers to apply for transport
- Give real-time updates and communication through integrated apps
- Allow better monitoring of the fulfilment of statutory obligations
- Promote greener solutions by scheduling the most efficient route plan
- Improve management information

This will improve the communication between the council, school, foster carer/ social worker, and driver. We hope to be able to start using the new system later this year.

- 2) The Committee noted that Sue Stepney and Fiona Van Den Hout had met to discuss the Junior ISA and Trust Fund accounts to talk about savings for Children in Care. Future meetings have been scheduled to discuss further.

Unfortunately, due to staff absence it has not been possible to progress this activity and Elected Members will receive an updated in the next Corporate Parenting Committee report.

- 3) Foster Carers raised that the Additional Allowance Consultation is not yet complete and that the consultation response from the Assistant Director, Ricky Cooper, is outstanding.

The service apologised for the delay and thanked Foster Carers for their patience and understanding. It was confirmed that delays have been necessary to ensure the best offer to Foster Carers across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire is achieved. The consultation response is to be completed in mid-March which will draw the Additional Allowance Consultation to a close.

- 4) Foster Carers said that the new Accreditation Competency Guide and associated skills level payments was welcomed and clear.
- 5) Foster Carers asked about the service's plans to celebrate long standing carers and this year's Foster Carer's Award event.

The service confirmed that every month, carers who have reached a milestone in their fostering carer will be noted and celebrated in the Newsletter (with their consent) and an Awards ceremony will be held in the Autumn. The Children in Care Council has asked to be involved in the nomination categories this year, which has been welcomed by the service. It was also agreed that whilst some of our carers have recently joined the Council if they have fostered for a significant period beforehand, their fostering career can also be celebrated at this event in recognition of their commitment to Children in Care. Foster Carers also heard that the Chairs of both the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Committee/Association have been invited to review and agree the events calendar for this year with the service.

- 6) Foster Carers expressed some concerns about the Stepping Out booklet which they said has received mixed responses from the young people they care for. Foster Carers suggested having the booklet on an app would be more user-friendly and that it was helpful to include some key independence skills such as learning to read a meter or mending a puncture on a bike.

The service confirmed that other external providers such as children's homes as well as Foster Carers from independent agencies are also required to complete the Stepping Out booklet with young people in their care. It is important that the Council makes sure they are supporting young people to develop their independence skills so that they are ready to move into their own accommodation when the time is right for them. The Stepping Out booklet was produced together with Young People in care and those who have left care, but feedback from Foster Carers will be taken on board. The Head of Corporate Parenting, Myra O'Farrell, is also keen to attend part of the Committee meetings on a regular basis to hear

feedback from carers on subjects directly related to children and young people and care planning.

- 7) Foster Carers raised that their experience of the most recent vaccination programme for children and young people has felt 'messy' and Foster Carers shared that the service at 'walk in' centres had run more smoothly.

The service has informed the project group overseeing the 5 to 11-year-old vaccination programme (which includes colleagues from Public Health) that Foster Carers need clear information and guidance regarding the permissions needed for children in their care, and that they require reassurance that this programme will run smoothly for the children they care for. The project group noted Foster Carers views and said that they will ensure communications are clear to both carers and schools.

- 8) Foster Carers asked if the Vivacity Gym membership includes swimming lessons as well as use of the gym and that other free resources and events be included in Newsletter such as the Park Run.

The service confirms that Foster Carers and those living in their household can enjoy free gym and swim membership as Children in Care they are able to access swimming lessons.

- 9) Foster Carers raised that it was important for the service to ensure that both prospective and approved carers understand about the need to put in pension arrangements as they are considered self-employed.

The service is currently reviewing the pre-approval and first-year training programme for this coming year. Following feedback from Foster Carers, the service will be delivering a different preparation training programme to applicant Foster Carers called 'Journey 2 Foster' starting in the summer. The 'Journey 2 Foster' programme is very thorough and provides a lot of useful information to applicants. The service agreed to ensure that workshops on tax and pensions will be prioritised in the Next Steps training programme which is targeted at approved Foster Carers in their first year of fostering but can be joined by all Foster Carers. Details of these workshops will be included in the 2022 - 2023 Training Programme.

- 10) The Foster Carer Committee confirmed that it is developing the Facebook site for Peterborough Foster Carers and discussed how this would be monitored and run. Foster Carers said that they had found the previous Facebook site to be a valuable source of support and information.

The service offered to support the development of the site if this is needed. The service will be holding a Transformation Launch event in April with staff and carers, which will be a good opportunity to showcase the new branding and our unified identity as a Fostering Service and Community across both Local Authorities.

- 11) Foster Carers raised that the Government has provided a £500 grant which has been given to schools for every Child in Care. It was understood that the grant



was to pay for *enrichment activities to aid their wellbeing*. Foster Carers requested clarification as to how and who was making the decisions about how the grant was spent.

The service has asked for clarification from the Virtual School Head in Cambridgeshire, Claire Hiorns, who confirmed that this is a recovery premium and information regarding this can be found on the government website ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)). The grant is £145 for children in mainstream education and £290 for children in specialist education settings. As with the Pupil Premium, funding for Children in Care is managed by the Local Authority Virtual School Head who works with schools to decide how to use the funding effectively to support Children in Care. The funding is allocated through the PEP, and this can be raised by Foster Carers at the child's PEP meeting.

- 12) Foster Carers noted that the current arrangements for using Sand Martin House for NHS appointments and letters is causing unnecessary delay and it was agreed that Foster Carers will raise this with the child's Social Worker.
- 13) It was noted that the service has successfully engaged Fostering Recruitment Ambassadors from within the Fostering Community, and there are two roles within Peterborough. The role of the Fostering Recruitment Ambassadors is to work in partnership with the service by:
  - Supporting the Fostering Service to increase marketing and recruitment activity across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough,
  - Working with us to develop our recruitment campaigns and marketing material,
  - Undertaking initial visits with fostering staff to prospective foster carers,
  - Attending Information Sessions with Recruitment Officers,
  - Linking with local communities and faith groups to identify opportunities to increase the awareness of fostering as a career,
  - Working with us to encourage businesses, district councils and other Council departments to offer our carers discounts and concessionary memberships,
  - Representing the Fostering Service at strategic meetings and events including meetings with partners and stakeholders,
  - Engaging with the wider Fostering Community to provide ideas and initiatives focussed on recruitment.
- 14) Foster Carers asked for a copy of the service structure chart and more information about the shared service, including the role of Mentors and how they are supported by the service.

The service will be including a structure chart within the new Foster Carer Handbook which will be published to carers in April alongside the revised Foster Carer Agreements. The service also confirms that the Mentorship programme is currently under review and new framework will be discussed shortly with both Foster Carer Committee/Association Chairs in both Councils. The Head of Service meets monthly with the Chairs which provides a good opportunity for planned development work to be discussed.

- 15) Foster Carers heard that the 0-5 Baby Support Group is running and is open to all carers. The service is currently reviewing the support group offer in PCC.
- 16) Foster Carers heard that for a recent Foster Carer Annual Review, the Household Reviewing Officer attended the Foster Carer's home and that this was a positive experience. Expectations around the Foster Carer Annual Review were outlined, noting that an additional review process had been introduced recently to support the completion of any outstanding Annual Reviews by the end of January 2022. This has been achieved and going forward the expectation is that the Household Reviewing Officers will be visiting carers in person.

At the last 'Coffee and Cake' informal meeting with the AD and members of the senior management team held in February, Foster Carers raised the following:

- Foster Carers requested that the service does more to raise awareness of the Foster Carer Association and Committee. The service is working with both Chairs and has identified opportunities to support this. The service is committed to supporting the awareness of the Foster Carer Committee and Association within the wider Fostering Community.
- A request was made to review the Foster Carer Agreements. This is underway and a revised agreement will be sent to carers in April.
- Foster Carers are concerned about the cost of Lateral Flow Tests, particularly considering requests to test for children in school. The service will discuss this further with the Virtual School Heads.
- Foster Carers raised that the paperwork they are asked to complete can be onerous and time-consuming. The service recognises this and is reviewing all paperwork, including the TSD workbook, to ensure that it is as streamlined as possible. Decreasing the amount of paperwork Foster Carers are asked to complete is a key priority for this coming year.
- Foster Carers said that there are many positives to fostering for the Local Authority as opposed to an Independent Agency. The service welcomes the involvement of carers who have the lived experience of working in an Independent Agency to work alongside the service to promote recruitment activity.
- Foster Carers have noted the revised format of the Foster Carer Newsletter and felt the breakdown of performance activity provided was informative.

## **5 CONSULTATION**

5.1 N/A

## **6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

6.1 Foster carer views will feed into the key priorities of the service

## **7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 Corporate Parenting Committee members have a duty to review the performance of Children's Social Care.

**8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 N/A

**9. IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial Implications**

9.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

**Legal Implications**

9.2 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

**Equalities Implications**

9.3 There are no equalities implications associated with this report

**Children in Care Implications**

9.4 This report relates to the services provided for children in care and care leavers and ties into the Pledge and Charter that the local authority respects the differing wants and needs for all.

**10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 N/A

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<b>CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 5</b>
<b>16 MARCH 2022</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Report of:	Nicola Curley, Director of Children's Services	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Lynne Ayres; Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Skills and the University	
Contact Officer(s):	Shalina Chandoo, QA Lead	Tel. 01733 452540

## **CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL PARTICIPATION REPORT**

RECOMMENDATIONS	
<b>FROM:</b> <i>Ricky Cooper, Assistant Director Children's Services</i>	<b>Deadline date:</b> <i>N/A</i>
<p>It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Notes the content of the report.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Raise any queries they have with the lead officers.</i></li> </ol>	

### **1. ORIGIN OF REPORT**

1.1 This report is submitted to each formal and informal Corporate Parenting Committee.

### **2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update from the Children in Care Council and participation services.

2.2 This report is for the Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference:

2.4.4.1 To act as advocates for looked after children and care leavers.

2.4.4.6 To monitor the quality of care delivered by the City Council and review the performance of outcomes for children and young people in care.

*(a) Raise the profile of the needs of looked after children and care leavers through a range of actions including through the organising of celebratory events for the recognition of achievement.*

*(b) Ensure that leisure, cultural, further education and employment opportunities are offered and taken up by our looked after children and care leavers.*

*(c) Promote the development of participation and ensure that the view of children and young people are regularly heard through the Corporate Parenting Committee to improve educational, health and social outcomes to raise aspiration and attainments.*

*(d) Hold meetings with children and young people in care, frontline staff and foster carers to inform the committee of the standards of care and improvement outcomes for looked after children.*

2.3 This report links to the Children in Care Pledge under:

1. *Respect - We will respect you as individuals, with differing wants, needs and beliefs and tailor the service you get to fit you.*

5. *Listen – We will support you to have a voice in your care plan and make sure you are listened to. We will ensure you know how to make a complaint or compliment about your care. You will have access to advocacy support to do this if wanted.*

### 3. **TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
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### 4. **BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Participation Team continues to promote opportunities for children and young people through regular newsletters, as well as creating event-specific publications to encourage engagement. Recent newsletters have encouraged young people to get involved in the Coram Voice Creative Writing Competition and apply to be a member of the Family Justice Young Person's Board to share views on the way in which the services within family justice are run and on the support they provide to children, young people and their families.
- 4.2 The Participation Team worked with Cambridgeshire County Council colleagues to organise two engagement activities in the February half term for Children in Care. Young people attended a bowling activity and a roller-skating activity where they had an opportunity to meet other young people in care from across the county.
- 4.3 A virtual activity for Children in Care who live at a distance or who prefer online activities was also arranged in the February half term. The session was titled February Art Fest and included creating doodle art characters and origami animals.
- 4.4 The Children in Care Council (CiCC) continue to meet in person on a monthly basis to work on their projects and consultation requests, meet professionals and give feedback on services. Recruitment to the CiCC is ongoing and we now have twelve members.
- 4.5 The CiCC continues to be consulted by Children's Social Care and other agencies to improve services for Children in Care. Recent consultations have included reviewing Children's Profiles with the Independent Reviewing Service, providing feedback on the accessibility of young people's health questionnaires from Healthwatch and learning more about the new Cambridge Children's Hospital with a visit from their Engagement Team. The CiCC are considering how they can work with the Children's Hospital to raise awareness about young people's mental health needs and the support that is available to them.
- 4.6 The CiCC invited members of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Team to their January meeting to observe how they conduct their meeting business and get involved in discussions. Members fed back that they like the option of inviting IROs to their meetings, and enjoy the discussions with them, particularly those they have built a relationship with.
- 4.7 The Children in Charge Youth Club continues to meet fortnightly during term time and have recently recruited some new members. The current venue for the Youth Club has a large outdoor space, and children and young people made the most of it by playing games and sports in the space, as well as using the indoor space for art and craft activities.

- 4.8 Attendees at the youth club have been discussing ideas for the 2022 Children in Care Awards Event which has been provisionally planned for July 2022, and have also spent time discussing their ideal Designated Teachers. Recent activities at the youth club have included making a giant patchwork wall art that when put together will represent the children's thoughts on the club. The group have also had fun making windmills, jigsaw puzzles, beaded bracelets and playing team games.
- 4.9 Feedback from the CiCC and youth club has been incorporated into a new draft of the CiC pledge. Children and young people have also told us they would prefer the pledge to be called a promise, so it's clearer to them what its purpose is.
- 4.10 The Young Recruiters Group continue to be actively involved in recruitment and have been asked to take part in interviews of newly qualified social workers for the ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) in March.
- 4.11 The Young Inspectors continue to work on their Supervised Contact Centre inspections across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire, with the next inspection dates planned in March. across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. The group will then meet to write their report, detailing their recommendations on how to ensure the supervised contact centres are meeting the needs of the children and young people that use them.
- 4.12 In January, the Young Trainers group delivered training to prospective Foster Carers as part of the Fostering Team's Skills to Foster course. The young people were supported by the Participation Team to facilitate an activity looking at Foster Carer skills and attributes and went through scenarios with the group on how to help young people settle into new placements. This is the third time the group have facilitated this training. Young people later commented that the carers had asked good questions, showing they had really reflected on the messages from children and young people within the training presentation. The Young Trainers have been invited to facilitate another Skills to Foster training course in March.
- 4.13 Members of the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire CiCCs attended a recording studio afternoon in the February half term to record audio for their ideal worker animated video joint project. The CiCC members also chose the animation style they would like for the videos, settling on digital animation rather than line drawing or a more traditional cartoon style. The audio is now being edited after which the artists will begin storyboarding the videos.
- 4.14 The new PCC Care Leaver Forum (CLF) had their first meeting in January where they were joined by the Cambridgeshire CLF. They brainstormed their group aims and focuses and received advice from their Cambridgeshire counterparts on how to be an effective CLF. The group were also consulted with on Pathway Planning and preparing young people for leaving care by the IRO Service Manager.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 This report was completed in consultation with members of the Children in Care Council.

## **6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

- 6.1 Improved engagement with Children in Care and Care Leavers.

## **7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 N/A

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 There are no changes required.

## **9. IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial Implications**

9.1 *There are no financial implications.*

### **Legal Implications**

9.2 *There are no legal implications, as the report is for information only.*

### **Equalities Implications**

9.3 Participation is an essential service for Children in Care and Care Leavers and this report demonstrates the level of participation in various events and activities.

### **Carbon Impact Assessment**

9.4 Children in Care Council meetings are held face to face on a monthly basis. As the venue for Children in Care Council meetings is centrally located, young people have been able to use public transport to travel to meetings.

### **9.5 Impacts on Children in Care and Care Leavers**

Participation is an essential service for Children in Care and Care Leavers, offering activities and opportunities to provide feedback on Children's Services.

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 N/A

## **11. APPENDICES**

11.1 N/A



<b>CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE (FORMAL)</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 6</b>
<b>16 MARCH 2022</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Report of:	Executive Director People and Communities Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Councils	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Lynne Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children's Services Education, Skills and the University	
Contact Officer(s):	Nicola Curley, Assistant Director Children's Social Care Catherine York, Designated Nurse Children in Care	Tel:

## HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS	
<b>FROM: Assistant Director Children's Social Care</b>	<b>Deadline date: N/A</b>
<p>It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Notes the content of the report</li> <li>2. Raise any queries with the lead officers</li> </ol>	

### 1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to a formal Corporate Parenting Committee

### 2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 This report provides an update on both physical and mental health services for Children in Care. The report provides an overview of the Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) activities to ensure robust monitoring and quality assurance systems are in place to meet the health needs of Peterborough's Children in Care including those with a disability.
- 2.2 This report is for the Corporate Parenting panel to consider under its terms of reference no: 2.4.3.6 (c) Promote the development of participation and ensure that the view of children and young people are regularly heard through the Corporate Parenting Committee to improve educational, health and social outcomes to raise aspiration and attainments.
- 2.3 This links to priority 4 of the Children in Care Pledge and Care Leavers Charter. Health issues of Children and young people in care

### 3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>
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#### 4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

### Annual Health Report Peterborough Corporate Parenting 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021

- 4.1 Over the past two years the Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the provision of health services, including the physical and mental health care provided to Children in Care. During this time the Designated Nurse and Doctor for Children in Care have worked with commissioners and providers across social care and health to ensure the provision of the required health services continued, including assurances around the quality and timeliness of services.
- 4.2 Health of Children in Care Partnership Group: Positive working relationships have been maintained between local authority and health colleagues since the commencement of the Covid-19 pandemic to enable appropriate health provision delivery. The monthly Health of Children in Care Partnership Meeting provides a robust forum for these discussions, decision making, development work, future planning, and pathway management. Additionally, the Head of Service: Corporate Parenting and the Designated Nurse meet monthly to further enhance communications, identify key risks along with mitigations, and to work on any new or ongoing issues, these discussions feed into the Health of Children in Care Partnership Meeting.
- 4.3 This Group holds a Workplan of developments and improvements, with ongoing workstreams being reviewed at each meeting, and the overall Workplan being reviewed quarterly. Current workstreams include the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire Pathway, review of the Health Assessment Questionnaires, audit of UASC Blood Borne Virus Pathway and TB (tuberculosis) Pathway and improving the sensory assessment and treatment plans for those with neurodevelopmental needs.
- 4.4 Initial and Review Health Assessments: At the start of the pandemic, in line with national guidance, Our providers moved to undertaking virtual health assessments. This approach enabled the continuation of timely and robust health assessments, with engagement of foster carers and young people being good.
- 4.5 Face to Face clinic appointments were provided for Initial Health Assessments for those aged 0-5 years, and children and young people when clinically indicated, and referral(s) to other services continued to be made as appropriate. Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) for those aged 6 - 17 years returned to face-to-face appointments from the beginning of June 2021. Virtual IHAs remain an option if the agreed criteria are met, but this will be for a small number of young people.
- 4.6 Review Health Assessments (RHAs): July 2021 saw the introduction of a hybrid model, which includes face to face appointments and virtual appointments for those young people who prefer this option and who meet the agreed criteria which are based on the learning from service provision during the acute stage of the pandemic.
- 4.7 **Initial Health Assessment Performance Data:**

<b>Initial Health Assessment Performance 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021</b>		
<b>In county placements</b>		
	Number of IHA requests (minus early discharges)	Number of IHAs completed within 20 working days
Total numbers	45	29
<b>Total percentage</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Out of county placements</b>		

	Number of IHA requests (minus early discharges)	Number of IHAs completed within 20 working days
Total numbers	20	11
Total percentage	100%	55%
<b>Overall Totals (combining In County and Out of County placements)</b>		
Total numbers	65	40
Total percentage	100%	62%

4.8 The reasons that the IHAs are not completed within 20 workings days include:

- Carers and young person not able to attend the initial appointment offered so the chosen appointment sits outside of the 20-working day timescale
- A sibling group of 3 had to be delayed by several days to enable them to be seen together.
- Delayed consent and referral from social care to health
- Placement changes
- In July there was lack of paediatrician capacity due to sickness

For those children and young people placed out of area the reasons are not known but are likely to be impacted by their own service capacity.

4.9 The IHA performance rates for our children and young people placed outside of Peterborough was previously raised as a concern by the Councillors, and the Chair of the Committee wrote to NHSE safeguarding colleagues to escalate this issue. I understand that to date there has not been a reply, however the Designated Nurse can report that this concern and the letter of escalation have been discussed with the Head of Nursing Quality and Safeguarding and Regional Safeguarding Lead for the East of England, and a meeting is scheduled with the Designated Nurse and the Head of Safeguarding, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG and the Regional Safeguarding Lead to discuss this matter on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022; an original meeting scheduled for early February was unable to go ahead due to regional system pressures. The Designated Nurse will provide a verbal update to the Committee on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

4.10 The Designated Nurse would also like to bring to the attention of the Committee, a change in the Peterborough Health Team's provision of IHAs for other local authority children placed in Peterborough. The Lead Nurse, Children in Care Health Team has reported that they are now experiencing pressures in undertaking IHAs for children and young placed in our area due to an increase in the number of requests as they have seen an increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children placed in Peterborough. To ensure that our children and young people receive their IHA within timescales, the team are prioritising our children/young people over those placed by other areas; previously out of area requests were dealt with in the same way as requests of our own children/young people. The Designated Nurse is working with the Lead Nurse to understand the details of the pressures, and the Team are looking at ways of working differently. It is anticipated that this will be a short-term problem, and the Designated Nurse will provide an update at the next Committee meeting.

4.11 The Deputy Chief Nursing Officer for England wrote to CCG Directors of Nursing in January 2022 advising that IHA completion for other local authority children (OLAC) is an increasing risk across most of England. She advised that the Looked After Children Clinical Reference Group (LAC CRG) has been reviewing this situation since before COVID-19, and that one of the key principles of their review is whether services which undertake IHAs discriminate against OLAC by offering a different process to completing the IHA, and it has been recognised that during COVID-19 that the issue has become greater. She stated that there is an onus on local solutions and NHS England would strongly recommend this matter is discussed at Local Safeguarding Partnerships, as a priority, so that the CCG accountable officer and the Director of Children's Services (as Corporate Parent) agree a single, unified process for **all** looked after children. She has identified that agreed partnership plans need to be developed, and that the Designated Professionals are engaged in this

work. Additionally, NHS England intends to commission a full audit via the Clinical Reference Group, by local authority / CCG, apropos of:

1. Numbers of OLAC placed from other local authorities.
2. Numbers of children placed into other local authorities.
3. Current volumes of delayed or deferred initial and review health assessments – noting the need for a notification process for systems under such pressure.

4.12 The Chief Nurse, CPCCG is taking this matter to the Executive Safeguarding Board at the May 2022 meeting and is working with the Designated Nurse CiC to understand the issues for our children and young people placed out of area, and also the local position.

4.13 **Review Health Assessment Performance Data:**

<b>Review Health Assessment Performance 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31st December 2021</b>		
<b>In county placements</b>		
	Number of RHAs Due	Number of RHAs completed within timescales
Total numbers	182	161
<b>Total percentage</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88%</b>
<b>Out of county placements</b>		
	Number of RHAs Due	Number of RHAs completed within timescales
Total numbers	61	34
Total percentage	100%	56%
<b>Overall Totals (combining In County and Out of County placements)</b>		
Total numbers	243	195
Total percentage	100%	80%

4.14 The reasons that the RHAs are not completed within timescale include:

- Carer’s availability
- Did not attend their first appointment
- Delayed consent and referral from social care to health
- Placement changes
- Initially declined an assessment but then decided to proceed

4.15 For those children and young people placed out of area the reasons are not known but are likely to be impacted by their own service capacity as well as the issues identified above.

4.16 **Strength and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQ)**

4.17 The Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire, commonly known as the SDQ, is a short behavioural screening questionnaire. There are three versions of the SDQ: the parent/carer, the teacher, and the self-report scale (completed by 11–16-year-olds), which provide the potential for triangulation of information about a child across the different versions. These questionnaires are used alongside health assessments to support the assessment of emotional health and wellbeing. Scoring categories are: Low need (0-13), Some need (14-16) and High need (17-40).

4.18 The health team in Peterborough undertake the SDQ process on behalf of Social Care. Pre Covid-19 the questionnaires were regularly completed by the carer at the time of the health assessment as this

was always a face-to-face appointment and was a way of increasing the number of returns, however with the introduction of virtual health assessments the process became reliant on foster carers receiving and returning the questionnaire by email; subsequently there was a drop in the completion rate. Despite efforts by health and social care practitioners to improve this position, this change in process resulted in far fewer SDQs being completed, with 2020/21 having only a **49% completion rate**.

4.19 To ensure that a robust partnership process is in place to support improved performance, a sub-group of the Health of Children in Care Partnership Group was formed and a SDQ Pathway was developed. The SDQ Pathway which includes health, social care, and education colleagues, was launched at the end of May 2021, however following review of the pathway in January 2022, it has been recognised that further work is required to increase the level of detail within the process to enhance its effectiveness; a further Task and Finish Group is being established for this work. Additionally, work will also be undertaken with foster carers to improve their understanding of the SDQ, its completion and its importance, with the option of the Lead Nurse being involved in some training.

4.20 **SDQ Completion Rate 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021:**

Month	Number of questionnaires sent to carers by the Health Team	Percentage of questionnaires sent to carers by the Health Team	Number of completed questionnaires returned by carers	Percentage of completed questionnaires returned by carers
April – June 2021	87	100%	48	56%
July - September 2021	68	100%	38	44%
October – December 2021	60	100%	30	50%
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>54%</b>
The percentage of questionnaires sent to carers is always 100% as questionnaires are sent for all children aged 4-16 years (inclusive) but excludes those for whom the questionnaire is not appropriate such as children/young people with disabilities.				

4.21 The annual quality audit of health assessments will take place before the end of March 2022. This audit is undertaken by the Designated Nurse and Designated Doctor to ensure independent review, and results in a report which is shared with the Children in Care Health Team. Required improvements and/or developments identified from the audit are captured as actions within the report and have clear timescales, as well as an identified lead who is responsible for ensuring completion and provision of updates and feedback.

4.22 Blood Borne Virus and Tuberculosis (TB) Pathway for Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UASC) Audit: The Designated Doctor is leading on this audit which includes review of the effectiveness of the pathways for Blood Borne Virus and Tuberculosis screening and treatment. Individual elements of the audit are being undertaken by iCaSH, Tuberculosis Service and the Children in Care Health Teams, thus, covering the whole of the pathway for our young people.

4.23 The audit includes young people who became looked after between June - December 2021. The audit includes 23 UASC, some of whom are still being seen within the services which is delaying the final findings being reported on until March 2021. All these young people are placed in Peterborough and are receiving their screening there. The audit report will be available at the end of March 2021.

4.24 Refugee Council continue to provide a Well Being and Work for Refugee Integration service which is commissioned until end September 2022, can be utilised by UASC. This service includes a well being therapy service, but this is not a replacement for mental health services.

4.25 Dental Services: access to dental services is a national challenge which is being managed by NHS England. In Peterborough our children and young people in care have had varying success at

accessing non-urgent dental care, but for a period two practices were regularly seeing children in care. However, this offer ceased due to the practices no longer having capacity. Access for children in care was also supported for a period by the St. Mary's Dental Practice in Ely, and has just recommenced, so provides an option for Peterborough children who are placed nearer to the practice and can travel, although this is not suitable for all.

- 4.26 Previously the Councillors had raised their concerns regarding dental provision, and the Chair wrote to NHSE dental colleagues and NHSE safeguarding colleagues. I understand to date, that a reply has not been received, but the Designated Nurse is able to provide the following updates:
- 4.27 From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 Dental Practices are delivering a minimum of 85% of their contractual activity. Due to dental care being a high-risk area requiring the increased infection prevention and control measures, practices continue to see a reduced number of patients per day compared to their pre Covid activity. Currently limited change is being seen due to the backlog, and patients are still being seen on the urgency of need and vulnerability. However, this increase in activity is helping those who require urgent dental care.
- 4.28 Dental services have been awarded additional funding to enable NHS dental practices to provide additional urgent dental care sessions outside of their normal practice hours e.g., evenings and weekends (practices choose to opt in). These additional sessions can only be accessed by referral from NHS 111 with participating practices being added to the directory. The funding must be used by 31-03-2022. Specialist Care Dentistry are also providing additional sessions for patients across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough via NHS 111.
- 4.29 The Designated Nurse continues to work with NHSE regional dental and safeguarding colleagues and attends the East of England dental meetings; this enables her to advocate for our children and young people and to ensure that the needs of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are understood by the regional teams. This Group is leading on the dental strategy, Mini Mouth training, development of the dental pathway and education of practices around this, data collection to assist in understanding the demand on dental services and rolling out Children Focused Dental Practices; all of which will contribute to improved access to dental services.
- 4.30 The outlined developments and work demonstrate that NHSE and regional colleagues are working towards improving services for all children and young people, some of the improvements being immediate and some will provide improvements over the coming 12 months. To provide reassurance to the Committee that improvements are occurring, the Designated Nurse would like to draw your attention to the following key points which have an immediate impact or an impact within the next 3 months:
- Urgent care is available to all our children and young people via NHS 111. There are an increased number of appointment available until the end of March 2022 to support the management of any backlog of patients waiting but following this date urgent care appointments will continue to be available.
  - NHSE are working to identify dental practices across the region, including Peterborough that have the capacity to see children in care requiring routine dental care. In addition to this, working with practices to understand the Dental Pathway will improve practices understanding around the need for children in care to be prioritised for routine care, thus increasing access.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

N/A

## **6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

- 6.1 To improve health and well-being, and health outcomes for children in care by ensuring adequate assessment of health and suitable health provision; addressing areas where there may be a lack of provision or improvements required.

**7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 Corporate Parenting Committee have requested a health update at all formal committees.

**8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 N/A

**9. IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial Implications**

9.1 N/A

**Legal Implications**

9.2 N/A

**Equalities Implications**

9.3 N/A

**Other Implications**

9.4 This report supports the health needs of Children in Care and Care Leavers with the service supporting them to live a healthy lifestyle and ensure they are offered regular health checks and support to attend these.

**10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 None

**11. APPENDICES**

11.1 None

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<b>CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 7</b>
<b>16 MARCH 2022</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Report of:	Nicola Curley, Director Children’s Services	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Lynne Ayres Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education, Skills and the University	
Contact Officer(s):	Myra O’Farrell, Head of Service Corporate Parenting	Tel. 01733 864391

**PERFORMANCE DATA FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS  
DECEMBER 2021**

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>FROM:</b> Nicola Curley, Director of Children’s Services	<b>Deadline date:</b> N/A
<p>It is recommended that members of Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the content of the report, and</li> <li>2. Raise any questions with the lead officer</li> </ol>	

**1. ORIGIN OF REPORT**

1.1 This report is submitted to Corporate Parenting Committee to each formal and informal committee as part of the standing work programme item in relation to performance.

**2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Corporate Parenting Committee in respect of the numbers of children and young people being looked after by the Council as of 31 December 2021 providing a breakdown of the types of placements in which they are living. The report also provides information about the age, gender and ethnicity of those children and young people.

2.2 This report is for Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.4.4.6 To monitor the quality of care delivered by the City Council and review the performance of outcomes for children and young people in care.

2.5 This reports to the Children in Care Pledge by focussing on the placements for children in care and care leavers.

**3. TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
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#### **4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

4.1 At 30.12.21 there were:

126 children placed with in house foster carers.

116 children placed with agency foster carers outside of the city boundaries. These agencies work with the council to provide foster placements on a contractual basis.

12 post-16 were living in semi-independent accommodation, who have an allocated social worker and a personal adviser. The focus is preparation for adulthood.

19 children were placed with family or friends (connected person). These carers are formally assessed in the same way that in house foster carers are assessed and are presented to the Fostering panel for approval through the same process and standard. They are supported through the foster carer allowance.

6 children are currently living with their parents but are still considered to be 'looked after' because they are subject to full care orders. The Council is sharing parental responsibility with the birth parent. Such placements are made when there is a plan for reunification.

7 children are currently placed for adoption.

5 children are placed in residential educational placements.

55 children are placed in residential provision and of these 5 are children with a disability. These placements are most usually made when it is clear that foster care is not sufficient to meet the child or young person's needs. Residential care is nearly always accessed by the Adolescents Team and only used for younger children in very special circumstances. These are reviewed regularly to ensure children can step down to a foster placement when they are ready.

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 N/A

#### **6. CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPIONS FEEDBACK AND NEXT STEPS**

6.1 Nothing to report

#### **7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

7.1 This is an accurate report of the current accommodation placements for children in care and care leavers.

#### **8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 The data included in this report is from the monthly performance report which includes live data.

#### **9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

9.1 None

## **10. IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial Implications**

10.1 None

### **Legal Implications**

10.2 None as this report is for information purposes.

### **Equalities Implications**

10.3 The current recruitment campaign for foster carers is focussed on increasing placements for specific groups linked to sibling placement, older children and Link carer for children with disabilities.

### **Carbon Impact Assessment**

10.4 There are no recommendations made within this report and therefore there are no implications to carbon emissions.

### **Children in Care Implications**

10.5 This report relates to all children in care.

## **11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

11.1 Monthly Performance Report

## **12. APPENDICES**

12.1 Appendix 1 – Performance Report December 2021

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## HEADLINE FIGURES

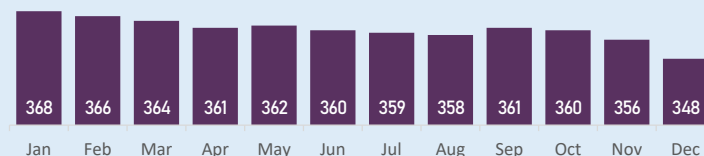
Number of children in care on the last day of December

# 322



Target: 370

Target: below 307



## Staffing

	Establishment	Average Caseload	Change	Performance
Family Safeguarding Qualified social workers	31.5	15	▲	-
Children in Care Qualified social workers	17	17.5	▲	-
Leaving Care Personal Advisors	8	23	▲	-
Independent Reviewing Officers	9	67	-	-

## Legal status of children in care

Full care order, 221

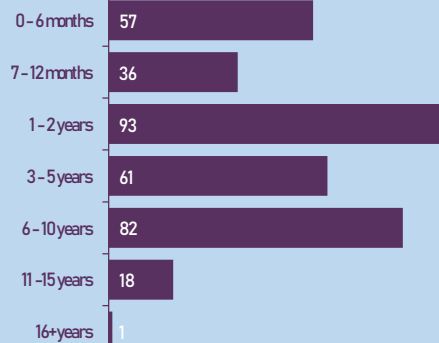
Freed adoption / placement order, 48

Voluntary agreement, 44

Interim care order, 33

Other, 2

## Length of time children have been in care



Key

Change since previous month  
Performance against target

▲ Improved  
✓ Strong

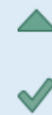
■ Stayed the same  
! Acceptable

▼ Deteriorated  
✗ Poor

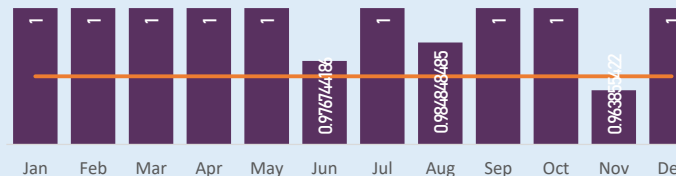
## SERVICE STANDARDS

% of child in care reviews which were held on time (year to date, and during each month)

# 99%

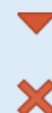


Target: above 97%

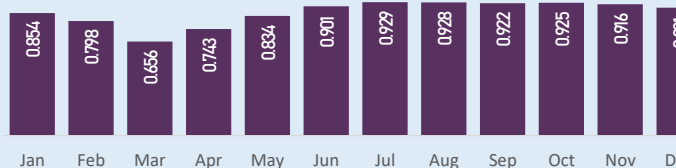


% of child in care statutory visits which were carried out on time (year to date, and during each month)

# 96.2%



Target: above 98%

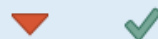


## PLACEMENTS

Placement stability

# 8.4%

Target: below 10.0%



8.4% of children in Peterborough's care had 3 or more different placements in the last 12 months.

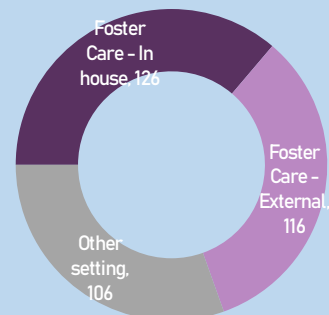
Out of those children who have been in care for over 2.5 years, 72.3% have been in their current placement for two or more years.

# 72.3%

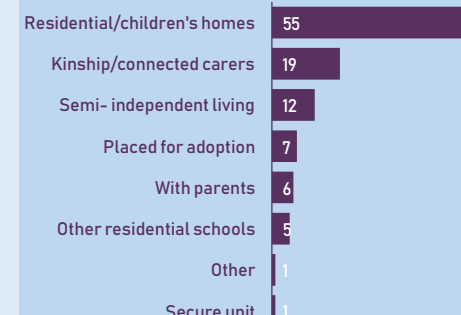
Target: above 68%



## Type of placement of children in care



## Other settings breakdown



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