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Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Committee held at the Bourges/Viersen Room - Town Hall  
on 17 July 2019

**Committee Members Present:** Bisby, L Coles, Ayres, Howard, Bashir, Robinson, Jones, Day, S Bond, Haynes, Lane.

**Officers Present:**

Nicola Curley, Assistant Director Children Services  
Myra O'farrell, Head of Corporate Parenting  
Andy Pallas, Executive Director Children's Services, The Adolescent and Children's Trust (TACT) Peterborough  
Deborah Spencer, Designated Nurse for Looked After Children  
Sue King, Head of Service TACT  
Jenny Weeden, Youth Voice Coordinator  
Dee Glover Virtual School Head Teacher  
Pat Carrington, Assistant Director Skills and Employment / Principal  
Cambridgeshire County Council & Peterborough City Council / City College Peterborough  
Mohammed Sarfraz, Post 16 Education Coordinator for Children in Care  
Karen S Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer

**Also Present:**

Stephen Green, Foster Carer Forum Representative  
Jo Merchie, Foster Carer Forum Representative

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harper, Councillor Howard was in attendance as substitute.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 MARCH 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**4. APPOINTMENT OF CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION POSITIONS**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report which requested Members to review the current Corporate Parenting Champions positions and allocations.

The Chairman introduced the report to Members and requested them to consider and approve the positions and nominations proposed.

Champion positions and nominations received included:

- I. Housing, Finance and Benefits - Councillor Sandra Bond
- II. Education Employment and Training and Access to Higher Education - Councillor Bashir
- III. Health - Councillor Robinson
- IV. Recreation and Leisure activities - Councillor Day
- V. Effective Care Planning - Councillor Jones

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (unanimously) to note the report and agreed the Champion positions and appointments.

#### **AGREED ACTION**

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and agreed the Champion positions and appointments as follows:

- I. Housing, Finance and Benefits - Councillor Sandra Bond
- II. Education Employment and Training, and Access to Higher Education - Councillor Bashir
- III. Health - Councillor Robinson
- IV. Recreation and Leisure Activities - Councillor Day
- V. Effective Care Planning - Councillor Jones

#### **5. UPDATE FROM FOSTER CARER FORUM**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the recent activities and outcomes of the Foster Carer Forum meetings.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an overview of discussions and actions from the Foster Carers forum. Members were advised about the training pack recently circulated to foster carers and the work undertaken to review the Staying Put Policy.

The Stephen Greene, the Foster Carer Forum Representative introduced the report to Members and requested them to consider and note the update provided.

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

- The language used in relation to the Staying Put Policy was being reviewed by TACT, however some of the language could not be amended for Legal reasons. Strategies to explain this to the young people in care had seemed to be effective.
- There had been improvements introduced recently surrounding the out of hours support provided to Foster Carers.
- The Foster Carer rates and packages were being reviewed by TACT in order to encourage carers to remain with the in-house provision rather than be enticed to move to Independent Fostering Agencies.
- The training packages were being circulated as wide as possible, such as through all social workers and special guardianship carers.
- The work to improve continuity of social workers for Children in Care was ongoing and this was a national campaign. Work was also being conducted with Cambridgeshire to commission social workers from agencies. There had been a slight turnover of staff due to circumstances such as promotion, which was seen as a positive outcome.

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

## **AGREED ACTION**

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (unanimously) to note the report and agreed that the Executive Director Children's Services, TACT Peterborough would provide details to Members of how the recent training package for foster carers would be accessible by all groups of carers.

### **6. YOUTH VOICE COORDINATOR FOR THE CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to an update from the Children in Care Council about their projects and activities.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an overview of note the content of the report and raise any queries they had with lead officers.

The Youth Voice Coordinator introduced the report and advised Members about the current projects being undertaken by the Children in Care Council such as work being undertaken on the coming into care packages, build a bear foundation application, summer activities, collaboration work with the Virtual School Head Teacher and the youth leader programme.

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

### **7. VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the Virtual Schools.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an overview of the achievements of Children and Young People in Care and the role of Peterborough Virtual School. Members were also provided with an overview of recent successes such as university offers for CiC and the Ravensthorpe Forest School success.

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

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

- Members commented that the data compiled for Virtual Schools (VS) was required to consider all the children in the cohort and was not able to separate out figures such as SEND or Education Health Care Plans, whereas mainstream school data would. Members commented that this had the potential to skew figures in relation to the success of the virtual school.
- Members were advised that in line with the Department for Education (DfE) expectations, figures had not been separated, however, it was something that could be considered by the virtual school service going forward.
- Members were provided with confirmation over the achievement levels for Maths and English and commented that the figures appeared to suggest that being put on a foundation level would not provide the opportunity for pupils to progress further than a grade four or five.
- Members were advised that some pupils had a low base learning level and the results that had been achieved on the foundation level, were considered good. Furthermore, Members were advised that if any pupil was placed on the wrong GCSE level, the school would face challenge from the VS.

- Members were advised that there had been around 107 pupils at the beginning of the academic year accessing the post 16 education provision. In addition, there were three pupils due to enter university.
- Members were advised that the 'out of city placements' had been a challenge, however the VS team had liaised with every designated school on a termly basis. Furthermore, the Virtual School training packages for teachers had been offered nationally.
- Members complimented the Virtual School Head Teacher on the report and the progress being made.
- Members were advised that Care Leavers could access university placements up to the age of 25 under the new legislation.
- Members were advised that the introduction of additional learning programmes such as the Forest School were being explored, particularly to include secondary school pupils.

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

## 8. APPRENTICESHIP AND WORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR CARE LEAVERS UPDATE

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to Care Leaver apprenticeship opportunities.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an overview on the position of Apprenticeships and Work Opportunities for Care Leavers in the City.

The Assistant Director Skills and Employment introduced the report and requested Members to note the contents and raise any queries they had with lead officers.

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

- Members were advised that there were suitable opportunities across the city where apprenticeship support would be provided to employers and applicants in addition to the Peterborough City Council opportunities.
- There had been an apprenticeship reform which had changed the funding available and this was different for employers with a wage bill over £3m which would be paid into a digital account to support their own apprenticeships. Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) companies could access funding from the Government, however there was a national shortage of this type of funding through the college. There had been a levy pot that could also be passed to other businesses and discussions were being held with Peterborough City Council to explore how residual apprenticeship funds could also be passed on to SMEs.
- The NEET team would contact young people that had not engaged with the service for some time. There were challenges with keeping track of the NEET young people if they move out of city or change their contact phone number.

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

### AGREED ACTION

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and agreed that the Not in Employment Education or Training Team would provide further detail to the Committee about what measures were in place to track down Care Leavers that had moved out of the City and changed contact details.

## 9. EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKER CHILDREN

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the education opportunities for all Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) young people.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an overview of UASC young people and their access to education when they arrive in care in Peterborough.

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

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

- Members were advised that there was an error in the report at 4.2.4 in that the City College data should be listed as in city rather than out of city.
- There were a number of provisions on offer to support unaccompanied asylum seekers, such as English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), Compass Group and other partnership arrangements.
- Peterborough City Council (PCC) was part of the Eastern Region UASC intake and was responsible for 0.07% of the UASC population. Where other local authorities were over their prescribed figures for UASC, PCC was signed up to a regional rota to take responsibility for a child in this situation.
- There were providers that worked with post 16 to 18 and post 18 UASCs to provide good educational skills base. Providers would also work with Imams and the People and Communities Cohesion Manager to support Peterborough's UASCs.
- Some UASCs were at different levels in their education, with some never receiving an education. There was a course on offer at the City College to provide citizenship and democracy awareness for all UASCs. No qualification could be achieved for the entry course; however, students could progress to level three. There had been several success stories despite the challenges the UASCs had faced, such as progressing into careers in the legal profession.
- Members commented that the work being undertaken to provide varied education opportunities for UASCs had developed in a positive way.
- Members were advised that there had been a transport support provision in place for UASC students as well as funding to help with grants towards any equipment needed for courses.
- Members thanked the Head of Virtual Schools and Post 16 Education Coordinator for Children in Care for all their hard work and success.
- Members were advised that the authority would provide UASCs with education placement near to where they lived.
- The Authority had recently been successful in a bid for Central Government funding to support community cohesion development. This funding also included support for UASCs education and housing needs provision in the future. Members were also advised that they would be provided with an update on the progress of the funding bid in due course.

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

## 10. CHILDREN IN CARE STRATEGY AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy which was currently being reviewed.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an overview of the strategy review and the work being undertaken by the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers in order to design it. In addition, Members were advised that it was also intended to enhance the connection with the Corporate Parenting Committee. The Committee was also informed that the Children in Care (CiC) and Care Leaver (CL) Strategy would be presented to Members as part of the ratification processes.

The Head of Corporate Parenting introduced the report and requested Members to note the content and raise any queries they had with lead officers.

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

- Members were advised that the priorities outlined in the current CL and CiC strategy had been initially linked to strategies such as the Sufficiency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Board. It was very out of date and the work being undertaken would ensure the relevant consultation processes were appropriate and would predominantly include CiC and CLs comments.
- The current strategy would be provided to the CiCC and CLs in order to obtain their views in the first instance and to gain their feedback on how the document should be updated.
- The Foster Carer Forum Representative commented that it was reassuring that the Authority was listening to the CiC and CLs over such important issues.
- Members were informed that the consultation with CiC and CL was intended to take place over the summer events and would include groups of young people with additional needs.
- Members commented that it was very important to listen to the young people and children in care over the strategy update in order to gain their views and engage with them especially over what support they need.

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

## 11. PERFORMANCE REPORTS

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the placements of children and young people in care.

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to Children in Care and Care Leaver placements.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an overview in respect of the numbers of children and young people currently being looked after by the Authority and to provide a breakdown of the types of placements in which they lived. The report also provided information about the age, gender and ethnicity of those children and young people.

The Assistant Director Children's Services introduced the report and requested Members to note the content and raise any queries they had with lead officers. Members were also provided with an update in regard to the new Scorecard format.

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

- Members commented that the new Scorecard format was a good improvement to the performance report and the figures were very clear to follow.
- Members were advised that the service had seen a downward trend on pathway plans for Care Leavers data. This was due to the number of reviews undertaken to improve the recording processes. This had been difficult for staff to manage, however there was a plan in place to assist with the transition and the data being produced. A recent peer review had identified that the new recording system in place was clear, which had been seen by the service to be a positive outcome.
- Members were advised that the new scorecard was not an in-depth service performance report and that one could be provided to Members on request. Members were also advised that officers would highlight any areas of concern where performance was low. Members were also advised that the targets would be reviewed to ensure that figures were achievable.
- Members were advised that there had been some success with adoption figures due to improvement plans in place, however, the process had been a lengthy one. Members were also advised that it was important to implement the right adoption placement and sometimes there had been a small number of cases that had taken longer to implement, which had affected the figures. In addition, Members were advised that the Authority's adoption figures had remained stable compared to national figures. It would take three years to see the numbers improve.
- Members were advised that the Authority was not required to report special guardianship orders that also provided permanent placements within the birth family. This had affected the figures for adoption placements as the courts preferred this type of order.

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

## 12. HEALTH

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report on the health service performance to children in care and care leavers.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with 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 the Looked after Children population in Peterborough.

The Designated Nurse for Children in Care introduced the report and requested Members to note the content and raise any queries they had with lead officers.

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

- Members commented that attention should be concentrated on support for young people in care with substance misuse issues.

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

## 13. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME AND REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK IN 2018/2019

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the review of the Committee's work in 2018/2019.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with the opportunity to discuss the Committee's objectives and priorities for 2019/20 and to approve the draft work programme for 2019/20.

The report also provided the Committee with the opportunity to review its work conducted throughout the municipal year 2018/19.

The Democratic Services Officer and Assistant Director Children's Services introduced the report and requested Members to note the content of the report and raise any queries they had with lead officers. Members were also advised about the number of recommendations they had made during 2018/19 and that this number had increased compared to 2017/2018.

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

- Members were advised that the Committee could receive updates about placements regarding sufficiency.
- Members were also advised that any finance queries could be directed to Members Services or the Cabinet Member for Finance.
- Members were advised that any finance service or budget issues should be referred to full Council.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and raise any queries with the Lead Officers.

#### **AGREED ACTION**

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and approved the work Programme for 2019/2020.

#### **14. MEMBERS ISSUES**

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

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

#### **15. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next formal meeting of Corporate Parenting Committee was due to be held on Wednesday, 20 November 2019.

CHAIRMAN  
6:30pm - 8:35pm