

<b>CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE (FORMAL)</b>	AGENDA ITEM No. 4
<b>25 NOVEMBER 2020</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Report of:	Wendi Ogle-Welbourn, Executive Director, People and Communities, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Councils	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Lynne Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Nicola Curley, Assistant Director, Children's Services	Tel. 864065

## **FOSTER CARER COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT – OCTOBER 2020**

<b>R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S</b>	
<b>FROM: Stephen Greene</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 the report; and</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 as part of a regular update schedule in line with the work programme.

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

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update the committee about the activities of the foster carer committee.
- 2.2 This report is for the Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.4.4.2 to receive statutory reports in relation to the adoption, fostering, commissioning, looked after children services and children's homes with a view to recommending any changes.
- 2.3 How does this report link to the Children in care Pledge?
- This links to all aspects of the Children in Care Pledge.

### **3. TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
---	-----------	----------------------------------	--

### **4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Foster Carer Committee met on 9 October 2020, and the following areas of interest were discussed:
- 4.2

All committee officers stood down and were are happy to be re-elected. There were no other candidates proposed for officer positions. All committee officers were happy to stand for another year as follows:

Chair – Stephen Greene  
Proposed by Mandy Nicholson  
2nd by Jenny Winters

Vice chair – Mandy Nicholson  
Proposed by Jenny Winters  
2nd by Sue Stepney

Secretary – Sue Stepney  
Proposed by Mandy Nicholson  
2nd by Jenny Winters

Treasurer/events organiser appointed - Andrea Hughes

#### 4.3 **Points raised at foster carers committee meeting 9/10/2020:**

##### 4.3.1 Staying put:

Initially when a young person turns 18yrs a staying-put agreement/contract between the young person and their foster carers is delivered by the young person's PA. The agreement is signed by all parties.

Staying-put agreement has been really positive for most young people.

The contract enables the young people to be supported whilst attending university and during the pandemic and has offered them a stable and supported place to reside.

The contract offers the young person security, peace of mind and stability whilst continuing to offer a permanent home as a young adult.

Unfortunately, the staying-put agreement does not offer this same security, peace of mind and stability to the foster carer/rest of household.

Whilst the foster carer is expected to give the young person a minimum of 28 days notice should they wish to terminate the contract, however the young person can and have terminate the contract without notice.

As the young person is now an adult, there is no Financial help for Foster carers for damages incurred.

##### 4.3.2 Foster carers leaving PCC:

Implementing exit interviews.

PCC Carers moving to other authorities or to fostering agencies.

Possibility of setting up a communication/WhatsApp group to link new carers with experienced carers.

##### 4.3.3 Transport:

Carers expressed concerns about communications with the transport department.

Young people sharing transport with unknown young people from other households who are not in their bubble either at home or at school.

Carers have been told that random young people sharing transport is purely down to cost - carers feel that everyone's safety should come before cost.

Transport/taxi's arriving to collect children who have already moved placement - taxi companies were unaware of the changes.

#### 4.3.4 Contact:

Carers are extremely concerned about face-to-face contact between the young people and the Young people's family members.

Carers should not feel pressured into agreeing for their young people to spend time with the wider community especially if they feel that there is a health risk being brought into their household/to their children/family members.

#### 4.3.5 fostering network forum:

Sue Stepney is our representative on the forum and will be attending meetings.

#### 4.3.6 Virtual training:

Positive feedback from carers regarding training courses held on zoom/teams. Carers found the apps easy to navigate and courses enjoyable and informative.

#### 4.3.7 Events:

Unfortunately, due to Covid all of the usual young people and carers events were cancelled. Committee members are at present organising a virtual personal message from Santa to carers/young people via zoom/teams.

#### 4.3.8 Finance:

The extra payment to assist carers with extra costs incurred by having young people at home/online learning and activities/equipment during lockdown was very well received by all carers, as were the recent increase in the cost of living allowances.

The committee received positive feedback and Messages of gratitude.

#### 4.3.9 Mental health:

During lockdown SENCOs/class teachers delivered weekly telephone calls to carers and their young people as well as individual schools offering helpful/supportive website addresses and courses to their pupils households.

FCC believe the city's young people should be thanked/congratulated for their resourcefulness during such a difficult time as we all appreciate the impact the pandemic/lockdown has had on their already different/difficult circumstances.

Also, carers have commented positively on how their households have built/repaid relationships during the lockdown period.

## 5. **CONSULTATION**

5.1 N/A

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

6.1 The outcome of the report is that committee will be updated about the foster carer committee activities.

**7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

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

**8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 *N/A*

**9. IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial Implications**

9.1 None.

**Legal Implications**

9.2 None

**Equalities Implications**

9.3 *N/A*

9.4 ***Carbon Impact Assessment***

Carbon impact in relation to this report has been considered and there is a neutral impact.

9.5 ***Children in Care Implications***

The work of the Foster Carer Committee relates to children in care and care leavers and therefore has an impact on them.

**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 *List any appendices to the report.*  
*N/A*