

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING (FORMAL)  
HELD AT 6:00PM, ON  
WEDNESDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2023  
BOURGES/MIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillor Jones, (Chairman (Chair), Councillor Bi (Vice Chairman) Councillors Jackie Allen, Casey, Cole, Howard, Sainsbury, Nawaz, S Bond and Seager

**Other Councillors in attendance:** Cllr Bisby, Cabinet Member for Children Services

**Officers Present:** Gary Jones, Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support  
Myra O'Farrell, Head of Corporate Parenting  
Shalina Chandoo, Quality Assurance Lead, Participation and Independent Visiting  
Zoe Lattimer, Head Teacher, Peterborough Virtual School  
Katie Liddle, Designated Nurse for Children in Care  
Dr Aslam, Consultant Paediatrician, Designated Doctor for Looked After Children  
Sue King, Fostering Service Manager  
Karen S Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer

**Also Present:** Glen Crossland, Foster Carer Committee Representative

**15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Over and Lane. Councillor Casey was in attendance for Cllr Over as substitute.

**16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

**17. MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 JULY 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**18. UPDATE FROM FOSTER CARERS COMMITTEE**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to updates from the Foster Carer Committee.

The purpose of the report was to update the Committee about the activities of the Foster Carer Committee (FCC). Members were also updated about the decoupling process for Foster Carer Services, which was shared with Cambridgeshire County Council. In addition, Members were updated about the ongoing transport issues for

foster families.

The Foster Carer Representative introduced the report and asked Members to note the contents and raise any queries they had with representatives.

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

- A workshop on 6 December 2023, had been organised to explore the transport issues and review the arrangements.
- The Foster Carer Committee information pack was being finalised and would be shared with Members when completed.

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

#### **AGREED ACTION**

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents of the report, and agreed that the Foster Carer Committee would share the foster carer information pack with the Committee once completed.

### **19. CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL (CICC) PARTICIPATION REPORT**

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.

The purpose of the report was to update Members on the Children in Care Council activities and participation services. Members were informed about the various projects and events that were undertaken and a recent award won for the Every Word Matters project.

The Quality Assurance Lead for Participation and Independent Visiting introduced the report and asked Members to note the contents and raise any queries they had with Officers.

The Quality Assurance Lead 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 on the work undertaken in conjunction with the Anglian Ruskin University (ARU) and Care Leaders and advised that further opportunities could be explored with other organisations for public speaking to build confidence.
- Care Leaders had been working on assessments for young Social Worker students, training and attending lectures at ARU.

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

#### **AGREED ACTIONS**

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and agreed that:

1. The Participation Team would inform the Leaving Care Service that there could be work experience opportunities available through Council departments and partners to support their public speaking project.

## **20. PETERBOROUGH VIRTUAL SCHOOL**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the Peterborough Virtual School Annual Report.

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with additional or background information on Exam results, the position for Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and the position for Children in Care with Special Education Needs

Head Teacher, Peterborough Virtual School 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:

- There were pupils in Key stage 3 and 4 with larger numbers compared to younger children and this was because there were more teenagers coming into care later in life. In addition, Members were advised that the situation was a nationwide issue.
- Members felt that it would be helpful to look at the destinations of young people in education moving into further education, such as moving to university and to track their journey. Members were advised that two young people had moved onto university and others, to a level three qualification. Furthermore, there was an issue in retrieving this type of data and whether it could be shared, but work could be undertaken to explore ways to track older students' education journey.
- Members were also advised about the decrease in figures from 27 to 6 for year 13 students that had withdrawn from further education, which was considered a successful project undertaken in conjunction with Stamford and Peterborough College.
- Teachers would be made aware of potential education difficulties children and young people in care were struggling with, and this varied from school to school. Furthermore, most of the challenges faced by children in care were in relation to social and emotional mental health, which were masked by underlying cognition and learning difficulties. The VS would need to work out what these issues were.
- Support for foster carers with children suffering from emotional mental health (SEMH) needs, were being addressed by provision of an eLearning suite, which intended to help foster carers support their children with homework.
- There was an opportunity for foster families to link in with Family Voice, a parent carer group, in relation to Special Educational Needs (SEND) support.
- The model of VS was changing to focus on specific needs to track children through their education and SEND needs. There was also an opportunity for schools to use the Pupil Premium (PiP) Plus grant to provide support for CiC with SEND needs and this option was being explored.
- It would be unusual to identify SEND needs in young babies and children in care unless there was an obvious severe disability. In addition, there would be very low numbers of Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) issued for very young babies and children in care, because language gaps would not be identified until the child had reached the age of eight.
- Children with Alcohol Foetal Syndrome (FASD) was a hidden disability and

would not automatically qualify for an instant (EHCP).

- The reference in 4.3.1 of the report, three attend alternative provision, was in relation to children where an educated provision could not be met by a child's school and other sources such as the Barns Academy, would meet a child's alternative needs.

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

#### **ACTION AGREED**

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and agreed that the:

- Head Teacher, Peterborough Virtual Schools would explore whether the education journey for young people in care could be tracked and included in future virtual school reports.

### **21. CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING START TIME 2024-2025**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the Corporate Parenting Committee Meeting Start Time 2024-2025.

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and asked Members to note agree the start time for final approval at Full Council.

#### **AGREED ACTION**

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents and agreed the start time as follows: formal to start at 6pm and informal to start at 5.30pm for final approval at Full Council.

### **22. PERFORMANCE REPORT**

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 2023 and to provide a breakdown of the types of homes in which they were living in. The report also provided information about the age, gender and ethnicity of those children and young people.

Members attention was drawn to several issues, which included:

- Home stability, where children had experienced three or more homes in a 12-month period, which was higher than expected. There would be some analysis undertaken by officers to explore the reasons why this was happening.
- Health assessments which were causing a concern as there were unreasonable delays in conducting these for children and these issues had been escalated to the Cambridgeshire Community Services, with immediate mitigation being requested to resolve the issues.
- There had been further work undertaken on the provision of dental assessments being conducted on time and Partners were being consulted. Work was also underway to explore the reasons why children go missing.

The Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support 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:

- The Health Service Standards figures collected in the performance report had not captured how many children had not completed an assessment, however there could be some further analysis to undertake in this area.
- Of the 412 children in care, 27% were in assisted living in residential care, and related to an older cohort and only a few younger children. Officers were undertaking a review of the foster carer recruitment and transformation of the fostering provisions as part of the Cambridgeshire County Council decoupling exercise. There could be further work undertaken to drill down into age groups to demonstrate how long they had been in residential care and their journey, compared year on year.
- There was a good interface with commissioning for homes for children in care and any concerns raised would be investigated.
- It appeared following a recent visit by a Member to the Welland Family Supervised Contact Centre, there were capacity issues which needed to be captured in the scorecard and the issues addressed. Members were advised that the types of interaction and capacity constraints could be included in the performance report going forward. The report could be provided quarterly to align the work being undertaken by the Young Inspectors.
- Members asked for consideration to be given to ensure that appointments to officer posts for foster carer recruitment, included skills to support the diverse fostering communities.
- There could be a range of reasons why the figures for the timeliness of adoption were concerning, such as an adoption being contested or age of a child.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the content and agreed a number of alternations to the performance scorecard.

### **AGREED ACTIONS**

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and **AGREED** that the Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support and Head of Corporate Parenting would include the following in future scorecards:

1. Health Service Standards figures data in the performance report to capture how many children had not completed an assessment.
2. A drill down into age groups for children in assisted living residential care to show how long they had been in this type of care and their journey, compared year on year.
3. To undertake a piece of work to provide quarterly figures in the performance report in relation to the types of interaction and capacity constraints being experienced by the Welland Family Supervised Contact Centre, to align the work being undertaken by the Young Inspectors.
4. To include further detail in the scorecard around the delay in the timeliness of adoption figures.

## **23. HEALTH REPORT**

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 provide Members with update on health and dental services for children in care (CiC). The report also provided an overview of the Integrated Care Board's (ICB) activities to ensure robust monitoring and quality assurance systems were in place to meet the health needs of Peterborough's Children in Care, which included those with a disability.

An update was also provided on the dental provision for children and young people in care, which was being provided by Bushfield dental practice. The practice had also assessed a lot of children in care from other areas outside of Peterborough. In addition, Members were advised that recent national data for children in care between 13 to 17 years of age, had shown there was a lack of treatment undertaken, due to them making their own choices, and the issue would increase for ages 17 to 24. Members were asked to note that work was being undertaken by the Authority, to encourage young people to attend regular dental checks.

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

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

#### **AGREED ACTION**

The Corporate Parenting Committee, noted the report and agreed that the Designated Nurse for Children in Care would:

- Liaise with the Chairman, to produce a letter of thanks to Bushfield Dental Practice for providing a volunteer service to children and young people in care.
- Provide Members with the latest figures on dental treatment take up from the teenage cohort 13 to 17 and 17 to 24.

#### **24. 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** that there were no issues to raise.

#### **25. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the work programme for 2023/2024.

The purpose of the report was to enable the Committee to discuss its objectives and priorities for 2023/24 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. Members were also asked to consider moving the meeting from 6 March 2024 to 26 February 2024.

#### **AGREED ACTION**

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note and agreed to move the 6 March 2024, to 26 February 2024.

CHAIRMAN - END 7:14 PM