

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Committee held at the Bourges/Viersen
Room - Town Hall
on 22 March 2017, 6.30pm

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Councillors Bisby (Chairman), Saltmarsh (Vice Chairman), Coles, Stokes, Johnson, Bond, Aitken, Saltmarsh, Harper and Ayres.

MEMBERS ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Nicola Curley	Assistant Director for Children's Social Care
Myra O'Farrell	Interim Head of Service Children Looked After and Leaving Care
Dee Glover	Head of the Virtual School for Children in Care
Simon Green	Head of Fostering and Adoption Service
Jess Palmer	Youth Engagement and Participation Officer
Karen S Dunleavy	Democratic Services Officer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Philip Gilbert OBE	Foster Carer Forum
Sarah Purvis	Foster Carer Forum
Heath Purvis	Foster Carer Forum

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Bull, Holdich O.B.E, Lane and Sylvester.

Councillors Aitken and Stokes were in attendance for Councillors Bull and Holdich O.B.E.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

3. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 9 November 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2016 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Update from Foster Carers

The Representatives of the Foster Care Forum (FCF) introduced the report which updated the Corporate Parenting Committee about the discussions and actions arising from the Foster Carers forum meetings.

Key points raised:

- The position of Chairman and other positions for the FCF membership had been allocated at a recent meeting;
- The Adolescent and Children's Trust (TACT) had addressed some recent funding issues in terms of allocation for activities;
- The Children in Care Christmas party had been held and was successful and well attended by Councillors; and
- Events organised for over the Easter period were to include a visit to Sacrewell Farm and Bounce.

Members thanked TACT for resolving the recent funding issues experienced by the FCF.

ACTION AGREED:

The Committee noted the report.

5. Participation Officer on behalf of Children in Care Council

Youth Engagement and Participation Officer introduced the report and advised Members about the recent meetings and events arising from the Children in Care Council.

Key issues highlighted

- The recent CiCC New Beginnings event experienced a good level of attendance from CiC, with features such as red carpet treatment for guests and the use of a photo booth, which made children feel special;
- The New Beginnings event was attended by Solomn OB, who was the Tact ambassador;
- The CiCC Z cards which included useful contact information for CiC were in the final stages of development;
- The Children's Commissioner event attended had focused on tackling stereotypes of CiC. The CiCC were due to attend another Children Commissioner event in June 2017;
- Ideas for support for care leavers and how this could be enhanced was discussed at the Children's Commissioner event; and
- An Easter trip had been planned to watch Matilda for CiC of ages 10-16.

The Participation Officer responded to comments and questions raised by Members. In summary responses included:

- Members congratulated the Children in Care Council for hosting a recent successful awards event for Children in Care;
- The CiCC were to organise a promotion day for 8 - 12 year olds and over 12 years old, in order to provide CiC with an understanding of what the CiCC do and how to get involved;
- The CiCC had recently report that they had enjoyed the new format of the Corporate Parenting informal Committee meetings and felt that they could talk to Councillors in a more open way.

AGREED ACTION

The Committee noted the report.

The Committee also agreed that the Senior Participation Officer would include more detail within future Children in Care Council reports.

6. Draft Report to the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee from the Corporate Parenting Committee

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care introduced the draft report which advised the Corporate Parenting Committee of the content of the report which was due to be presented to the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee to outline the activity carried out by the Corporate Parenting Committee since its first meeting in August 2016.

Key issues highlighted

- New Committee format set up;
- The appointment of Corporate Parenting Champions;
- Development of the Corporate Parenting Committee work programme; and
- Work with the Local Government Association in order to enhance the approach of the Corporate Parenting Committee.

AGREED ACTION:

The Committee adopted the inclusion of the report's recommendations to Children and Education Scrutiny Committee as follows:

1. That it was an accurate reflection of the work of the Committee over the last 6 months and should be referred as such to the Scrutiny Committee; and
2. That a report should be provided to Children and Education Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis going forward, as with other Committees and that Scrutiny recommends to Council that the Corporate Parenting Committee's terms of reference should be updated to reflect any change agreed to the reporting regularity.

The Committee also agreed that the report would be expanded to include:

1. Specific information in regards to the work of virtual schools and the progress updates received by Corporate Parenting Committee;
2. Further information on the outcome of the Corporate Parenting Committee workshop held in March 2017; and
3. The new Health Champion officer lead would be updated within the draft report.

7. Virtual School Annual Report 2015 – 2016

The Head of the Virtual School for Children in Care introduced the item to Members, which outlined the outcomes of the Virtual School provision for Children in Care in the academic year 2015 – 2016.

Key issues raised:

- The purpose of virtual schools;
- Staffing levels;
- Pupil Premium;
- Peterborough Virtual School Roll January 2017;
- Children in Care living out of the area; and
- Pupils A* - C grades achieved.

The Head of the Virtual School and Assistant Director for Children's Social Care

responded to comments and questions raised by Members. In summary the response included:

- Schools were requested to demonstrate how they had allocated the pupil premium for the year and this would be accompanied by the pupils personal education plans, any funding which was surplus would be allocated to learning opportunities for extra maths and literacy projects;
- There had only been £5,000 out of a £30m pupil premium budget which had not been allocated;
- The Dedicated Social Workers, Not in Education or Employment Team (NEET) and Personal Advisors would keep track of productive activities for CiC between the ages of 17-19. The responsibility for between 21 and 25 year olds was currently being considered by Government, however currently the LA only held responsibility for this age group for disabled CiC.
- There had also been a bit of a gap to track the further education position for 16 year olds and challenges experienced with 17-19 year old Care Leavers;
- There were 150 care leavers between the ages of 19 – 21 and 101 care leavers between the ages of 16-17;
- There was a governing body in place for Virtual Schools, however this had been disbanded and was due to be reviewed;
- The circumstances of some Care Leavers (CL) with a reduced learning timetable, could be because of arrangements such as a visit or contact with a parent and details would be included in the CL Personal Education Plan (PEP), which would generally operate as a short term solution;
- Use of the short term reduced learning timetables had increased recently at the adult college;
- The availability of apprenticeship arrangements for CiC were currently being reviewed;
- The recent successful phonics result for Peterborough had been due to the success of key stage two phonics and maths and literacy projects;
- The education needs put in place for CiC placed out of the City were assessed carefully and would be challenged rigorously by the LA if required; and
- The Committee commended the Head of the Virtual Schools (VS) on the recent VS improvement success.

AGREED ACTION:

1. The Committee considered and noted the content of the report, and in particular in light of the recent Ofsted Action Plan Recommendation 14: to ensure that the virtual school has sufficient capacity to monitor and improve education outcomes for looked after children, including those in post 16 education and consider how it would be achieved; and
2. The Committee also agreed to receive an update in the future on the progress of Virtual Schools.

8. SEND CQC/Ofsted Local Area Inspection

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care introduced the report to Members which provided a short overview of the CQC/Ofsted SEND local area inspection and Peterborough's preparations to-date.

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care responded to comments and questions raised by Members. In summary the response included:

- Improvements were being undertaken to bring together data from multi-agencies in a more effective way through a software package named qlickview; and

- The SEND action plan was a three year plan in order to implement all changes required and all LAs were on the same improvement journey. There was a monthly meeting held where all of the SEND actions were reviewed by management including the Director of People and Communities.

AGREED ACTION:

The Committee:

1. Noted the potential implications of a Local Area review; and
2. Agreed to receive an update on progress in 12 months' time.

The Committee also agreed that the Assistant Director for Children's Social Care would circulate the overarching monthly inspection report used to track the progress on the SEND action plan to the Committee.

9. Education 0-25 and Transition

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care introduced the report to Members which outlined the education for Children and young people with Disabilities who were looked after by the LA or were Care Leavers and had been identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

Key points highlighted:

- There were 33 children within the 0-25 cohort and some had included those in transition to Adult Social Care;
- The report focussed on education placements and the provision provided to the CiC SEND cohort; and
- There had been an issue being experienced with the transition in regards to personal advisor support.

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care responded to comments and questions raised by Members. In summary the response included:

- The report included both CiC with educational learning disabilities as well as those with disabilities; however, would not include children with Autism or Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) as they would receive other specialist support;
- There were some young people that had not wished to engage in the SEND service provision, however, these CiC were generally sectioned under the mental health act; and
- The Education 0-25 and Transition Team worked with the CiC where educational engagement barriers were an issue particularly where CiC had not received good level of education in the past.

AGREED ACTION:

The Committee noted the report.

10. Performance Data

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care introduced the report to Members, which outlined the numbers of children and young people currently being looked after by the Authority and provided 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.

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care responded to comments and questions raised by Members. In summary the response included:

- The 'not in suitable accommodation' figures outlined in the graph were shown in reverse order and would include circumstances such as CiC in hospital or in custody. It had been very difficult for the service to achieve a 0% result and it had been not felt by the team, not to be a bad indicator; and
- The Care leavers (+19 years) Not in Suitable Accommodation year to date data in the graph had been a cumulative figure. The data display was currently being reviewed by the team to ensure it was displayed in a meaningful data.

AGREED ACTION:

The Committee considered and noted the content of the report, and in particular those areas where good performance was being sustained, while noting continuing actions being taken to address areas where performance remained inconsistent.

1. The Committee also agreed that the data in regards to the Care leavers (+19 Years) not in Suitable Accommodation would be provided in a more meaningful way in future reports and that Councillor Coles would incorporate the reporting improvements as part of his Corporate Parenting Champion role.

11. Members Issues

Members thanked Head of Fostering and Adoption Service for his hard work and dedication to the Fostering service area and Corporate Parenting Committee and wished him well in his future role.

In addition, the Chairman thanked all Members for their contribution throughout the year at Corporate Parenting Committee meetings.

12. Date of the next meeting

Next meeting of Corporate Parenting Committee will be agreed at the Annual Council meeting due to be held on 22 May 2017.

CHAIRMAN
6:30pm – 8:00pm