

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING
(FORMAL)
HELD AT 6:30PM, ON
WEDNESDAY, 21 MARCH 2018
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillors Ayres, Bisby, (Chairman (Chair), Bull, Harper, Hussain, Lane, Okonkowski, Saltmarsh (Vice-Chairman) and Stokes.

Also in Attendance: Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

Officers Present:

Nicola Curley, Assistant Director Children's Services
Jenny Weeden, Senior Youth Engagement and Participation Officer
Dee Glover, HeadTeacher, Virtual Schools
Marie Saunders, Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Helen Card, Independent Reviewing Officer
Karen S Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer

Also Present:

Philip Gilbert M.B.E, Foster Carer Forum Representative

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Johnson and Bond.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

15. MINUTES OF THE MEETING:

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

16. FOSTER CARER FORUM UPDATE

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 request the Committee to consider and note the update provided by foster carers.

Mr Gilbert, foster carer introduced the report and provided an update on the discussions and actions arising from the Foster Carers Forum meetings.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the update and in summary, key points included:

- The Foster Carer Annual General Meeting, was held recently and Mr Gilbert was appointed to the position of Chairman.
- The Forum had been exploring a slightly different financial package with The Adolescent and Children's Trust (TACT), in order for foster carers to increase carers skill set to a level four status. The level four status was designed to attract carers to take on the more challenging Children in Care (CiC).
- The transport issues continue to be explored with TACT.
- The recent foster carer Christmas party was a success and plans were being explored for the following year.

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

17. UPDATE FROM THE PARTICIPATION OFFICER FOR CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the work of the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and the outcome of their discussions at meetings and events organised.

The purpose of the report was to request the Committee to consider and note the contents.

The Senior Participation Officer for Children in Care Council introduced the item to Members and asked them 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:

- Two events had been held for Children in Care one for the younger children and one for older children. Feedback received had been positive from CiC and foster cares. The Flying Seagulls Project had been in attendance at a recent CiC event and would look to attend in future years.
- The CiC youth club had been success and had attracted new members.
- The CiCC continued to develop a work programme for a varied number of CiC.
- The CiC awards was a success and had received positive feedback through the Mind of My Own (MOMO) application. In addition the use of MOMO had been increased and social workers had recently received training. The statements made had been 108 MOMO level one statements. Out of the 108 statements, 59 were submitted by CiC to state how they were feeling, which had also included those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SENDS).
- The youth club had operated every other week with six to ten young people in care in attendance.

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

18. VIRTUAL SCHOOLS

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the Virtual School services which were reported to the Committee annually.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an outline the educational outcomes for Children in Care in the academic year 2016 - 2017.

The HeadTeacher Virtual Schools introduced the report to Members, which requested them 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:

- The exam missed by two children outlined on page 29 of the report could not be rescheduled, due to GCSE ruling. The CiC would be encouraged by the team to undertake the GCSE exam at a later date when they were in a better position to do so.
- The HeadTeacher would advocate a change in date for the CiC who were due to undertake a GCSE or SAT tests in the event of difficult circumstances, however she had no influential power to change the examining body's position.
- Children in Care were not usually informed of negative news before an exam where possible.
- The national attainment levels had been a challenge due to the individual schools assessment methods, which was an issue that needed to be addressed. Due to the differing attainment levels, the team focused on the CiCs achievement progress rather than the attainment level.
- The figures on page 24 of the agenda, paragraph 3.4, total number on the school role had only included CiC of school age and not pre-school ages. The table would be amended accordingly.
- The 119 CiC outside of the city wall CiC were visited by the VS team once a year.
- Key stage one and two results for CiC, which had fallen below national targets had been a concern, however, the key stage two cohort that had come into care recently had been very volatile. There had been work undertaken to support children coming into care to make them feel more stable, which would continue. There had also been a focus on placement of specialist teachers in phonics and maths to improve the standards, which had been successful.
- The Department for Education (DFE) had published a document on promoting the education of looked after and previously looked after children, which had been developed to support the emotional needs of children that had been adopted or were on special guardianship orders. The guidance aimed to support staff in schools that supported children in these areas and formalised the support that had been provided for years. The advice in the DFE document promoting the educational needs for LAC and adopted children would help teachers and carers to support their emotional needs in addition.
- The Post 16 training and apprenticeships would be explored further with Peterborough Regional College and City College Peterborough to offer opportunities to CiC.
- Further support on apprenticeships were being explored with TACT to promote opportunities to CiC, which would include a telephone support line for them. TACT were in the process of signing up to be bondholders and had a list of potential apprenticeship opportunities to young people in care.
- There had been a target set by the Authority to raise apprenticeships for young people in care, however, there needed to be some bridging work in order to raise the academic level required for applications.
- The VS were looking for school governors from a wide range of expertise such as Members and HeadTeachers to challenge and support the VS service.
- Pupil Premium was being used to support new projects within VS learning.
- Jack Hunt Forest group was being accessed for CiC unable to access education full time to receive outdoor education opportunities to boost literacy levels.
- An Attachment Awareness city programme was due to be launched to make teachers aware of the issues behind CiC unable to undertake some educational tasks.
- An Educational Psychologist had been appointed to the VS team through Pupil Premium.

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

ACTION AGREED

The Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and agreed:

The HeadTeacher for Virtual Schools would share the DFE document on promoting the education of looked after and previously looked after children with the Committee.

19. REPORT ON THE WORK OF CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the work of the Committee that would be reported to the Children and Educational Scrutiny Committee.

The purpose of the report was to seek approval from Members to advise Children and Education Scrutiny Committee of activity carried out by the Corporate Parenting Committee during the municipal year 2017-18.

The Chairman and Assistant Director Children's Services introduced the report to Members and requested them to consider approval of the report, which reflected the work undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Committee. The Committee was also asked to agree the submission of the report to the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee.

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

- The meeting with Councillors Bisby and Ayres in respect of apprenticeships was due to be undertaken and the report would be amended accordingly in respect of the status of their attendance.
- The report of the Committee was a good representation of their work.
- The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their hard work in supporting the Committee.

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

ACTION AGREED:

The Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and agreed:

1. That the report was a true representation of the Committee's work;
2. The report would be updated accordingly to reflect Councillor Bisby's and Ayres's attendance in respect to the meeting regards to apprenticeships for CiC; and
3. To submit the annual report to the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee for noting as per the Corporate Parenting Committee's Terms of Reference, subject to any amendment in respect to the apprenticeship meeting status.

20. THE NEW OFSTED INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S SERVICES FRAMEWORK

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the new inspection framework from Ofsted.

The purpose of the report was to provide members with an overview in respect of the new framework launched by Ofsted in relation to how it inspected Children's Services in Local Authorities.

The 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.

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

- Some staff had not felt confident talking with Ofsted inspectors about casework and had found the whole process quite overwhelming as it was an intimidating process with somewhere in the region of 14 inspectors to talk to. The latest Ofsted inspection held at Cambridgeshire Council under the new scheme, Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) had less inspectors, which had felt quite different to staff. It was felt that the new ILAC process would be a more proportionate inspection.
- It had been three years since the previous inspection at the Authority so and inspection for Peterborough was imminent.
- There were levels of a single inspection framework that Ofsted carried out through the ILACS scheme. A focussed visit would not result in a judgement, whereas a full inspection would result in a judgement. The last Ofsted inspection for Peterborough had 19 recommendations and corporate parenting had improved since then, however, there were areas in service quality and practice as well as staffing that required further attention.

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

21. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT

The Corporate Parenting Committee received an annual report in relation to the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance department in respect to case management and review of looked after children.

The purpose of the report was to provide members with an overview of the statutory review and analysis of the Independent Reviewing Service.

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead 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:

- The workload handbook recommendation of 50 to 70 CiC for the full time equivalent of IRO had been achieved for 2016 and 2017.
- The PCC results for new children in care was slightly higher than the national average and was thought to be due to the demographic changed over time, however a further investigation needed to be undertaken as to the true reasons behind why the figures could be increasing. There were quite small numbers for Peterborough and sibling groups and unaccompanied asylum seekers coming into care, which would skew the figure. The unaccompanied asylum seeker numbers coming into care being capped would show a more favourable figure in 2017 and 2018.
- The caseload figures for IROs were at the high end, which had an impact on service. Staff were struggling to cope with caseloads on top of other duties.

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

ACTION AGREED

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

The Assistant Director Children's Services would arrange a briefing note on the reasons behind the increase in new children coming into care in Peterborough.

22. PERFORMANCE REPORT

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 were living. The report also provided information about the age, gender and ethnicity of those children and young people.

The Head of Service Corporate Parenting 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:

- The work being undertaken in placement stability could not include expanded commentary within the report due to the sensitivity of the information. There had been a working group with TACT to explore the reasons why a very small number of children continued to significantly impact the placement stability indicator. The team were exploring how these CiC needs could be better supported.
- There were one or two young people that went missing from care and had done so on a regular basis. These YP were very vulnerable and the team were working with police colleagues to track the incidents and tackle the issues being experienced.
- None of the 31 CiC within the report were in the position of being trafficked. Some CiC either had not wanted to return to their foster placement or had returned to their birth family where it had not been safe to do so. The team worked to return the missing CiC to their foster placement as quickly as possible.
- The Preventative work through Youth Offending Services (YOS) in terms of links to gangs had been very poor for young people in care living out of the boundary, unless the young person was on a full care order. There had recently been a resource change in the YOS team and staff were exploring ways to link with the Corporate Parenting team to investigate what preventative measures could be implemented to support this cohort. Corporate Parents would expect to see the improvements in due course.
- The figures in relation to CiC not in suitable accommodation had been due to the young people wanting to take on their own tenancy and had not accepted the Authority's support. The Authority's preferred method was to provide suitable accommodation for those over 19, which would be a supported process. There had been a small number of CiC that had not wished to return to accommodation in Peterborough, which had been harder to accommodate.
- Cabinet members that held portfolio responsibilities for care leaver accommodation would meet regularly with the appropriate departments and had also been working in conjunction with Cambridge to investigate the issues in order to provide solutions.
- Members commented that it had been unfortunate to see that there was little that could be done to support the leaving care cohort when the young people refused the Authority's help.

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

23. HEALTH REPORT

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to a regular update on Health matters for Children in Care or Looked After.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an overview of the Clinical Commissioning Groups activities to ensure robust monitoring and quality assurance systems were in place to meet the health needs of looked after children.

The Assistant Director Children's Services 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 commented positively on the successes outlined on page 93 of the agenda at paragraph 4.4 in regards to significant improvements and collaborative working on closing the gap.
- There had been an emotional wellbeing strategy being produced by the Joint Commissioning Unit (JCU), however, it had not addressed concerns raised by the Committee about the specific attachment disorder issues, such as trauma related behaviour. A paper had been submitted on behalf of the Committee to the JCU to gain clarity over what support requirements were being proposed for the specific areas of concern highlighted. Details of the outcome of discussions would be provided in a briefing note to Members in due course.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report specifically in relation to the recent significant improvement made.

AGREED ACTION

The Committee considered and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the report and agreed that:

The Assistant Director Children's Services would provide a briefing note to Members in regards to the progress on the support for closing the gap for children in care with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

24. MEMBERS ISSUES

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

The Committee commented that the reports received throughout the municipal year were of a good standard and relayed thanks to officers for all their hard work and dedication in supporting the informal and formal Corporate Parenting Committee meetings.

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

25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next informal meeting of Corporate Parenting Committee was due to be agreed at Council.

Chairman
6:30pm – 7:56pm

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