

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 4
20 MARCH 2019	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Executive Director People and Communities Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Councils	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.	
Contact Officer(s):	Myra O'Farrell Head of Service Corporate Parenting	Tel. 864391

FOSTER CARER FORUM REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Foster Carer Forum	Deadline date: N/A
<p>It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the content of the report; and 2. Raise any queries they have with the Foster Carer Forum Representatives. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to each formal Corporate Parenting Committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 Corporate Parenting Committee wish to receive an update at formal committee meetings of discussions and actions from the Foster Carers forum.

2.2 This report is being presented under the Corporate Parenting Committee Terms of Reference: 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 This links into all areas of the children in care pledge.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 The Foster Carers Committee continues to meet on a regular basis. The agenda consists of standing items and other issues, topics of conversation that occur from time to time. Meetings are attended by 10-15 representatives. The chair, deputy chair, secretary and treasurer posts are subject to annual elections. Managers from the Permanency service are also present at these meetings.

4.2 Learning & Development for carers – During the foster carer survey in August 2018 the quality

of training was scored at 7/10 and over by 98% of respondents with face to face training preferred by 84% of recipients. Whilst there has been an overall increase in the number of carers attending training, last minute cancellations/non-attendees often for perfectly good reasons need to be addressed. The committee have nominated a carer to be 'Training Champion' carer to work with service lead training people to progress this. Communication between carers and the service is good and a regular training newsletter is sent to carers and the annual training brochure is currently in the process of being produced, which will include all mandatory courses.

- 4.3 Personal Education Plan (PEP's) & Childcare Review (CCR) documents – There have been on-going discussions in the committee about the processes around children's reviews and information being completed for these. There have been recent improvements in this as a result of issues being identified and acted upon.
- 4.4 Young people's Passports – The carer committee is working with Children's services to ensure that the complexity of process involved does not negatively impact on the timescales in which young people obtain passports.
- 4.5 Pathway Plans/Staying Put – There are currently around 22 children in staying put placements and a number of those with in house TACT Peterborough foster carers who continue to foster for the service. Carers are keen to play a role in the development of the local authorities offer to young people. Joint work is on-going to ensure policies and processes are fit for purpose and will enable young people and carers a smoother transition. Particular interest will be in discussions around the language and terminology used.
- 4.6 Respite care for children with disabilities - committee is discussing how to support carers requiring respite where agreed in children's plans. There are on-going discussions about contract care (care for children who will need continuing care into adulthood).
- 4.7 As part of the annual carer allowances review respite/daycare is being looked at to ensure the service is supporting carers as best as it can to care for the children within the service.
- 4.8 Transport – Transport arrangements for looked after children within the service run smoothly in most situations. The arrangements agreed last year have helped and the main issue is availability of a point of contact outside of office working hours. This is being dealt with and there are positive regular communications between the transport service and TACT.
- 4.9 Birth Children's Group – The terms of reference for this group are being reviewed to ensure that all birth children can benefit from this.
- 4.10 Children's savings - Information has been presented to the committee about the different providers and accounts available for young people to make savings. The Metro Bank has a particularly helpful offer encouraging children to save and count their coins using their Magic Money Machines, the 5 for 5 Club and learn about budgeting with their financial education programme (we could use this if we had a group of young people who had Metro Bank savings accounts). They also give children opening accounts a 'goody' bag and a bright red 'M' shaped money box.
- 4.11 TACT/Committee Events - The Children's Party at the Fleet in December 2018, was attended by nearly 200 individuals and enjoyed by all. There was a disco, face painting and sweet store and all the children and young people present received a present from Father Christmas.

- 4.12 Children and families attended the local pantomime at The Cresset and carers secured 100 free tickets from the local YMCA that is greatly appreciated. Approximately 180 attended this year, 60 up on last year.
- 4.13 The carers also enjoyed the second TACT Dinner and Dance Ball at the Bull Hotel. The event was themed around Hollywood and those attending enjoyed the Firefly band. Awards were given out in recognition of the service certain individuals had given the committee and service.
- 4.14 Special Guardians and kinship carers have been involved in all the events organised by the committee which is important as TACT are providing a Permanency service which sees all carers as having equal needs regardless of the order the child they are caring for is under.
- 4.15 Going ahead in 2019 – the committee has a monthly Draw for Peterborough United Tickets (family of 4) donated by the football club. Carers have organised events at Snettisham Deer Park during the Easter holidays and in the Summer at Wicksteed Park, with half term events at Bounce. The BBQ will take place at the start of July 2019, at Peterborough Rugby club.
- 4.16 The social events are an important part of the service enabling carers and children to have fun and build links and relationships across the service.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 None

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 6.1 None

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 Corporate Parenting Committee to be aware of the role of the Foster Carer Forum.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 N/A

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 9.1 None

Legal Implications

- 9.2 No

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 No

Other Implications

- 9.4 This report provides Corporate Parenting Committee with an update of Foster Carer Forum meetings, actions and events, which provide foster carers with effective support with the aim to provide quality care provision to children in care and care leavers.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None