

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING (FORMAL)
HELD AT 6:00PM, ON
WEDNESDAY, 19 July 2023
BOURGES/MIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillor Bi, (Chairman (Chair), Councillors Jackie Allen, Casey, Cole, Over, S Bond, Lane and Tyler, Hemraj, Seager

Other Councillors in attendance: Sabeel Ahmed and Afran Khan

Officers Present: John Gregg, Executive Director for Children and Young People's Service
Gary Jones, Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support
Shalina Chandoo, Lead for Quality Assurance , Participation and Independent Visiting
Marie Saunders, Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Geoffrey Fredderick, Independent Chair
Jo Banks, Head of Regional Adoption Agency
Brian Relph, Service Director, Fostering and Adoption for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire
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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Denise Jones and Ayres. Councillors Hemraj and Jackie Allen were in attendance as substitute.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 MARCH 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. 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). Key points highlighted included:

- The Working Group progress for mentoring, retention and recruitment.
- Information provision for cost of living.
- Social events with coffee mornings and lunch meet up.
- Five households had recently left the fostering service.
- Recruitment Ambassador update to encourage more people to foster.
- Mentoring scheme which involved one to one session for new foster carers.
- Feedback loops held to understand what was happening in the foster world had been positive.
- An update was provided on the progress of Mockingbird, transformation programmes feedback loops for Foster Carers.

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:

- Foster Carers (FCs) had received a government increase in the basic allowances they received, and this was in line with the cost-of-living increase of 12.43% from 1 April 2023. Although Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foster Carers were paid higher than the government basic rate, they were being paid lower than the national average on one element of the allowance. Members were assured that discussions were underway to negotiate a better rate for FCs, and this would be settled by the end of the month.
- Some teenage foster placements had broken down to a variety of reasons such as not being active in education or employment, self-harming, aggressive behaviours, and traumatic issues and theft.
- There had been success in prospective foster carer applications due to the success of the recruitment campaigns conducted.
- Retention of Foster Carers for special needs CiC had been successful due to the link respite service. In addition, there were some FC families that had made a commitment to care for CiC with significant special needs. Furthermore, there had been no issues with the retention of Foster Carers for children with special needs, as the team had been working to increase the number of these carers.

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

5. 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.

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.

Key points raised in the discussion included:

- CiCC Summer programme activities which take place physically and virtually;
- Annual art exhibition to include a physical display this year.
- Mental health awareness video developed by the CiCC.
- Children in Charge Youth Club project of post boxes and posters for children and families to submit feedback about the Contact Centres.
- Peterborough Care Leaders requested an update from Corporate Parenting Committee Members about the Council Tax exemption and Protected Characteristic status for care experienced people.
- Young Trainers had been involved in delivery of a training programme for student Social Workers
- The Young Recruiters and development of themed questions to be used by adoption panels.
- A video on Every Word Matters was being developed to provide guidance to Councillors and Council Staff on the preferred language that CiC and CL would expect to be used about services to them.
- Public Speaking course for Care Leavers

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 confirmed that a Motion on Protected Characteristics for Care Leavers (CLs) due to be presented to a Full Council meeting.
- Members commented that there could be work experience opportunities through the Council and its partners to support the public speaking training ambition for CLs
- Members complimented the work undertaken by the CiCC on the development of the mental health support video.

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 the public speaking initiative for CLs.

6. APPOINTMENT OF CHAMPION MEMBERS

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the Champion positions and nominations to those roles.

The purpose of the report was to set and approve the Corporate Parenting Committee Champion roles and positions.

The Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support introduced the report and asked Members to appoint to the relevant Champion positions.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to the appointment of Corporate Parenting Committee Champions and roles.

ACTION AGREED

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to the following Champion roles and appoint Councillors to those positions as nominated:

- I) Support for Care Experienced Young People (Housing, Finance and Asylum Issues) , Councillor Sandra Bond
- II) 0-25 Education, Employment and Training (including the Combined Authority and Partners) , Councillor Cole
- III) 0-25 Physical and Mental Health and Emotional Well Being , Councillor Hemraj
- IV) Citizenship, Participation and Leisure activities, Councillor Casey
- V) Foster Carer Retention , Councillor Bi
- VI) Foster Carer Marketing and Recruitment , Councillor Jones

7. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2023 – 2024 AND REVIEW OF WORK IN 2022 - 2023

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the draft Work Programme 2023 – 2024 and Review of Work conducted in 2022 – 2023.

The purpose of the report was to enable the Committee to discuss its objectives and priorities and approve the draft work programme for 2023/24.

The Democratic Services Officer 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 and agreed the Work Programme for 2023-2024

8. ANNUAL FOSTERING SERVICE REPORT

The Committee received an annual report in relation to the Fostering Service.

The purpose of the report was to keep the Corporate Parenting Committee informed of activity undertaken by the Fostering Service and to update on Fostering Service developments. Members were also advised that there were plans in place to increase the recruitment of new Foster Carers.

The Fostering Service Manager 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:

- Members were advised that there was a shared fostering service with Cambridgeshire County Council, although some parts of the service were separate. Furthermore, some of the staff were shared across both Councils as part of a wider Fostering Agency.
- Members commented that Peterborough Fostering recruitment campaigns should be sited in as many locations as possible such as supermarkets.

- Members were provided with an outline of how the shared Fostering Service for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough had operated such as fostering and recruitment campaigns. Furthermore, some of the services that had not been shared included recruitment panels, FC reviews, fostering support and governance.
- Members commented that recruitment leaflets should be inclusive and displayed in prime locations such as places of worship to cover all ethnic backgrounds. Members also commented that there had been good links within ethnic communities and that the information would be shared with the Foster Carer Recruitment Team.

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:

1. The Service Director, Fostering and Adoption for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire to provide Members with an organisation chart and associated information on the shared fostering service provision.
2. Members of the Committee would share any ethnic community group links they had with the Foster Carer Team, to help with the Foster Carer recruitment campaign.

9. Annual Adoption Report Regional Adoption Arrangements

The Committee received an annual report in relation to the Regional Adoption Arrangements.

The purpose of the report was to provide an Annual Report on the business of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Adoption.

The Head of Regional Adoption Agency 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 budget underspend referenced on page 21 of the report in relation to £64.757m had been a pooled budget between Cambridge and Peterborough. This had resulted in the £64,757m being added to reserves for the joint Regional Adoption Agency. The plan had been to spend the reserves on interagency adoption arrangements and unplanned costs.
- Members commented that it would be useful for the Adoption Service Plan to be RAG rated to highlight any service slippage.

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and **RESOLVED** (unanimously) and agreed for future service plans to be RAG rated.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Committee noted the report and agreed that the Head of Regional Adoption Agency would provide a RAG rated Service Plan for future annual reports.

10. ANNUAL INDEPENDENT REVIEW OFFICER (IRO) REPORT 2022 - 2023

The Committee received an annual report in relation to the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with the statutory review and analysis of the Independent Reviewing Service

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead 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 IROs had been involved in the Celebration Day events to promote service information.
- Members commented that a suggestion of Children in Care completing a Pen Profile to help them settle in with new foster families and this issue had been raised at the informal meeting held on 14 June 2023. Members were advised that a CiC Pen Profile system could be explored with the CiCC.
- Members were advised that foster families would provide profiles to the CiC moving into their homes, to help them settle in.
- Members were advised that a CiC profile was included on their care plans, which would describe their hobbies, likes and dislikes.

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and **RESOLVED** (unanimously) that the IRO service would develop and implement a Pen Profile feature for CiC.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and agreed that the Deputy Safeguarding Lead

- Would work with the CiCC to explore the implementation of a Pen Profile feature written by CiC.
- Feedback the progress to Members of the Committee in relation to the creation of a Pen Profile feature for CiC.

11. CHILDREN IN CARE THAT GO MISSING

The Committee received an annual report in relation to Children in Care that go missing.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an update in respect of the numbers of children in care that go missing and the details behind the data presented.

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:

- Members were advised that the reasons behind why children in care (CiC) go missing would be assessed to consider how they were reported in future as in some cases they had been with friends.

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted **RESOLVED** (unanimously) noted the report.

12. 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 31 May 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.

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:

- Members were advised that the family safeguarding cases that had increased could include some narrative in future reports.
- Members commented that it would be helpful if the Performance report showed a breakdown of the reasons why children came into care.
- There had been a variety of reasons some children had been in care for a lengthy period, such as historic practice, placements with other family members or those primary carers that had not wanted a permanent care arrangement. Furthermore, a piece of work could be conducted by the Safeguarding Team to explore whether some children could return to their family members with the provision of additional support.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents and agreed that additional information would be included in Performance reports, where possible, in relation to family safeguarding caseloads and the reasons why children came into care.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and **AGREED** that the Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support would provide Members with:

1. Some narrative within future reports in relation to why performance figures had increased for family safeguarding caseloads;
2. Why children had come into care within future performance reports, where feasible.
3. A briefing note on the findings of whether some children in care could return to their family home with the provision of extra support, where appropriate.

13. 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.

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 debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members were advised that all children's health needs were assessed with no priority given as to whether they had a care status. However, referrals conducted by partners such as Younite, would indicate whether it was for a CiC with mental health concerns.
- There had been no staff capacity to extend appointment times to complete the health questionnaires. Furthermore, health questionnaires needed to be complete prior to the CiC assessment, to allow assessors the chance to analyse the forms and identify any key areas of concern.
- Access to a CiC health information would resume for birth parents if the child had returned to their care and this would need to be applied for and an end of looked after status would need to be present.

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

14. 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.

CHAIRMAN
END 7:39PM