

Time Commenced: - 6.00 pm
Time Finished: - 6.50 pm

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMISSION TUESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2005

Present: Councillors Hird, MacDonald, Marshall and Turner

10/05 Appointment of Chair

Agreed to appoint Councillor MacDonald as Chair for the remainder of the municipal year.

11/05 Appointment of Vice Chair

Agreed to appoint Councillor Turner as Vice Chair for the remainder of the municipal year.

12/05 Apologies

An apology was received from Councillor E Berry.

13/05 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

14/05 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

15/05 Minutes of the Corporate Parenting Joint Sub-Commission

Resolved to approve and adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2005.

16/05 Statistical Information on Children Looked After

The Sub-Commission considered a report from the Director of Social Services that provided statistical information on children looked after.

The statistical evidence presented in the report set out details of progress made towards the Council's priorities of improving children and young people's prospects and improving the life chances for vulnerable and disadvantaged people and communities.

Resolved to note the report

17/05 Participation and Consultation of Children and Young People

The Sub-Commission considered a report from the Director of Social Services on the participation and consultation of children and young people. The report identified some of the work undertaken since the last report to the Sub Commission in October 2004.

It was reported that the Young Achievers Award had run successfully for four years and was under review. It was felt that there might be a better way of celebrating success. Three options were given at the meeting:

- Carry on with the existing format in conjunction with other groups
- Smaller events such as the current employee's long service award where the Mayor would shake hands with the achiever etc... This would happen every couple of months, as a year between each award ceremony is sometimes too long since the achievement took place.
- Treat each child as an individual, so they are rewarded individually, such as once a month. Then perhaps have a party once a year to celebrate all achievers without what their achievement is for being highlighted.

The hope of review was to ensure that the rewards were valued and worthwhile and to ensure inclusion, as the existing Award Ceremony was felt to separate Children in Care from their peers.

Councillor Hird commented that she felt age would have an effect. Younger children have a shorter attention span and a year seems a long time away.

Resolved to note the report.

18/05 Inspection and Management Visits to Children's Homes

The Sub-Commission considered a report from the Director of Social Services on the inspection and management visits to Children's Homes.

It was reported that the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 required children's homes to be inspected by a Regulatory Inspector of the Commission for Social Care Inspection. Inspections were carried out at Moorfield on 4 January 2005, Vicarage Road on 19-21 January 2005, Coronation Avenue on the 31 January, Bute Walk on the 4 March and 5 June 2005 and Queensferry Gardens on 6 June 2005. There was no inspection at Cricklewood Road since the last report to Members. These inspections found that, out of 35 standards, Coronation Avenue failed to meet five, Cricklewood Road two and Vicarage Road one. While

Moorfield and Queensferry meet all 35 standards. The latest report for Bute Walk had not been received. It was reported that significant progress had been made at the Children's Homes.

It was reported that the format of the inspections had changed and that they were now shorter and less formal, so more of an overview, rather than detailed. Plus the children's views were also now taken into account. The reports were now more helpful and supportive enabling the Social Services department to bring about the improvements needed.

The Management visits were internal visits on how the home looked and felt. The children and staff were spoken to as part of the visits. These were then formally reported.

Councillor Marshall asked whether visits could be arranged to the children's homes for the members of Corporate Parenting Sub Committee. Councillor Hird pointed out that CRB checks would be required. It was agreed that CRB checks would be organised so that the members could go and visit the children's homes.

Resolved to note the report.

Minutes End