

ITEM 4

Time commenced – 13:00pm

Time finished – 14:45pm

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

25 July 2017

Present: Councillor Bolton (Chair)
Councillors Eldret, Marshall, Harwood and Russell.

In attendance: Suanne Lim - Service Director, Children's Integrated Services
Pervez Akhtar – Corporate Parenting Lead
Natasha – Representative of the Children in Care Council
Graeme Ferguson – Virtual School Head
Gareth Dakin - Deputy Head of Service - Children in Care
Annamarie Johannesson – Derby Foster Care Association
Claire Hurst – Children's Participation Officer
Heather Peet – Southern Derbyshire CCG
Hazel Lymbery – Director – Specialist Services
Antony Mains – Leaving Care Team Manager
Kelly Thompson – Named Nurse for Children in Care
Clare Harrison – Democratic Services Officer

01/17 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Care.

02/17 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were none.

03/17 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

04/17 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

It was noted that a letter had been sent to the Derby County Community Trust Engagement Team on 08 March 2017 to pass on the thanks of the Children in Care Council (CICC).

05/17 Children in Care Council – Update July 2017

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Children in Care Council which provided the CICC and Children's Participation Officer with an opportunity to share what has been discussed and progressed by the CICC and the impact of their work. It also provided an opportunity for the CICC to raise any queries or issues and share any challenges that the Children in Care Council may have encountered.

It was reported by the Participation Officer that the CICC had met three times since she had been in post and informed the Committee that she has continued to encourage new members to join the CICC through attending team meetings, sending electronic and written communications and promoting the forum with social work teams (Locality and Children In Care), Fostering workers, MAT teams, IFAs and residential homes. It was also reported that a leaflet had been produced to introduce young people to the Participation Officer and the CICC members are currently involved in designing a poster and leaflet for young people about the forum.

Members were informed that promotion and recruitment activities continue to increase access of the CICC by children and young people across Derby with four new members recently attending meetings and a number of new people expected to attend the next meeting of the CICC.

Natasha, the CICC representative, further informed the Committee that the pledge event that took place on 11 July was very successful and that the CICC had been very pleased to hear that there would be more work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for young people as they felt that this was very important. The representative also informed Members that they were due to hold an event at Chester Green the following week to try and encourage new members to join the CICC.

The CICC expressed a desire to get involved in accompanying members at residential inspections. The Chair said that she would take this on board but informed the CICC that this would need to be at a time separate to the official inspections as Members have strict protocol that they need to follow at these. The CICC also raised the issue of finances for those leaving care, as that often struggle to manage and the importance of having health visitors. Awareness of the advocacy service to help young people was also raised as an important issue as the CICC felt that this was very useful in helping with parental contact issues, because it sometimes took social workers a long time to help with these sorts of issues. The CICC also felt it was good that the designated nurse is making sure the voices of Looked After Children (LAC) are heard and acted upon. The Children in Care Participation Officer also informed the Committee that advocacy is also available for conferences and has been for a number of years, but a referral needs to be made by the social worker to get this help.

Heather Peet, the CCG representative also raised that at the recent CICC meeting the children had said that the Health Passport hasn't been as thorough as they would have liked and that there is often still a lot of missing information. It was also raised that the information in the current information packs given to children and young

people on first becoming looked after was not quite right for what the children want. The Committee was also informed that 17 year old health care assessments are handed to the young person by the Social Worker who will go through it with them (this also happens for children placed Out of Area where they live). Members also heard that NHS England have received funding to develop something similar to the Redbook for the phone for children leaving care which will hopefully be useful in providing health related information and advice to young people living independently.

Claire Hurst, the Children's Participation Officer informed the Committee that she has spoken to care leavers and that they are keen to know information about their health history, such as what immunisations they have had and their personal details such as the day, time and weight of birth.

Natasha also added that care leavers would also benefit from knowing things like what to do if there is a fire in the home and basic first aid information. The Designated Nurse responded to say that they would look at what they can do in relation to training children leaving care in treating minor ailments and basic first aid.

Suanne Lim, the Service Director for Children's Integrated Services also commented that the CICC minutes had discussed that the Child Protection Service poster was not as child friendly as it could be and that this was being reviewed and another version would be presented to the CICC for comment.

In response to issues around financial support for care leavers, Gareth Dakin, the Deputy Head of Service for Children in Care, raised that the Council is currently looking at the Council Tax offer to improve the support to children leaving care and are looking at a communication allowance to prevent isolation. It was reported that Derby Homes also has a package of goods and support with the leaving care grant, as well as through Derby Homefinder and they will send an update to the CICC on this.

Heather added that the timeliness and quality of health assessments will continue to be looked at and fed back to the Committee and that the CCG are creating a staff profile on who everyone is and what they do. It was also reported that funds have been granted to the North Derbyshire CCG for a web site, which is well progressed, and that they will be continuing to share the content of this with the CICC to get their views on the health information included, the wording and age appropriateness of material.

Natasha also raised that there is variability in the provision of pocket money for children in foster care and the CICC felt that it was important for a more consistent approach to this.

The Chair thanked Natasha for her input on behalf of the Committee and confirmed that she would be attending the next meeting of the Children in Care Council in September.

It was resolved to note the update.

06/17 Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Looked After Children and Care Leavers

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services updating the Committee on the position of the SIF inspection programme. The Committee also received a presentation at the meeting on Derby's inspection outcomes with a particular focus on the recommendations for improvement and outcomes for Derby's looked after children and young people.

It was reported that Derby City was inspected by Ofsted in March 2017 and Derby's final report was published on the Ofsted website on Tuesday 13 June 2017 with the outcome being an overall effectiveness grading of 'good' being received. It was also reported that the Derby Children's Safeguarding Board was only one of four to receive an 'outstanding' grading.

Members were informed that 11 recommendations and an action plan would be submitted to a meeting of Council Cabinet in September for approval and that the action plan detailing how the Council intends to respond to Ofsted's recommendations needs to be fed back to Ofsted by the end of September. It was highlighted to the Committee that the Ofsted report included a recommendation that "the Corporate Parenting Committee strengthens its oversight of children looked after with additional vulnerabilities and that children's views help to shape services".

The Committee was informed that Dame Margaret Beckett had sent a letter of congratulation and that the Council is now doing what it can to gain an 'outstanding' grading from the next inspection.

It was resolved to note the update.

07/17 Annual Performance Summary of Derby's Looked After Children – 2016/17

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on performance outturns for Looked after Children and Young People for 2016/2017 with a focus on those areas that have not achieved target.

It was reported that at the end of March 2017 there were 448 children in care, a rate of 76.1 per 10,000 population, but that since March this figure had increased to 482. However, Members were informed that this should not be a cause for concern as trends show these figures as a normal fluctuation within previous years. It was further reported however, that there has been a rise in Child Protection Plans, children in sibling groups and those from new communities. Members were informed that work is being done to try and cut down on crisis moves, improve stability in placements and narrow down what the right placements are for these children.

It was reported that performance on health checks was good with 92.6% of children having received their annual health checks, with the exception of under 5s where performance data shows 81.6% of children having received their two checks in a

year. Heather Peet explained that the CCG is currently reviewing its internal processes and is working to improve accessibility to its services through home visits and other alternatives.

The Board was informed that 87% of care leavers were considered to be in suitable accommodation and 58.2% of care leavers were in employment, education and training (EET). Councillors queried what is considered 'unsuitable accommodation' and were informed that this included things like: prison; choosing to live with family and friends and not with who or where they have been placed; and living in temporary accommodation because they have been evicted (or similar). This usually applies to those who are older (19-21 year olds) and have already left care for a couple of years and/or have been through transitions.

In relation to adoption, Members were informed that in 2017-17 it took an average of 732 days from entering care for a child to be move in with an adoptive family with 44.7% waiting less than 16 months. It was reported that these figures include legacy cases which overinflate numbers and that there has always been an interest in Derby to place children in the right 'stable' placements and get the best outcomes for the child regardless of timeliness.

Members queried the low percentage of only 58.2% of care leavers being in EET and were informed that Derby that these figures have moved on since the end of March 2017, however, this can be revisited in future if the Committee is still concerned about performance.

It was resolved to note the report.

08/17 Leaving Care Service

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on the Leaving Care Service. The report updated the Committee on the outcome of a number of audits that took place in late 2016 and 2017. The report also updated Members on the progress of the service over the last 12 months and detail on the continuation of the Care Leavers forum and efforts made to ensure that the voice of care leavers is heard and influence service development.

Members were informed that the service had been on a journey since 'Mocksted' as this had highlighted a number of areas in the Leaving Care Service which generated the development of an improvement plan for the service. It was reported that there has since been a very clear marked improvement in the quality of the work, against the previous audit and the recent OFSTED judgement of the service was judged as 'Good'. The Committee was informed that the Leaving Care Improvement Plan and Board continues to meet every 2 months in order to progress the Improvement plan for the service and continues to have Care leaver representation as a regular member of the board.

It was reported that the Care Leavers Forum has been re-established and meets on a monthly basis. As Care Leavers said that they didn't feel it was beneficial to have the Leaving Care Team Manager and Personal Advisers facilitating the meetings it was agreed therefore that the Deputy Head of Service would facilitate the meetings. It

was further reported that attendance at the forum continues to be a challenge with regards to numbers as 50 % of Care leavers do not live in the City. However, work is being undertaken to try and expand attendance and the forum has agreed to develop a communications group who will explore how best to utilise social media to gather the views of a broader range of Care Leavers and include those who currently live outside of Derby.

Members queried whether LAC placed Out of Area (OOA) come back into the city after leaving care and were informed that some do, but some choose to stay where they are placed and some move on, making the OOA care leavers a very transient population. Members were also informed that those who do want to return to Derby are offered support to come back and to find accommodation in Derby if needed.

The Committee commented that the issue of assistance with Council Tax for care leavers should be dealt with as soon as possible and Members were informed that this was being dealt with and progress would be reported back to the Committee in the autumn. Officers and Members discussed the financial assistance available to LAC children care and all felt strongly that the relevant authorities should provide assistance in lieu of the assistance young adults would normally receive from their parents. Members queried whether care leavers can be offered support for budgeting and were told that an assessment is undertaken of their independent skills and a pathway plan is development offered additional support in being prepared for independence.

Members asked what happens if a care leaver goes 'off radar' and we are unable to make contact them. The Committee was informed that some care leavers don't want to be contacted after leaving care, but if they have been identified as vulnerable the Council will keep trying to find ways to make contact with these individuals. It was also reported that there is a 'Staying Put' scheme where young adults can stay with their foster carers until they reach the age of 21. It was raised that this could be built upon, but the counter argument was also made that although this was worth investigating it would reduce the pool of available foster carers in the city for under 18s.

Members queried if the Council manages to keep on top of the welfare of our OOA LAC and were assured that the authority keeps a close check all of the LAC placed OOA and we try and make contact every six weeks to touch base and deal with any issues arising.

Officers agreed to circulate the 'Information to Derby City Care Leavers' booklet to the Committee as well as information on the 'Staying Put' scheme.

It was resolved to note the report.

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Children's Rights Service – Annual Report 2015/16. The report was presented by Gill Black and Diane Cook of Volunteering Matters.

It was reported that provision of the Children's Rights Service was enshrined in legislation for looked after children through the Children Act 1989 and through related regulation and guidance. It was further reported that the Council had a statutory duty to provide advocacy services for looked after children making complaints and to appoint independent visitors.

It was noted that the Children's Rights Service in Derby was made up of 4 services, delivered by Volunteering Matters:

- The Independent Visitor Service
- The Independent Advocacy Service
- Independent Advocacy at Child Protection Conference
- The Children in Care Council.

It was resolved to note the report

10/17 Children and Young People Missing from Care

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services which provided an overview of progress in relation to practice pertaining to children and young people who go missing.

It was informed that a plan to reduce the incidences of children and young people going missing has been in place since May 2015 and was updated in June 2016 on the back of the annual report on missing children and young people for 2015-16. A presentation will be given to the Board as an update of progress to reduce the incidences of children and young people going missing across the course of 2016-17.

Members were informed that 2016-17 saw dips in episodes of children going missing from care over summer before an upward trend occurred from August to October. It was explained that there had been less seasonal trend in missing episodes in 2016-17 in contrast to downward trends over these months in 2015-16. A relatively stable number of individuals had been 'missing' each month (and quarter) during the last twelve months and patterns and trends related to specific circumstances in individual cases.

Over 2016-17, 68% of young people who went missing from care only did so on one occasion. A much smaller cohort of individuals (making up 17.5% of 'missing' cases) have been more persistently missing and these are usually children living in children's homes. It is therefore important to be careful about which young people are placed together. Members were informed that in quarter two, two young people accounted for 53 missing episodes and 2 others (placed at the same children's home) accounted for 16 missing episodes. It was further reported that the cohort of persistently missing young people are well known to services and have overlapping

vulnerability factors including CSE, criminality, family break-down and substance misuse.

In relation to individual care homes, Members were informed that over the last 12 months, Willows and Coronation Avenue are the Council managed homes with highest numbers of missing episodes. It was reported that the most prevalent reasons why young people go missing are wanting independence and wanting to be with friends.

It was reported that return interviews have been taking place but there has been a lack of a forensic approach to properly understand missing behaviours and whether there are specific triggers for certain individuals, such as whether young people are going to the same locations, if they go missing for the same reasons and if the length of time they go missing increasing. Officers have also developed a guidance sheet which was launched to practitioners in January 2017 and are negotiating with other Authorities and the Police on changing the Return Interview format and form so that it is more similar to the CSE Operation Liberty form used to pass intelligence to Police by agencies. Members were informed that changes will launch in conjunction with all missing episodes being recorded on the Liquid Logic system help to increase forensic analysis of these episodes.

It was resolved to note the report.

11/17 Inspection and Monitoring of Children's Homes

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on the Inspection of Children's Homes by Ofsted. It was reported that Children's Homes are regulated and inspected by Ofsted as required by the Care Standards Act 2000. Inspections are based on the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and Quality Standards. Every home is inspected at least twice a year, receiving one full and one interim inspection.

The full list of homes and outcomes of the inspections were reported to Members and it was noted that all of the homes have to date received a 'good' judgement, but that 402 Sinfin Lane has recently been inspected in June, and the Service is currently awaiting the publication later in July.

Members queried how independently managed children's homes are inspected and were informed that all children's homes, both local authority run and independent homes are inspected by Ofsted twice annually to ensure compliance with the Regulations and to assess how well the home is providing care in line with the Children's Homes Quality Standards.

It was resolved to note the report.

12/17 Update on the Implementation of Commitments Regarding the Pledge for Children in Care 2017/18

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services providing an update on the progress made by the different Council departments on the Pledge commitments made by Derby City Council to all Derby City Children in Care and Leaving Care.

It was reported that since the launch of the new Pledge in January 2016 significant progress has been made by departments in developing, improving and embedding services for children in care. The Committee was also informed that for 2017/18 it has been agreed to continue with the Pledge events and that the most recent Pledge event was held on 11 July 2017.

Natasha informed the Committee that at the Pledge event, young people said that apprenticeships were very important but that they also felt trips to companies across the city would be useful to help them gain insight into where they might want to serve as an apprentice. The Cabinet Member reported that the pledge would be amended to reflect this and brought back to the Committee in the autumn. The Committee was also informed that in addition to the existing commitment to apprenticeships across the Council, Officers have been working with Derby College to ensure that Care Leavers are included in their apprenticeship academy programmes.

It was resolved to note the report.

13/17 Update of the Derby City Looked after Children health team – Derbyshire Healthcare Foundation Trust

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services report which provided the Committee with a brief overview of the current and future looked after children health arrangements that Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group (SDCCG) Commission from Derbyshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (DHFT). The report was summarised for the committee by Heather Peet, Designated Nurse for Looked After Children for Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group (SDCCG).

It was reported that over the last few months there has been an opportunity to work closely with the Health Provider in order to review the Looked after Children Service. Members were informed that to enable this review Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group (SDCCG) Designated Professionals and the Children Commissioners have worked with the DHFT Children Services General Manager, Service Manager and the Looked after Children health team to improve services for looked after children and ensure that the health needs, statutory functions and responsibilities of looked after children are being met.

It was further reported that the review has been facilitated by working closely with DHFT in the development of a new Looked after Children (LAC) service specification that more accurately reflects the service that CCG is required to commission from the Health Provider in order to fulfil its statutory responsibilities. Members were informed that although there have been a lot of negotiations, especially in relation to finances and administration, but it is expected that the final ratification of the service

specification will take place by the end of July 2017 and will be in place until 31st March 2019.

It was acknowledged that there are a significant number of OOA children, which remain the responsibility of Derby City Local Authority, that are placed just outside the City boundary and close to home (within a 20 mile radius) who have relied on other Health Providers to complete their statutory review health assessments; often with delay and reduced quality. In order to make improvements in this area the DHFT and SDCCG have negotiated that the Derby City LAC team will travel to undertake health assessments up to the mileage of approximately 20 miles to ensure timely health assessments that are of a high standard and that clearly identify the individual health needs of the child. Members queried if dental and eye care come under the remit of health assessments and were reassured that this is the case.

Heather outlined the Designated Nurse key priorities and the Derbyshire Healthcare Trust key priorities for 2017/18. It was noted that health pathways for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and missing children were present on both sets of priorities. It was also highlighted that the health history booklet and gaining the opinion of looked after children were also key priorities and were due to be discussed at the next meeting of the Children in Care Council.

Members queried if children living in Derby from other authority areas are receiving the right level of health care. Members were reassured that the Council is aware of all children placed in Derby that are from Out of Area and that all other authorities have a statutory duty the same as ours. Members were also informed that if it became apparent that other authorities were not meeting their statutory responsibilities we would write to their Department of Children's Services to ask what they are doing to ensure their LAC are brought looked after properly and what they are doing to exercise their statutory duties.

Annamarie, representing the Derby Foster Care Association, raised whether there was scope to offer consultation appointments to foster carers as they don't always have access to information around the child's SEN needs.

It was resolved to request that the SDCCH formalise the opportunities for Foster Carers to have consultations with LAC Nurses to discuss SEN needs and provide them with a more structured opportunity to discuss issues around behaviours, what they might mean and if there are certain activities or support mechanisms relevant to these behaviours.

MINUTES END