

Corporate Parenting Sub Commission 13 December 2011

Present: Councillor Bailey (Chair)
Councillors Bolton, Campbell, F. Khan, Whitby and F. Winter

In Attendance: Diane Cook – Project Manager, Derby CSV
Jacqui Jensen – Director of Early Intervention and Integrated Safeguarding
Katie Harris – Director of Specialist Services
Ellen Bird – Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer

11/11 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Leeming.

12/11 Late items to be introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

13/11 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Whitby declared a personal interest as he was a foster carer for Derby City Council.

14/11 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

1511 Children in Care Council

The Commission received a report from Diane Cook, Project Manager, Derby CSV, on the development of the Pledge. The pledge is a list of promises that all staff who work for the Children and Young People department make to all looked after children. It was reported that the pledge had been developed in consultation with children in care. A member of the Children in Care Council had visited all children's homes within Derby to seek their views and incorporate them into the pledge.

The Commission questioned whether the promises could be honoured. The Project Manager explained that work had been carried out to ensure all of the requests were feasible.

The Commission questioned the wording of the following promise in terms of whether the 48hrs time frame was deliverable:

- See your social worker on a regular basis and you will be contacted within 48hrs by your Social Worker or their manager if you need them.

The Commission discussed the importance of getting the wording right and recommended that the wording be changed from “48hrs” to “two working days”.

The Commission discussed the Children in Care Council and agreed that the Chair should attend a future meeting of the council.

Resolved:

- **to support the Pledge;**
- **to recommend to the Children in Care Council that the wording of the first promise be changed from “48hrs” to “two working days”;**
- **that the Chair and Ellen Bird, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer, attend a future meeting of the Children in Care Council to explain the work of the Corporate Parenting Sub Commission.**

16/11 Ofsted Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services Improvement Action Plan

Members received a report from Jacqui Jensen, Director of Early Intervention and Integrated Safeguarding, on Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services.

The Director of Early Intervention and Integrated Safeguarding reported that an Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children services had been carried out by Ofsted in May 2011. The inspection team had made 24 recommendations to improve services and five of those had to be implemented straight away.

It was reported that the Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children report contained a draft action plan designed to address the areas of improvement and that the finalised plan would be brought to the next meeting.

The Commission discussed absence rates and questioned the work being carried out to help relieve the pressure on social workers. It was reported that absence rates were very positive and that there was a programme of engaging with front line social workers to get their ideas on how to move forward.

The Commission discussed the training that had been provided for Councillors on Corporate Parenting responsibilities and questioned whether there would be more sessions for Councillors who had not been able to attend. It was reported that follow-up sessions would be organised.

The Commission discussed admissions arrangements and over-subscriptions criteria for schools in respect of Looked After Children and noted the difference between schools where Derby City Council was the admission authority and those where the governors of the school were the admission authority.

The Commission discussed early help and intervention for vulnerable families and it was agreed that the Director of Early Intervention and Integrated Safeguarding would attend a future meeting of the Commission to talk on that matter.

Resolved:

- **to request that the finalised action plan be brought to the next meeting of the Commission;**
- **to request that the Director of Early Intervention and Integrated Safeguarding attend a future meeting of the Commission to discuss early help and intervention.**

17/11 Children's Home Visits

The Commission discussed the visits to children's homes that had been completed. It was reported that five homes had been visited since October 2011.

The Commission recognised the importance of having a clear procedure for reporting back the results of visits to officers and for officers to respond. It was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer would put together a procedure.

Resolved that the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer would put together a procedure for reporting back to officers the results of Member visits to children's homes and for officers to respond.

18/11 Retrospective Scrutiny

There were no items for retrospective scrutiny.

MINUTES END