

Corporate Parenting Sub Commission
25 October 2011

Present: Councillor Bailey (Chair from 02/11)
Councillors Bolton, Campbell, Whitby and F. Winter

In Attendance: Andrew Bunyan – Strategic Director for Children and Young People
Diane Grist – Deputy Head of Service - Children in Care
Philip O'Brien – Head of Democratic Services
Mahroof Hussain – Overview and Scrutiny Manager

01/11 Appointment of Chair

It was agreed that Councillor Bailey be appointed Chair for the 2011/12 municipal year.

02/11 Appointment of Vice Chair

It was agreed that Councillor Bolton be appointed Vice Chair for the 2011/12 municipal year.

03/11 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor F. Khan.

04/11 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

05/11 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

06/11 Remit of the Corporate Parenting Sub Commission

Members received the Corporate Parenting Sub Commission – Terms of Reference report.

There was some discussion around there being no formal role for Children and Young People Commission co-optees in the Corporate Parenting Sub Commission.

There was some discussion around changes to be made to the terms of reference under Appendix 2.

Resolved:

- 1. to approve the terms of reference of the Corporate Parenting Sub Commission; subject to the following amendments:**
 - under Appendix 2, point 2, replace “Regulation 22 visits” with “Regulation 33 visits”
 - under Appendix 2, remove point 10, “To monitor the work of the Corporate Parenting Forum”;
- 2. to agree that there would be no formal role for Children and Young People Commission co-optees in the Corporate Parenting Sub Commission;**
- 3. to agree that the Corporate Parenting Sub Commission would be made up of the elected members of the Children and Young People Commission.**

07/11 Meeting Dates

Members considered future meeting dates of the Sub Commission and agreed on:

- Tuesday 13 December at 6.00pm
- Tuesday 14 February at 6.00pm
- Tuesday 27 March at 6.00pm

Resolved to agree future meeting dates

08/11 Children in Care Statistics Report

Members received a report from Andrew Bunyan, Strategic Director of Children and Young People, and Diane Grist, Deputy Head of Service (Children in Care).

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People reported that the number of children in care in Derby fluctuated between the high 480's and the low 470's. From 2005 there had been a gradual increase in the numbers of children in care. The rates of children in care was much higher than the national average. The distribution of placements across the UK showed that the vast majority are located in Derby. The Strategic Director of Children and Young People explained the reasons why children were sometimes placed outside the authority boundary. He said that there were higher numbers of young people in the upper cohort and he would look to reduce these numbers in the future.

Councillor Bolton noted that there were lots of babies at the lower end of the cohort. The Strategic Director of Children and Young People said that this was not surprising as Local Authority partners would have had concerns with those and so they come into care.

There was some discussion around the numbers of children who were in foster placements and care homes. Councillor Winter asked whether the 90 children in private/agency foster placements were in Derby. The Deputy Head of Service (Children in Care) reported that some may not be, but it was about finding the most appropriate support.

There was some discussion around the numbers of children in care of dual heritage. The Strategic Director of Children and Young People said that over the last five years there had been a significant increase in the numbers of young people entering the system of dual heritage.

The Deputy Head of Service (Children in Care) reported that care applications to courts are higher than they have ever been and that this is a national problem.

There was some discussion around the processes, timescales and approval rates of becoming a foster carer.

The Commission resolved to note the report

09/11 Children's Home Visits

Councillor Bolton reported that three Members had visited The Lighthouse on the previous day. It was recognised that children's home visits should be on the agenda for every Sub Commission meeting and that it was important to have feedback from Children and Young People officers after visits had taken place.

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People reported that there were two Ofsted reports each year about children's homes. It was agreed that the Sub Commission would want to see these.

There was some discussion around the content of the Members' Visit to Children's Care Home Report form. It was agreed to add Diversity to point 3. Health and Wellbeing so that a diversity breakdown could be recorded on future care home visits.

Resolved:

- 1. to note the procedure for Member visits to children's homes**
- 2. that children's home visits should be on the agenda for every Sub Commission meeting and feedback be provided by an Children and Young People officers after a visit had taken place**
- 3. to add Diversity to point 3. Health and Wellbeing on the Children's Care Home Report form**

10/11 Future Work Programme

Members agreed items for future Sub Commission meetings.

Resolved:

1. to consider actions identified by the Inspection of Safeguarding and looked after children Services Ofsted report published in June 2011
2. to receive the Munroe report and recommendations
3. to receive an update on support provided to raise education attainment for LAC
4. to receive a paper on what is being done to safely reduce the numbers of children in care in Derby
5. to receive an update on the “out of hours” support to carers
6. to consider the progress on the topic review of the mental health of children looked after
7. to receive an update on support to children in care with regards to leisure and culture activities
8. to consider how all members can continue to play an active part in corporate parenting

MINUTES END