

Time Commenced: - 6.00 pm
Time Finished: - 7.00 pm

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMISSION WEDNESDAY 26 July 2005

This meeting of Corporate Parenting Sub-Commission was inquorate.

Present: Councillors Marshall and Turner

01/05 Appointment of Chair

Agreed to appoint Councillor Turner as Chair for this meeting.

02/05 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors E Berry and Hird.

03/05 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

04/05 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

06/05 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

07/05 Fostering Service Report

The Sub-Commission considered a report from the Director of Social Services on the Fostering Service. The Fostering Panel met a total of 24 times between 1 April 2004 and 31 March 2005. During the period the service responded to 206 requests for new foster placements.

It was reported that there had been a reduction in foster carer numbers in recent years, but the total number of foster carers did increase by three in 2003/04. However the capacity was not matched as the new carers could often only take one or two children. Some foster carers were lost to Independent Foster Agencies as they could offer more money to the carer.

It was reported that Derby did well in terms of supporting its carers with respite. The Council also planned to start training courses with dedicated training for foster carers.

Resolved to recommend the next meeting agree:

- 1. that the Fostering Service continue to provide an annual report for period from 1 April to 31 March and reviews the Statement of Purpose as required by the Foster Services Regulations 2002. (see Appendix 1 of the report)**
- 2. to receive the Fostering Service Report to track key indicators of performance**
- 3. to note the work and developments of the Fostering Service.**

08/05 Promoting the Health of Children Looked After

The Sub-Commission considered a report from the Director of Social Services on promoting the health of children looked after. The Department of Health published guidance in November 2002 setting out the responsibilities of Councils and health agencies to work together to provide services to meet the needs of children looked after. In the same year the National Healthy Care Standard was developed by the Department of Health, with the National Children's Bureau to support the guidance and assist agencies to carry out their responsibilities.

Central Derby Primary Care Trust – PCT, appointed a consultant community paediatrician, to act as designated doctor for looked after children for Southern Derbyshire. Central and Greater Derby PCTs also appointed community nurses who acted as designated nurses for looked after children. It was reported that there was a shortfall in designated nurse hours. Overall provision in the city fell considerably below the level in the three PCTs in Southern Derbyshire and some of the provision was based on temporary funding.

Mahroof Hussain asked how the health of CLA compared with the health of other children in the city. Rod Jones reported that when children came into care they were generally in poor health and they didn't catch up as they moved around, so these children actually required a better than normal health service. It was stated that health was monitored but there was no local information on the health of looked after children in comparison to the general child population in Derby.

Councillor Turner suggested that it should be highlighted as a possible topic review.

Resolved to recommend the next meeting agree to consider the health of children looked after as a possible topic review of the Social Care and Health Commission

09/05 Reducing Offending by Children Looked After

The Sub-Commission consider a joint report from the Director of Social Services and Director of Community Safety Partnership on reducing offending by children looked after.

It was reported that Derby Youth Offending Service - YOS was part of the merged Community Safety Partnership and the management board was chaired by local authority chief executive. It was recognised that early intervention with young people was effective in preventing offending and reducing youth crime. The YOS preventions Steering Group monitored delivery of the preventions agenda. Youth Inclusion and Support Panels – YISPs – identified those children and young people assessed to be most at risk of offending. Children looked after were considered to be three times more likely to offend than the general population. Other risk factors associated with offending were not being in education, employment or training, as well as living in areas of greater deprivation.

Delivery of this work was primarily through the work of mainstream YOS staff, for those who had already offended, and preventions staff within outreach work in the community for those who had been identified as vulnerable to offending. The work centred upon reducing the incidence of risk factors and enhancing protective factors by providing appropriate interventions. Progress of children was monitored within assessment processes, statistical returns and tracking of re-offending rates. In December 2004 there were 19 children looked after out of 196 (9.7%) who offended during the year, compared against Home Office statistics for Derbyshire of 2.7%.

Resolved to note the report.

Minutes End

