

Time Commenced: - 6.00 pm
Time Finished: - 7.40pm

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMISSION 24 MARCH 2010

Present: Councillors Bolton, Higginbottom (for part of 27/09 and 28/09 only) and Williams

In attendance: Mohammed Jakara and Emma Smith (both University of Derby)

21/09 Appointment of Chair

In the absence of Councillor Higginbottom at the start of the meeting it was agreed that Councillor Williams would act as Chair for the meeting.

22/09 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ginns

23/09 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items

24/09 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

25/09 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

26/09 Call-in

There were no items.

Items for Discussion

27/09 Visit to Bute Walk – 25 February 2010

The Sub-Commission provided feedback to officers following a visit to the above facility. Concerns were raised over a variety of jobs which appeared unfinished or poor quality following the building's refurbishment. These included wires that needed to be boxed in, poor paintwork and an untidy finish to many areas, as well as a broken window that had not yet been repaired.

The Head of Service for Residential and Leaving Care explained that there was an outstanding 'snagging' list that the contractor was working through. Members were informed by the Maintenance Team Leader from Property Services that the time taken to repair the window was due to a delay in awaiting a replacement part as the frame itself had been irreparably damaged as well as the glazing.

Members asked whether the council had powers to remove the contractor from the list of approved contractors should the finish not be completed to a satisfactory level. It was explained that this was possible but that significant concerns would need to be identified and the problems with the work at the home on its own may not be sufficient.

Councillor Williams informed the other Sub-Commission members that she had been impressed by the level of commitment staff had made in making the transition into the refurbished environment.

Resolved that the concerns of the Commission be noted.

28/09 Children in care and care leavers – partnership with the University of Derby

A report by the Corporate Director for Children and Young People on the development of a new partnership with the University of Derby was considered. The Education Consultant for Children in Care, from within the Social Development and Inclusion section, explained that work had been undertaken to develop a partnership whereby university students, selected following an interview process, acted as mentors to children in care and care leavers. It was reported that the partnership was designed to be mutually beneficial as it provided the students with valuable mentoring experience and offered the children and young people an opportunity to realise their own potential to achieve within a higher education environment.

The Sub-Commission was informed by Mohammed Jakara and Emma Smith (both University of Derby) that the partnership was proving successful. It was highlighted, however, that as the project grew it was placing greater pressures on staffing, meaning funding to support its continuation could become an issue in the future.

Resolved to note the report and provide a regular update on its successes at future meetings.

29/09 Statistical information on children in care

The Sub-Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director of Children and Young People, providing statistical information on children looked after and 2008-9 outturn performance on national indicators.

Resolved to note the report.

30/09 Adoption Agency report

The Sub-Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director of Children and Young People highlighting the activity of the Derby City Adoption Agency.

Members were informed that during the previous calendar year, 40 children had been placed for adoption, compared to 36 a year earlier. During the same period, 40 adoption orders were made and 19 adopters were approved.

Members were informed that the Quality Care Commission requires Adoption Agency Reports to be considered twice a year by the Corporate Parenting sub Commission in future.

Resolved to note the report.

31/09 Response of Council Cabinet to Commission's report

Resolved to note the response.

MINUTES END