

# ITEM 4

Time commenced – 6:00pm

Time finished – 7:37pm

## **CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday 24 October 2017**

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

In attendance: Suanne Lim - Service Director, Children's Integrated Services  
Amelia – Representative of the Children in Care Council  
Annamarie Johannesson – Derby Foster Care Association  
Claire Hurst – Children's Participation Officer  
Hazel Lymbery – Director – Specialist Services  
Pauline Anderson – Interim Director of Learning and Skills  
Sally Penrose – Head of Children's Integrated Services  
Sharon Green – Head of Direct Services  
Andy Smith- Strategic Director Children and Young People  
Andrew Kaiser Head of Service Early Help and Children's Safeguarding  
Jacquelynne Dominiczak – Democratic Services Officer

### **11/17 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Marshall

### **12/17 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair**

There were none.

### **13/17 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

### **14/17 Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

### **15/17 Children in Care Council – Update July 2017**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Children in Care Council (CICC) which provided the CICC representative Amelia and the 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 commenced her post, these meetings took place in July, August and September 2017 and in addition a Pledge event in July 2017.

On 5 July 2017, six members attended the Children in Care Council meeting which focussed on Education. The Virtual School Head (VSH) attended the meeting to inform the Members about the services the Virtual School provided and the schemes which had been developed and amended. Members discussed with the VSH what the Pupil Premium can be used towards.

Personal Education Plan meetings were also discussed and what information a young person would like to know prior to a meeting taking place. It was suggested this could be included in a leaflet within the information pack for young people when they arrived in care and they stated that they felt there should be more support given to children when moving from school to college.

CICC members discussed ideas of what should be included in a welcome/information pack when young people first move into care and it was suggested a summary sheet for carers to refer to listing what is important to the young person should be included. Peter Macauley from the Fostering and Adoption Team attended and asked young people what they thought would be needed to know about them and asked them to be involved in the design of the leaflet to be included in the welcome/information pack. This idea will be progressed by the Participation Officer and members of CICC.

It was reported on 11 July 2017 a Pledge event took place at the Council House with seven CICC members in attendance who gave a presentation to officers and councillors. They presented their views on the Pledges that have been made for the year ahead. Officers gave CICC members an update on their Pledges and how these will be delivered in the coming year. CICC members felt that in addition to the Pledge should include work experience and apprenticeships. This has been updated within the Pledge and circulated.

Amelia, 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.

On 2 August 2017 at Chester Green Community Centre a summer event took place which was an opportunity for potential CICC members to attend to find out what CICC was about. A number of activities were available which included baking, arts and crafts and games.

This event was used as a further opportunity for a Virtual School officer to engage with young people and consult them as to what they feel should be included in an ePEP (Personal Education Plan) and a Virtual School leaflet for young people when they first become looked after.

The Virtual School will produce a leaflet using the comments from the young people along with other information about the Virtual School, PEPs, PP+ (Pupil Premium Plus), etc. When a draft copy had been put together, the Virtual School would take it to the Children in Care Council to see whether anything has been missed out or needs changing before it was published.

It was reported that on 6 September 2017 eight members attended the CICC meeting.

The report went on to state that A Focus On Us newsletter has been designed and would be distributed to all children in care in October 2017. This first edition would go out as a printed newsletter, with a view to future newsletters being emailed to carers and residential staff.

The Participation Officer had continued to encourage new children and young people to attend CICC meetings and they reported good attendance with the ages ranging from 10-21 years with the typical demographic being 12-15 years old, however it was felt that young people from residential care were under represented and this representation needed to increase. A leaflet was being circulated to social workers and carers to introduce young people and adults to CICC to encourage participation. Further work is being undertaken by the Participation Officer to work closely with the champion from the Children's Residential Homes to encourage attendance by residents.

Views were given by Members on a new Child Protection Conference leaflet aimed at children and young people, amendments were suggested and passed onto the design team with the changes made in consultation with the lead Child Protection Manager. The amended design has been viewed by the CICC members, they approved the final design.

Amelia the CICC member who attended the Corporate Parenting Committee meeting was the winner of a competition to design a Christmas card for Councillor Sara Bolton to use as her official card for Christmas 2017. Amelia reported that she enjoyed attending CICC meetings and being involved events.

The Chair thanked Amelia for her input on behalf of the Committee and for her designing her Christmas card.

**It was resolved to note the update.**

## 16/17 Children and Young People Missing from Care

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services presented by the Head of Early Help and Children's Safeguarding which provided an overview of progress in relation to practice pertaining to children and young people who go missing.

Appendix 2 of the Quarter 2 report stated there had been a decrease in the number of missing individuals compared to Quarter 4 from 63 to 57 but there had been an increase in missing episodes from 100 to 147. Overall there had been a decrease in missing individuals compared to Quarter 2 of 2016-17, 69-57 and in missing episodes, 176 compared to 147 this year. Appendix 2 went on to provide Quarter 2 statistics and gave comparisons to previous quarterly statistics. It was reported that Sinfyn Lane, Cricklewood and Willows Children's Homes all saw larger increases in missing young people but Coronation Avenue Children's Home reported a reduction in missing episodes.

Furthermore it was stated that children in care were likely to go missing than children from other groups, however the Pupil Referral Unit an education placement reported the highest number of missing episodes which was 56.

Members were informed by the Head of Service, Early Help and Children's Safeguarding that two young people were responsible for 39 missing episodes and two thirds to three quarters of young people go missing as a one off episode.

**It was resolved to note the report.**

## 17/17      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.

Under the new framework judgements were made on:

- Overall progress and experiences of children and young people
- How well children and young people are helped and protected
- Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Homes were judged according to a four point scale:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

Regulation 44 of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 required each home to be visited by an employee of the organisation not directly concerned with the conduct of the home and a report to be written. Some visits were carried out by an independent visitor from outside of the Council. The rest are done by Managers in the Children and Young People's Directorate, who are completely independent of the Homes and have no involvement with young people placed in them. Reports of the

visits are sent to Homes Managers who respond to any recommendations. The reports were circulated to Ofsted, Responsible Managers and Democratic Services.

Elected members carry out periodic visits to children's homes to monitor the quality of care and the welfare of children and young people, these visits fall within the members' corporate parenting responsibilities.

In July 2017, four briefing sessions were delivered by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding to equip Members to undertake the visits at the Children Homes.

The list of Derby City children's homes is as follows:

- The Willows
- Cricklewood
- Shine
- Bute Walk
- 402 Sinfin Lane
- Coronation Avenue
- Queensferry Gardens

The Chair reported that all children's homes would have been visited by an elected member by the end of December 2017 with the exception of Queensferry Gardens which is currently undergoing refurbishment but a visit is planned for early next year.

At 4.4 of the report it was stated that 402 Sinfin Lane after its OFSTED inspection would require improvement but this primarily related to one resident and a full improvement plan was swiftly implemented and is being monitored closely to address the concerns. A visit was being planned by the Chair and the Strategic Director, Children and Young People.

**It was resolved to note the report.**

## **18/17      Annual Report of the Head of the Virtual School for Looked after Children (LAC) for the academic year 2016-17**

A report of the Strategic Director of People Services was presented to the Committee by the Interim Director, Learning and Skills - Annual Report of the Head of the Virtual School for Looked After Children for the Academic - Annual Report of the Head of the Virtual School for Looked After Children for the Academic Year 2016-17.

The report stated that 2016 saw major reforms to the primary school accountability measures and a new floor standard for schools and the former assessment system of using 'National Curriculum levels' had stopped for children in primary school education. Instead there is now a new 'expected standard' (a higher standard than in 2015), along with new national curriculum tests in English reading, mathematics and

grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS): with outcomes reported as scaled scores ranging from 80 to 120, rather than levels.

Pupils achieving the expected standard was a combined measure across the three subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. To be counted towards the measure, a pupil must have achieved a scaled score of **100 or more** in reading **and** a scaled score of 100 or more in mathematics; **and** have been teacher assessed in writing as 'working at the expected standard' or 'working at a greater depth within the expected standard'.

Pupils achieving at a higher standard is also a combined measure across the three subjects. To be counted towards the measure, a pupil must have achieved a 'high scaled score' of **110 or more** in reading **and** mathematics; **and** have been teacher assessed in writing as 'working at a greater depth within the expected standard'.

A school would be above the floor if at least 65% of pupils meet the expected standard in English reading, English writing and mathematics; **or** the school achieved sufficient progress scores in **all three** subjects.

The report further stated In secondary schools there had been changes in the way headline performance measures were reported. The previous measure of 5 good GCSE passes at A\*-C grades including English and maths had gone. It had been replaced with the following measures:

- Progress 8 – this is the progress which students make in eight subjects.
- Attainment 8 – this is the average points score a student gains in eight subjects.
- The percentage of pupils achieving 9-4 in English and maths
- The percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate (GCSE higher grades in Maths, English, Science, a Humanities subject and a foreign language)

2017 saw the introduction of the new, more challenging GCSEs in maths and English with grades awarded on a 9-1 scale. This again made comparisons with previous years problematic.

Tables within the report informed Members of statistics and comparisons with previous year's performances.

The Interim Director, Learning and Skills stated that the numbers of children concerned were very low in the cohorts written on page 5, Table 7 of the report, improvements could be seen in Year 1 Phonics and that improvements were consistent, the same continued in Key Stage 2 table evidenced in Graph 8 at the bottom on page.

Page 10 of the report stated there had been no permanent exclusions in 2016-17 and it was a very positive story.

Members discussed Looked After Children's attendance at school, the rewards given to children by their individual school for 100%, how this is not achievable due to the children having to attend statutory appointments and the effect this could have on their confidence and future. The Interim Director, Learning and Inclusion responded

by saying the attendance coding is fixed by the Department for Education but that individual school's had their own celebration of Attendance as did the virtual school.

**It was resolved to:**

- a) **note the report**
- b) **request an anonymous report is compiled to evidence the scale of the absences to aid the Cabinet Member and/or the Corporate Parenting Committee in resolving the issue, listing:**
  - i) **Overall individual attendance figure**
  - ii) **Number of absences**
  - iii) **the individual reason for the absence**
  - iv) **gender**
  - v) **school**

## 19/17 Fostering Agency Report

A report of the Strategic Director of People Services was presented to the Committee by the Head of Service, Fostering and Adoption Services. The report stated that the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services required that the executive side of the Local Authority:

- a. Monitor the management and outcomes of the service in order to satisfy themselves that the service is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children;
- b. Receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the fostering service every three months;
- c. Satisfy themselves that the provider is complying with the conditions of registration and National Minimum Standards for fostering.

(Standard 25.7)

The Fostering Agency was required to produce a Statement of Purpose updated on an annual basis. The current Statement of Purpose was presented to the Corporate Parenting Committee in September 2016. The Statement of Purpose has been updated for 2017 and is attached as appendix 2. The marketing Strategy for 2017-2020 is attached as appendix 3.

This report covered the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017.

At point 4.1 page 2 of the report it stated fostering panels have a crucial role to play in the provision and monitoring of foster care for children. The membership of Derby City's fostering panel complies with Guidance and Regulations and National Minimum Standards 2011 for Fostering Services. The central list (regulation 23) consisted of an independent chair and vice-chair, a health service representative, a foster carer from a different local authority, a fostering social worker representing the service with at least three years post qualifying experience, a care-experienced

young person and other independent members with relevant experience related to children in care and safeguarding. The panel was currently supported by an independent professional advisor and also had access to a specialist adult medical advisor and legal advice as required. The fostering panel advisor post was currently being recruited to by the service at a senior practitioner grade which was commensurate to the professional advisor for the Adoption Panel. This will replace the independent professional advisor and bring the post under the direct line management of the Head of Service. It was a statutory post that required a more substantial QA role and liaison with team managers to manage the panel agenda, quality of reports and panel minutes. The Agency Decision Maker (ADM) is the Head of Service for Fostering and Adoption.

The foster panel chair, professional advisor and fostering, managers met twice a year to consider quality assurance and performance issues relating to the service and training needs of the panel members. Panel members received an annual appraisal undertaken by the panel chair and panel advisor. The panel chair and ADM were interviewed about their respective roles by Ofsted inspectors in March 2017. The overall judgement for Looked After Children which included the fostering service was “good”

The Head of Service, Fostering and Adoption Services informed the Committee that a revised and refreshed marketing strategy was in place and the Derby City Council website was an integral to this new strategy in successfully engaging with prospective foster carers. Part of the new strategy was to have the support of existing foster carers at information and recruitment events.

Point 4.5, page 3 of the report stated during the 12 month period between July 2016 and June 2017, the fostering service received 217 fostering enquiries 69% of which were white British enquiries (fig.1) from the predominate age bands being between 30-59yrs (fig.2). On line enquiries and telephone enquiries accounted for 67% with 13% of enquiries coming from people attending events (fig.3).

Of the 217 initial enquiries 183 information packs were sent out. Information packs are not always sent out and this is often due to telephone consultations with the applicant being ruled out early (i.e call back from fostering social worker reveals no spare bedroom for a child). 69 enquiry forms were returned and 59 initial visits were undertaken (fig.4).

Members of the Committee sought clarification about minimum requirements for bedrooms and if there were resources available to create space within a household to accommodate a foster child/children. The Head of Service, Fostering and Adoption Services responded saying there were budgets available but this mainly focussed on children with disabilities.

**It was resolved to:**

- a) note the report**
- b) approve the Fostering Agency report and Marketing Strategy**

## 20/17 Adoption Agency Report

A report of the Strategic Director of People Services was presented to the Committee by Head of Service Fostering and Adoption Services which outlined the Children Act 1989, the Adoption Agency Regulations (2011), the Adoption and Children Act 2002, the Education and Adoption Act 2016 and the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2014 placed duties and responsibilities on Local Authorities to provide, or arrange to provide an Adoption Service.

The report provided adoption performance information for the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

The Committee heard Derby City Adoption Agency had continued to develop services to meet the needs of children who should be placed for adoption. The agency continued to provide services to meet the needs of adults including adoptive parents, birth family members and adopted adults.

At points 4.2 and 4.4 the report stated that 47 children had been adopted and 22 adoptive families had been approved to adopt.

At point 4.7 the report stated, during 2016 to 2017, 23 children were matched with an adoptive family. This included one sibling pair and a group of three placed together.

A table at point 4.8, page 4 of the report showed statistics which stated 14 families had matched 17 children.

### **It was resolved to:**

- a) approve the report**
- b) endorse the statement of purpose.**

## 21/17 Independent Reviewing Service – Annual Report 2016-17

A report of the Strategic Director of People Services was presented to the Committee was presented to the Committee by the Service Director, Children's Integrated Services which provided Members with information on Independent Reviewing Service (IRO) – Annual Report 2016-17. The IRO Handbook 2010 provided statutory guidance for Independent Reviewing Officers and Local Authorities on their statutory functions in relation to case management and looked after children.

The IRO service completed 1,034 statutory reviews in 2016/17, 90.1% of statutory reviews had been held within the required timescales which was just over the set target of 90%. Of these 1,034 reviews 90% of them had children and young people participating in them.

The IRO had received positive feedback following the recent OFSTED inspection regarding its effectiveness and the relationship between Independent Reviewing Officers and young people. Feedback forms of the review process from children and parents had also been overwhelmingly positive.

It was a statutory requirement as stated in the IRO Handbook 2010 for the manager of the IRO service to produce an annual report for the scrutiny of the members of Corporate Parenting Committee. This is to ensure the Corporate Parenting Committee were aware of the performance of the IRO service issues that may impact on the this and the children in care population the IRO service is providing a service to.

**Resolved to note the report and the Chair thanked staff in all areas for their hard work.**

MINUTES END