

Time Commenced: - 6.00 pm
Time Finished: - 8.10 pm

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMISSION TUESDAY 19 JUNE 2007

Chair: Councillor Rawson
Present: Councillors Higginbottom and Poulter

01/07 Appointment of Chair

It was agreed to appoint Councillor Rawson as Chair for the 2007/08 municipal year.

02/07 Appointment of Vice Chair

It was agreed to appoint Councillor Poulter as the Vice Chair for the 2007/08 municipal year.

03/07 Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ginns.

04/06 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

Children's Home for Autistic Children

The Commission considered a late item that related to the possibility of a new children's home being developed in the City to accommodate Autistic children. An item was currently on the Forward Plan and would be reported to Council Cabinet in July 2007, with the aim of receiving an 'in principle' decision.

Keith Woodthorpe – Assistant Director – Specialist Services - advised the Sub Commission that Derby currently had 11 children with learning difficulties placed outside the City as Derby did not have the facilities to cater for them. Following a review of Children Looked After it was decided that there were sufficient children with learning difficulties to warrant opening a Local Authority run home.

It was reported that the proposal would be included in the 2007-10 budget strategy as an overall saving would be made if a home could be provided with the City, as out-of area placements currently cost £200,000 a year per child.

Resolved

- **to note the report**

- **to receive an update at a future meeting of the Sub Commission**

05/07 Declarations of Interest

Name	Type of Interest	Reason
Councillor Higginbottom	Personal	Vice Chair of Governors – Ashgate Primary School
Councillor Ginns	Personal	Volunteer Youth Worker
Councillor Rawson	Personal	Governor – da Vinci Community College

06/07 Minutes of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Commission – 19 December 2006

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2006 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

The Commission also received minute number 107/06 of the Children and Young People Commission held on 13 March 2007 that related to business of the Corporate Parenting Sub Commission.

07/07 Call – In

There were no items.

08/07 Reducing Offending by Looked After Children

The Sub Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director for Children and Young People that detailed the work undertaken to reduce offending by Children Looked After and Young People aged 10-17 Years.

Tim O'Neil and Elene Constantinou advised the Sub Commission that the Youth Offending Service and Children and Young People's Department were working in partnership to ensure that measures according with the Green Paper on Looked After Children (Care Matters, 2006), are implemented. These measures include

- Training for staff working with vulnerable groups in restorative justice approaches to managing conflict
- The setting up of local arrangements to ensure that there are appropriate responses to incidents in children's homes
- More joined up services for looked after children who go into custody

Tim O'Neil reported that the percentage of looked after children convicted or that had a final warning or reprimand as at 30 September 2006 was 6.7%.

Councillor Poulter asked what was the trend outside children homes? Tim O' Neil responded that the numbers had reduced by 30% in a 24 month period. He considered that this was the impact of the youth inclusion service and making the right connection between service providers.

Keith Woodthorpe advised that a looked after child was 1.8 times more likely to offend than a child not in care. He considered that whilst the ratios would never be the same, the gap was closing.

Resolved

- **To note the report**
- **To mark the progress of partner agencies in working with Looked After Children and Young People (10-17) within Derby City.**

09/07 Inspection and Management Visits to Children's Homes

The Sub Commission considered a report from the Director for Children and Young People that gave details of the outcomes of the latest external inspections and management visits to Children's Homes throughout Derby.

Members were informed that the homes were assessed and scored by the Commission for Social Care Improvement, CSCI, against 35 standards, details were presented in the report. It was noted that all but five of the 70 management visits required between June 2006 and April 2007 were completed. It was reported that for the last two inspections for which individual standards were assessed there were no standards not met and some were exceeded. Since April 2007 CSCI inspection role has been replaced by OFSTED.

Rod Jones – Head of Service – Residential and Leaving Care Service - advised the Sub Commission that the format of inspections had changed and they were now taking more account of service users' feedback. He noted that the regulatory body had given the Children Homes time to catch up and that the general direction was one of improvement.

Councillor Poulter asked how much notice was given to the homes before an inspection? Rod Jones responded that they were both announced and unannounced.

Keith Woodthorpe considered that unannounced visits were helpful as they were not something that should be prepared for as the homes should aspire to the standards at all times.

Councillor Rawson asked how management visits were fed back into the system?

Rod Jones responded that after the visit by a senior officer, that could take up to four hours, the reports were written, circulated to the manager of the home and the service manager. If any major issues were noted then the Head of Service and Assistant Director would be involved.

Resolved

- **to note the report**
- **to report back to the Sub Commission any issues of concern raised following future OFSTED inspections.**

10/07 Visits by Elected Members to Children's Homes

The Sub Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director for Children and Young People that requested it consider how Members could best fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities by visiting children's homes.

It was reported that in 2005 Members agreed that each home would host an open event once a year to which Councillors would be invited. In 2005 and 2006 three open evenings took place, attended by four, three and one Councillor respectively, although all Members were invited. A number of open days were arranged but were cancelled at short notice due to lack of attendance and one was not cancelled but no one attended.

Resolved

- **to re-instate a scheme of unannounced rota visits with a Member of the Sub Commission taking the lead role and involving a Member from the ward that the home is in and one other Member of the Council to accompany them on a visit. This would be in place of the open days currently arranged.**
- **to organise the visits and arrangements for Criminal Records Bureau checks through Members Services as its staff have direct access to Councillors and their diaries.**

11/07 Statistical Information on Children Looked After

The Sub Commission considered a report from the Director for Children and Young People 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 objective of healthy, safe and independent communities.

Resolved to note the report and the statistical information contained in appendix 2.

Minutes End