

# ITEM 4

Time commenced 1.00pm  
Time finished 3:00pm

## **CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE** **Tuesday 26 July 2022**

Present: Councillors Hezelgrave, Kus, Pandey, Pattison,  
Roulstone (Vice Chair), Swan and Whitby (Chair)

In attendance: Omar Aslam, Youth Mayor  
Pervez Akhtar, Corporate Parenting Lead  
Laura Bradley, CiC Council Participation Officer  
Katie Evans, Commissioning Manager, CiC  
Holly Hardgrave, Commissioning Support Assistant  
Suanne Lim, Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care  
Andy Smith, Strategic Director Peoples Services  
Marlene Upchurch, Chair of Parent Foster Carers  
Sarah Walker, Policy & Improvement Manager

### **01/22 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from, Councillors Lind, Pauline Anderson, Director Learning, Inclusion and Skills, Steve Atkinson, Independent Chair Derby & Derbyshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Johanna Barker DHOS for CiC, Graeme Ferguson, Headteacher Virtual School, Sharon Green, Head of Direct Services, Integration & Direct Services Adults Judy Levitt, DHOS Fostering & Permanence Service, Heather Peet, Designated Nurse NHS, Kelly Thompson, Named Nurse NHS

### **02/22 Late Items to be introduced by the Chair**

There were none.

### **03/22 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Whitby declared he was a Foster Carer for Derby City Council and a member of the Adoption East Midlands Panel.

### **04/22 Minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

### **05/22 Children in Care Council (CiCC) Update**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Integrated Commissioning (CYP) which was presented by the Participation Officer. The report highlighted the work of the Children in Care Council (CICC) and explained the challenges faced which Corporate Parenting may be able to help with.

There were two meetings of the CICC in April and June 2022. At the April meeting a Senior Practitioner for the Children in Care Service consulted the CICC on the revised Pocket

Money and Savings Policy. Several key points were suggested by the CICC: It was good that savings will be inaccessible until children and young people are 18; it was unfair that children in foster or residential placements receive pocket money until they are 18 but those in supported accommodation do not; CICC agreed that savings should only be made into a child's trust fund or ISA. The Senior Practitioner Children in Care Service would return to a later meeting to give feedback to the CICC on "you said, we did". Consultation was also carried out at Internal Residential Homes and West Park School to ensure a wider reach.

At the June meeting there was a face-to-face activity, laser tag and a consultation session at Megazone. A Life story Practitioner shared the Life story Work Policy and asked the CICC what important information should be recorded through their journey. The officer highlighted that young people were concerned that incorrect information had been given about their family background and did not feel supported with their primary language. They also felt that having social worker continuity would help them. The Life story Practitioner would return to a later meeting to give feedback on "you said, we did". At the meeting the young people were told about an opportunity to meet a reporter for BBC Radio Derby to give their views on how their voices are heard.

The Committee heard about the key participation activities over the last quarter which included: Internal Residential Homes Consultation, Allestree Park Rewilding, School Participation, Foster Carer Training and the Children's Accommodation Strategy.

A consultation exercise in Derby City Council Residential Homes had been requested by the Change Manager. The aim was to find out how Internal Residential Homes currently meet the needs of CIC and what they feel about the homes they live in. Full details of the consultation can be seen at Appendix 1 and a brief summary was highlighted in Table 1.

The CICC also took part in a focus group about the Allestree Rewilding Project. They went on a site visit, had a tour of the area, and learnt about the plans proposed. The CICC had the opportunity to give feedback on the proposals and were asked for their thoughts and suggestions about the rewilding of Allestree Park.

In May School Participation sessions were facilitated by the Participation Officer with groups of CIC at West Park School. This was to promote the CICC and inform CIC of upcoming meetings and activities. The sessions gave the Participation Officer a chance to meet and engage with CYP on a personal level and be a point of contact should they consider joining the CICC in the future. The Participation Officer was liaising with other secondary schools in Derby City to develop methods of consultation with CIC.

A Foster Carers Training Session about "Participation" was arranged in collaboration with the Training and Education Officer. The first group session took place 6<sup>th</sup> June and there was another session on the 21<sup>st</sup> June. The sessions were used to raise awareness of the CICC to support its growth and ensure Foster Carers were aware of the opportunities available.

The Participation Officer and a member of the CICC attended a meeting about the Children's Accommodation Strategy. Before the meeting a survey to get the views of Care Leavers, Residential CYP and the CICC had been undertaken. The aim was to capture their experiences of being in care and how it affected them. It would ensure their views were embedded in the strategy and their experiences would form part of the planning and delivery of services to improve outcomes. A presentation of the information from the consultation was given at the meeting.

The Participation Officer had attended a Leaving Care meeting in May to discuss the Children's Accommodation Strategy and how Care Leavers could be involved. She will attend the next Care Leavers Forum to start to form relationships and enable further engagement in participation work.

A councillor was pleased to hear that a meeting with a BBC reporter was going ahead. However, regarding the feedback from Children's Homes she understood that there was always a weekly meeting to look at menus, she asked if that still took place. She noted the comments about fire doors and signage in children's homes and asked if it was not a legal requirement could the signs be taken down. Could the feedback on Allestree re-wilding from the CiC representatives be passed onto Cabinet.

Councillors raised concerns about the differences in pocket money between children in care be reviewed. They commented that there was always a disparity between those children in a residential home and those in foster care, they would be victims of inflation if the amount was not raised. The councillors were in support of equivalency of payments for all CiC. An officer responded to the Committees concerns regarding pocket money for CiC and explained that work was now being undertaken to look at these payments, it was hoped to finish a review by the end of the year, it had already been highlighted to the Strategic Director of Peoples Services that there will be differences to consider. The whole scheme of payment was being looked at so that one transparent policy could be put in place.

Regarding the Life Story comments from CiC, the officer was disappointed that children felt that the right information was not being included. It was highlighted that three new posts had been put in place for Life Story work going forward and it was planned to further embed the Heritage Pledge and LAC and disability rights and diversity issues. Updates will be provided to the Corporate Parenting Committee.

Regarding the comments from CiC comments and councillor queries about signage in the homes, it was recognized that these types of doors and signage were not conducive to a home environment. The service had also noted that children would prefer smaller homes, officers were listening to children, and they recognised the need for different types of accommodation provision like smaller homes, however the changes would take time. The officer suggested that staff could be asked to explain the reasons for the signage and fire doors which related to health and safety issues.

Regarding meals in Children's Homes, the officer explained that the Designated LAC Nurse had input into menus in terms of healthy eating, it could just be a simple difference in that children did not want to eat what was advised for them.

The committee discussed the redecoration of rooms for children when they first enter care and asked if it was still policy to re-paint and decorate to suit. They heard that because of the high turnover of children it was not feasible to redecorate each time a child entered care. It was suggested that councillors could visit homes to see the decoration in place the rooms were lovely and very homely.

A councillor was interested in how many children had engaged in the consultation about Children's Homes. The officer explained the consultation had taken place in March and about eight children had provided input, there were only a few young people in each home.

The committee welcomed the review of Pocket Money and Savings Policy which the officer had confirmed was underway and a full report with financial sign off would return to a future Corporate Parenting meeting. They also asked that the feedback on Allestree Re-wilding from the CiC representatives be passed onto Cabinet for their consideration

**The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the content of the report and feedback from CiCC and requested that the feedback on Allestree Re-wilding from the CiC representatives be presented to Cabinet for consideration**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Integrated Commissioning (Children and Young People). The report was presented by the Commissioning Manager (Children in Care). The report provided a brief overview of the types and range of placements commissioned with external providers for Children in Care and Children in Need. Included in the report are sufficiency of placement types, the quality and cost of placements and developmental work being undertaken.

The Committee heard that placements for children can be sourced from internal and external provision. There are a range of placements made by the service these include: Internal Fostering and Children's Homes, External Fostering through Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs), External Mother and Baby Fostering, External Children's Homes, External semi-independent and Secure Welfare placements.

There are three frameworks used to source placements:

- D2N2 Children in Care Framework, Accommodation and Support Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for Fostering and Children's Homes used in partnership by Derby City, Derbyshire County, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils
- Accommodation and Support DPS for 16 to 17 year olds for semi-independent placements and support accommodation, and
- Nottingham DPS, for semi-independent placements for 16 to 17 year olds with complex needs.

The number of each type of external placement as of 31 March 2022 was highlighted, details are at paragraph 4.3 of the report; the committee noted that the demand for all types of external placements was increasing. As of 31 March 2022, there were 627 Children in Care in Derby a reduction since 31 March 2021/22.

Fostering and Children's Homes Placements – the officer highlighted that the D2N2 Children and Care framework had been in place since February 2020. It would remain in place until 2024 and there was an option to extend for a further three years. There were 200 registered providers and had regular Ofsted Inspections. The committee noted that there continued to be a shortage of foster carers available to Derby, however this was a national issue. The service works hard to build and maintain relationships with local external providers to secure the provision needed for Derby.

Semi-Independent Placements are secured using the Supported Accommodation Dynamic Purchasing Solution (DPS) for 16- to 17-year-olds. Support packages are offered of up to 25 hours per week and there was an opportunity for provision of bespoke packages for individual children with higher needs.

Secure Welfare placements are specialist placements authorised to care for children in a care setting, we work alongside health colleagues for these placements.

Quality Assurance, to ensure quality provision for all placements the service works alongside social care and providers. Most settings are Ofsted inspected, regulated settings include Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) and Residential Children's Homes. Semi independent settings which are non-regulated have specific pre-placement checks on the provider before being approved on the DPS.

The Committee heard that additional costs were rising across all placements and that quality does not always come with price, provision of placements was a constantly challenging situation and was a financial pressure on public resources. However, the service works to ensure every child gets the best possible placement for their needs.

The committee were informed that new Ofsted reforms for 16–18-year-old placements would be in place in January 2023. Unregulated supported accommodation for 16- and 17-year-olds will be overseen by Ofsted under a new set of mandatory national standards, which would improve quality and challenge market sufficiency.

Placement Sufficiency, the local authority undertakes a lot of development work with the aim of increasing placement sufficiency and improving the Accommodation offer for CIC. There was continued focus to ensure the right types of placements are available in the right location which in many cases means more placements locally in Derby.

The officer highlighted that diagram and 4.21 of the report which detailed a block contract with the D2N2 framework working with a smaller number of providers. Caps would be set on prices for placements and quality would be provided. Working alongside Derby Homes by leasing 3-bedroom properties which are fully refurbished, currently there are nine 3-bedroom properties available. The properties would be set up for young unaccompanied asylum seekers who were waiting for an age assessment.

The committee were reassured about specific residential provision for young people with complex needs, the service was working to meet their needs by working with colleagues on providing three cluster properties of two to three bedrooms. Derby City Council would own the properties and would ask providers to run the homes, there had been good interest so far from providers and the tender was about to close.

The officer explained that the service was aiming for provision to be in Derby City or close to the edge, they were working with D2N2 and health colleagues for provision of 2-bedroom properties across the D2N2 area both in the short and long term. The service was also looking at other models of provision for example the Somerset Model, the approach now was forward looking to ten years' time to ensure support and placements for CIC in Derby.

A councillor asked if there were places for supported accommodation but nothing else would children be placed in these. The officer confirmed that the pressure was there, but they would always try to match placements for young people. However, if a young person of 17 years was interested in living in supported accommodation, then the service would have to trial it, but the Social Worker would be involved in the decision.

Another councillor talked about the Derby model and was pleased that Health would be involved so that therapies would be in place from the start of the placement. Young people would not need to wait, this was especially important for young people with special needs. It was noted that young people had been involved from the beginning in how the Accommodation Strategy would be shaped.

**The Committee considered and noted the content of the report.**

## 07/22 Children's Homes – Update, Inspection/Regulation 44 Reports and Member Visits

The Committee received a report of the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care. The report was presented by the Head of Service Children in Residential Care. The report provided an overview of Derby City Council's Children's Residential Homes internal and external inspections over the last six to twelve months.

The officer explained the three types of inspection for Children's Homes:

- Ofsted Inspection at least twice a year
- Regulation 44 Inspections – home to be visited by an employee of the organisation not directly concerned with the conduct of the home and a report was written. Visits

are carried out by an independent visitor employed by the service. These visits have been fully resumed and no major issues have been identified.

- Elected Member visits – these are periodic visits to children’s homes to monitor the quality of care and the welfare of children and young people. There were two elected member visits in February 2022. Training was provided by the Lead Member for CYP. Areas for development were highlighted including improvement of the Homes back garden, replacement of the Home’s vehicle. At one home a young person explained they were interested in an apprenticeship and an opportunity was found for them to take up.

The officer highlighted the table on page three which listed the DCC Children’s Homes Inspections and outcomes to date. There were five homes in total, but one had been temporarily closed. The Ofsted Judgement on two homes was “Requires Improvement” and the other two homes were “Good”. The Ofsted Inspections had previously identified that placement matching of young people needed to be improved across the service. The Committee noted that it had been necessary to place one child in a “Home under direction” (an emergency referral) since the last reporting period.

The committee heard that staff resourcing was still a pressure, recruitment and retention of staff continued to be a challenge, initially it was due to the Pandemic but then it became a national sufficiency crisis as staff who had come into the childcare sector returned to their previous careers as the sectors such as hospitality returned during recovery. The service has experienced churn at all levels because of retirement or change in lifestyle. The officer highlighted that recruitment of managers had particularly affected two homes which had both seen changes at Deputy and Manager level over the last year. However, the service had been pro-active in resourcing from a secure pool of people for Derby including a market comparison of pay. There was a strategic Board looking at Recruitment and Retention looking at lots of ways to recruit childcare workers and managers, including Facebook, Local Magazines and various social media sites. A change was made to the recruitment process to accept Curriculum Vitae rather than on-line applications.

The officer explained that although there had been churn in staffing over the last few years the care for young people has not been unduly affected. Through COVID staff had been retained. Staff had been moved from different areas and agency staff had been used to ensure baseline staffing as per the Homes Statement of Purpose was in place.

The offer of training for staff was excellent. The staff and manager induction programme was tailored so that people entering the profession felt supported throughout their learning and working in the Home. Staff could then progress to Apprenticeships Level 4. It was a flexible offer with blended training to support staff.

Partnership working was highlighted by the officer, there were good relationships with the Virtual School and each young person had access to tutoring. There was a Designated Nurse for CIC who was a constant champion for CIC, healthy eating and lifestyle including preparation for independence were supported. There were many other partnerships including CONCORDAT, sharing relationships with the police and voluntary organisations who all supplied support for young people.

A councillor raised concerns regarding the financial cost of the temporary closure of one of the Children’s Homes and asked if there was a date for re-opening. The officer explained that the re-opening was a priority for the service, but they were unable to give a definitive date for re-opening. They were having difficulty recruiting a Home Manager, there was a recurring advert in place, agencies had been approached, everything possible was being done. Where appropriate deputy managers had been moved into management positions. It was re-iterated that this was a national issue. The Strategic Director of Peoples Service explained that the decision to close the Home had been made in early 2020 it was not foreseen that the Home would still be closed now. The difficulties of recruitment were again

highlighted these became worse during the pandemic. However, it was right that the Committee challenged the service, there was a need to get to grips with the recruitment market, this was now had corporate focus which should aid improvement. However, it was still early in the process, and it is a challenging area.

A councillor asked if there was a possibility of putting in place a “golden handshake” to attract staff. The officer explained that there was evidence that this did not work. The service has reviewed salaries and have increased them. The current salaries are higher than the private sector. A lot of staff has moved into different professions. The service was trying to take a long-term approach for retaining staff. It was looking at how recruitment is undertaken, how DCC markets itself as an employer, how it looks after staff and develop career opportunities for them. Using staff to promote and sell the work of the service.

Another councillor highlighted the strategic work undertaken by E4E going into schools, talking about care vacancies as a career choice also working with Derby Adult Learning Service (DALs) looking at apprenticeships and courses. Looking strategically and in the long-term to make young people aware of careers and pathways but this work would not have any impact until a few years in the future.

A councillor asked if there was a figure for staff vacancies to be filled available. The officer stated it was around a 40%. There were approximately 74 full time equivalent (FTE) vacancies but there are a lot of part-time staff, probably around 100. The councillor also asked how many staff were needed for the currently closed home to be operational. The officer explained there was need for a Manager and Deputy Manager and a rota of approximately 18 staff. Another councillor asked for the impact on placements by the temporary closure. The officer explained that for every fostering on residential placement there are 100 referrals. Providers in the external market are seeing the same numbers, they are stealing staff from each other. The councillor asked how many out of area placements there were. The officer could not provide the figure at this time.

#### **The Committee resolved:**

- 1. To note the content of the report, as inspections are a key element of the regulatory function in relation to Children’s Homes. Management visits are a statutory requirement.**
- 2. To note the report as a Corporate Parent.**

## **08/22 Fostering Agency Report**

The Committee received the Annual Report of work undertaken by the Fostering Service and the Statement of Purpose. The report was presented by the Director of Early Help and Children’s Social Care.

The officer explained that the report explained the role of the Fostering Panel and outlined panel standards of compliance. The membership of DCC Fostering Panel complies with Guidance and Regulations and National Minimum Standard 2011 for Fostering Services. Panels provide a quality assurance role to the fostering service provider, on the quality of reports and practice and development to ensure good outcomes for LAC.

The officer highlighted the summary by the Independent Chair of the Fostering Panel at 4.5. The Committee heard that Children’s Services in March 2022 which included the fostering service. The overall judgement was “Outstanding”. Ofsted commented “Foster Carer assessments are of a good standard and the fostering panel is providing good scrutiny of the assessment and recommendation of carers”.

Under areas of practice that influence how effectively the panel can function the officer explained how central the “voice of the child” was, the service was working hard to ensure

their voice was heard. Another area of panel development was a transparent and open process for applicants, applicants and approved carers now stay in the panel meeting with their supervision social worker. They are fully involved in the discussion and hear the views of panel members about their terms of approval.

The changes in the Team's situation were detailed by the officer. There was now a full-time permanent Deputy Head of Service post. The service was fully staffed during the last year, with three Team Managers and a part time professional adviser to the Panel. From June 2021 the service had been restructured to provide three teams, a new Family and Friends Team, a Foster Carer Support Team and a Recruitment and Assessment Team.

A new Marketing Strategy was developed for 2022 – 2023 and targets were detailed for the coming year. The officer listed the recruitment activity between April 2021 and March 2022. There were 199 initial enquiries, 64 information packs were sent out, there were 18 returned applications. There were 16 mainstream approvals and 10 Family and Friends approvals. In total there were 26 new households, in comparison with our regional comparator authorities Derby has significantly higher numbers for the year. This was a good level of progress. A breakdown of all the stages can be found in the report at 4.22 to 4.26.

The officer highlighted that 5 targeted fostering events took place during 2021-2022, they were a mixture of in person and virtual. Analysis of these events provided a total of 81 prospective fostering households taking the first step to find out more information about becoming a foster carer.

A new placements officer post was created, the officer started in July 2021 and there had been a positive impact on the number of placements, there was a growth of twenty internal foster placements (from 99 to 119). A new Parent and Child scheme was developed this year and specialist training was given to ten existing carers. Eight carers have been approved to take parent and child placements. In January 2022 approval was given to pilot a new Supported Lodging scheme. There was currently one new supported lodgings carer approved who has been matched with a placement.

The officer reported on the de-registration of mainstream carers, none left to join independent fostering agencies (IFAs) those that did leave were mainly due to changes in personal circumstances or retirement, none were dissatisfied with DCC as a fostering agency.

The committee heard about the engagement and support of foster carers. The Derby Foster Carers Association (FCA) have had an active voice in developments in the service over the last year, co-designing the work of the Fostering Service. The Fostering Support Team Manager was invited to and attends monthly FCA committee meetings. The officer explained that support groups available for carers had expanded significantly over the last year and included a black carers support group and a men's group.

The committee learnt that in collaboration with D2N2 Local Authorities, Derby City had gained accreditation as a Foster Friendly Council in March 2022. This means that DCC employees if they wish to become foster carers would get additional days of annual leave to undertake the fostering assessment and ongoing leave to support them in the role of foster carer. DCC planned to work with partner agencies and local businesses to encourage to become Foster Friendly organisations.

The officer detailed areas for development in 2022-23, the committee heard that the service had been expanded to welcome the permanence team into Fostering. It was planned to develop a specialist foster care scheme and are looking to recruit emergency foster carers from internal staff, who could be trained to support and care for children removed under Police Protection Orders for up to 72 hours.



A councillor asked whether Short Breaks for Carers were still available, the committee heard that the service was still available. Another councillor asked whether there was an increase in interest for fostering for DCC or was there any notable increase in carers moving to IFAs. The officer that 6 foster carers had been attracted to move to DCC and IFAs were coming to DCC as a choice of provider. A councillor asked whether the Family and Friends model was like the "Mockingbird" model which was structured around the support and relationships an extended family provided. The officer explained that where children did not need to come into care the Family and Friends service was working with the family to provide wrap around support to facilitate the children remaining at home with their families. A councillor was pleased to see this report, lots of employees can benefit from becoming a foster carer, and the service was now working with partners to try and bring them on board.

The committee extended its thanks to the staff of the Fostering Service for the incredible progress it had made against remarkable challenges. This was a great story for the Council.

### **The Committee resolved to approve the Fostering Agency Report and Statement of Purpose**

## **09/22 Children's Permanence Team – Quarter 4 Update Report 2021/22**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care. The report was presented by the Team Manager, Children's Permanence Team. The report provided an update on the ongoing performance of the Children's Permanence Team (CPT).

The committee noted that the Exit from Care Team was developed in 2013 to respond to meeting sufficiency needs and ensure that children and young people were cared for in local communities and with their families if possible. From 2017 to date there has been an increase in the numbers of children exiting long term care and as a result increased cost savings to DCC. The Team was now a part of the Children's Permanence Team (CPT). The report and presentation provided the quarter 4 and the 2021/2022 annual update on CPT's progress.

The targets for financial year 2021/22 were:

### **Exit 28 children and young people from care through the Exit from Care Team per annum via re-unification with family, use of Court Orders such as Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) or Child Arrangement Order (CAO)**

During 2021/22 12 children in total Exited Care under an SGO.

7 children exited care under Placement with Parents Regulations (re-unifications)

There was a total of 19 exits during 2021-22

### **Exit 35 children and young people from care through the CPT via Adoption**

During 2021/22 - 23 children were placed for Adoption,

### **Adoption Orders**

There were 21 Adoption orders granted in Q1-Q3 and 13 Adoption Orders were granted in Q4. In total there were 34 Adoption Orders in total for 2021/22.

**Caseloads at the end of Q4 2021/22** - 58 children with a plan of adoption. 51 allocated within the Adoption Team. Team were tracking further 36 cases with a plan of adoption, but where the Placement Order has not yet been granted. 16 cases - Adoption Order granted

but tasks to complete before closing the case. The Team had a 20% reduced capacity for 75% of 2021/22

The Committee learnt that in March 2021, in a family proceedings case in Somerset it was identified that a child's permanence report (CPR) did not contain a medical summary compliant with regulation 17 of the Adoption Agency Regulations 2005. The Designated Family Judge order the LA to review compliance with regulation 15 and 17 of the AARs 2005 for all children subject to Placement Orders. The compliance review identified additional non-compliant cases and the matter was referred to the High Court for review.

The Somerset Judgement resulted in delay in progressing children's plans during Q4 2021/22 and will impact on adoption performance in 2022/23. The Judgement called for all LAs to review compliance under Adoption regulations.

### **Projections for Q1 2022/23**

76 cases open with a Best Interest Decision (BID) where the BID was made prior to 1 January 22, who were still in the adoption process.

The Children's Permanence Team's target is to exit 35 children and young people from care through the CPT per annum in 2022/23 via adoption.

Based on the number of children who are linked/matched or placed under Foster for Adoption Regulations at the end of Q4 it is projected to place a further 14 children into their adoptive placements by the end of Q1 2022/23.

### **The Committee resolved to note the ongoing performance of the Children's Permanence Team in the following areas:**

- **How many children/young people exited care per quarter and the onward forecast**
- **Quarterly staffing updates and forecasts for the next quarter**
- **Caseloads, both case responsibility and co-working**
- **Arrangements for children and young people exited from care**
- **Financial savings of the team and expected savings forecast**
- **Additional work being completed by the team**
- **Identification of service strengths and areas for development**

## **10/22 Annual Performance Update – Children in Care and Care Leavers**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care. The report was presented by the Head of Strategy and Performance. The report presented the latest provisional performance highlights in the context of national information (Appendix 1) and key highlights from the 2022 Ofsted inspection relating to children in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers (Appendix 2).

The officer reported that each year all local authorities submit statistics to the Department for Education (DfE) on the children they look after. The information was collated centrally and published annually to enable comparison between authorities and to inform local understanding of the profile, demand, and performance in relation to key children in care performance indicators.

The committee noted that at the end of March 2022 Derby had 627 children in care, this was a decrease of 15 from March 2021 when there were 642 children in care. This was the first reduction of children in care seen over the past five financial years.

Between April 2021 and March 2022 Derby had 242 children who ceased to be looked after. The rate of children per 10,000 who ceased to be looked after increased from 30 per 10,000 in 2020/21 to 41 per 10,000 in 2021/22. This placed the rate of children exiting care significantly higher than national and comparator averages.

Performance on health outcomes for Derby's children in care is generally strong. It has however slightly dipped across several areas based on 2021/22 provisional information but remains largely in line with national positions. The number of children with an up-to-date dental check has improved. A key area to note is that Derby remains above national averages for the score of strength and difficulties questionnaires where a lower score is preferable.

Employment Education or Training (EET) - The percentage of care leavers in EET was 57.3% at the end of March 2021) in comparison to 47.6% for comparators and 52% nationally.

Placements - Children in Derby do benefit from stable placements in line with national averages, and performance in this area has been stronger over the last 12 months. However, the sufficiency of placements is an ongoing area of challenge that is compounded by the small geographical boundary of the city meaning fewer young people are placed within the city or within a 20-mile radius.

ILACs Inspection – HMI Inspectors were on site for 5 days from 21 March to 25 March 2022. The final report was published on 11 May 2022, reporting the overall effectiveness of services for children and young people in Derby as “Outstanding”. The judgement grade breakdowns were:

- The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families - Outstanding
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection - Outstanding
- The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers - Good
- Overall effectiveness – Outstanding

The Inspectors identified two areas for improvement both relating to CIC and Care Leavers

- Access for all children to life-story work that helps them to understand their histories
- Sufficiency of placement choice and location for children in care

An action plan for improvement in the identified areas must be submitted to Ofsted by 19<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

A councillor stated that the feedback for the CIC was positive, their voice was listened to. The committee thanked all the staff for their work, it was an amazing result.

#### **The Committee resolved:**

- 1. to note the latest performance information relating to Derby City Council's Children in Care and Care Leavers**
- 2. to note how Derby compares to national and comparator benchmarks**
- 3. To note the inspection findings presented in paragraph 4.8 with the full letter available at Appendix 2**

- 4. To note that an improvement plan in response to any areas identified for development will be submitted to Ofsted by 19 August in line with the principles within the inspection guidance**

MINUTES END