

ITEM 04

Time commenced 1.00pm
Time finished 3:15pm

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE Tuesday 25 October 2022

Present: Councillors Hezelgrave, Lind, Swan, Whitby (Chair) and Williams

In attendance: Pervez Akhtar, Corporate Parenting Lead
Laura Bradley, CiC Council Participation Officer
Holly Hardgrave, Commissioning Support Assistant
Margita CIC Council Representative
Graeme Ferguson, Virtual School Headteacher
Andrew Kaiser, Head of Specialist Services
Kelly Ormond, Principal Service Manager MAT Over 11's
Mandy MacDonald, Child Protection Manager
Heather Peet, Designated Nurse NHS

11/22 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from, Councillor Roulstone, Omar Aslam, Youth Mayor Marlene Upchurch, Chair of Parent Foster Carers, Andy Smith, Strategic Director Peoples Services, Pauline Anderson, Director Learning, Inclusion and Skills, Joanne Groombridge, Children's Rights Service

12/22 Late Items to be introduced by the Chair

There were none.

13/22 Declarations of Interest

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

14/22 Minutes of the meeting held on 26th July 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th July 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

15/22 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 (PO). 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 has been one meeting in September 2022 of the Children in Care Council since the last report. At the meeting a "You Said, We Did" event took place at the Council House to feedback to members of the CiCC on the last year of meetings and the impact their views had on services.

Key findings from the Children in Care Consultation which went out in March this year with a closing date of 29th April were highlighted: 27% of CiC were unaware of the CiC Council and what they do, 45.5% did not want to be involved with the CiC. 36.4% would like to meet bi-monthly/yearly respectively

The CiC Consultation was done to find out how CiC would like to be consulted with and the most suitable methods to use. Information from the consultation helped the PO to plan the upcoming year, face to face meetings will now be held bi-monthly, and two activities have been planned for Christmas and Summer. The CiC preferred Emails or text surveys, their preference for discussions included Health and Wellbeing, Education and Employment, Developing independence and Environmental issues. The uptake of the consultation was not high, so it cannot give a collective view of CiC. Further consultation will continue.

Other activities undertaken were the BBC Radio Derby CiCC interview, School Participation, GP Training, where the GPs found it helpful to have an insight about behaviour and barriers for CiC in their own words. The Designated Nurse thanked the CiC Council for the feedback for GPs which had been valuable. A two-day residential Regional Residential CiCC meeting took place on 15th to 16th October, the programme of activities could be seen at Appendix 2. The Participation Evidence for the authority was open for 22/23 and the Participation Officer was working with colleagues to ensure they can submit evidence.

The PO highlighted the Age Range for Participation, unlike other authorities DCC does not ask for views from CiC under 10 years. It was explained that as the PO worked part-time there was not the capacity to undertake this work, but it was important to draw attention to the issue so that a way forward could be found which did not exclude any age groups.

An update on work undertaken with Care Leavers was provided. Following a request to meet with a CiC/Care Leaver to discuss the Leaving Care offer in Derby City, the PO had met with the Leaving Care Manager to discuss/explore reviewing the offer. This would be an ongoing piece of work, needing a consultation if there was a review.

A councillor suggested that if capacity was an issue, then consultation from age 10 was reasonable. He agreed with the CiC input to the pocket money and savings policy if it was age appropriate.

Another councillor thanked the CiC for their input and work which was fantastic. She noted that the Change Grow Live materials had already been printed before changes suggested by CiC could be incorporated and felt that in future there should be co-production from the beginning of the process. The PO explained that sometimes it was not possible to get involved from the beginning of the process. The councillor suggested a recommendation be made to recognise the co-production status from the beginning of a process, the Committee agreed recommendation 2 below.

A councillor asked if the Committee could be reassured that the four topics for identified for discussion from the Consultation are something the PO will be asking about specifically. The officer explained that the Consultation responses were anonymous, and the next year of meetings will be discussed at the November meeting of CiC Council.

The Virtual School Headteacher offered help with surveys, a co-produced survey could be produced, and the service could offer the incentive of a voucher could be offered on completion by CiC.

A councillor felt that several issues had been raised, where help could be provided to make improvements. What can be done to improve attendance at CiCC meetings, was it possible to hold a workshop to ask CiC. Was there a secure way using social media to contact CiC perhaps by texting or emails, the restrictions of use of social media for CiC was discussed. The PO had spoken with colleagues about "Let's Talk Derby" to see if CiC could have a secure area, there were some barriers and safeguarding issues, but she was looking into

have a secure space to access. The difficulties of involving young people were discussed and the Committee recognised that sometimes young people did not want to be involved, but some might come to a workshop. A councillor suggested that if young people are consulted in an age-appropriate way to seek their ideas or concerns then they might want to be involved in consultation at a later stage. The Committee agreed recommendation 3 below.

Another councillor suggested looking at the issue of communication, to see how it could be achieved, perhaps working with the Virtual School, also to look at in terms of resources and contribution. A form of analysis was needed of how it can be done and if there were any resources available.

A councillor raised the issue of the name of the CiCC which was not easy for young people to identify with. The CiCC representative explained that work was ongoing on a new name for CiCC, it was hoped to re-brand in the New Year.

The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:

- 1. To consider the content of the report and feedback from CiCC with reference to the consideration of the age range consulted with, and methodology used.**
- 2. That Council recognise co-production status from the beginning of the process as the CiC Council should be involved in any work right from the start.**
- 3. That some exploratory work be undertaken and analysis on the best way to proceed in involving young children in the consultation process effectively and which will lead to them to get involved in consultation processes in the long term.**

16/22 Update Report on Children in Care Missing

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services. The report was presented by the Deputy Head of Service for Early Help Services. The report provided a brief overview of the current performance and actions implemented to support improved outcomes for those Looked After Children and Young People who go missing and to aim to reduce missing episodes.

There were 303 missing episodes for Looked After Children (LAC) in Derby, other local authorities and children placed out of Derby during the three quarters between January 2022 and August 2022. This compares with 833 missing episodes for children who are not looked after in Derby.

Return Interviews (RIs) have a high percentage of completion, from January to March 2022 there were 100 missing episodes and 95 RIs were completed. From April to June 2022 118 missing episodes and 104 RIs were completed, from July to August 2022 there 88 missing episodes and 60 RIs completed. All young people are offered an RI, completing RI within timescales was a priority, work was ongoing with Heads of Service for LAC to ensure a process was in place.

The key locations where young people go to were identified and shared with partners at the monthly missing meetings. The locations are similar to the ones in the last report in March 2022, but some new areas have been identified. The areas identified were the Bus Station, River Gardens, Silk Mill Area, Derbion, Sainsbury's at Osmaston and Derby Train Station (1 young person placed in Derby by another local authority and wanting to return home).

Two audits on RIs have been completed since March 2022 and have demonstrated a positive progression in quality by providing information which can be used to safeguard young people.

A safety planning tool has been created to use with young people to help reduce missing episodes and reduce risks if they go missing. It was currently being finalised and will help all staff to engage with young people in the RI process.

A Long-Term missing meeting template has been updated and was being piloted for when young people have gone missing for more than three days.

Data on CRE levels and missing episodes was being recorded to ensure CRE processes are being following if a missing episode triggers a CRE concern. A Missing Workshop for independent residential homes was held on 12th October 2022 a further session is planned for after Christmas.

A podcast for foster carers has been created around the missing protocol as part of their training and development.

A councillor suggested that the list of key locations of where children missing have been found might not be an indication of where they have been. The officer explained the struggle to obtain information, staff try to build relationships, look at families, to try to build a picture of where young people go. Another officer explained that from the data the more persistent missing are teenagers living in homes 60% of missing episodes are that group of children who go missing together, some are involved in risky situations, 40% are a one-off missing episode, the service is constantly trying to manage the risk. In house care meetings with Youth Offending Service take place. The service was aware of the cohort of missing children by age and gender.

A councillor was concerned that missing children who have been removed from families end up back with them. He asked whether follow up work was undertaken. The officer explained that meetings took place with parents, if situations change or have improved then supervised contact can be put in place, to allow the children access in a safe way. The service tries to work with children as situations change, they engage with them using therapeutic work, it was sometimes better for children to go back to their families if assessments are in place. If agreed contacts are in place then some of the missing episodes stop, but if they are not approved things are more difficult. However, it was important to maintain family links, the children need networks and families they cannot be cast adrift.

A councillor asked about Derby children placed out of area and whether it became difficult for the service to work with other local authorities. The officer explained they work well with children from other areas placed in Derby who follow DCC protocols. Independent Children's Homes are approachable, there are some problems with other local authorities, but this was managed by the service and can be escalated with the Police or Derbyshire County Council if necessary.

Councillors asked for further context around the table at 4.4 in the report to get an idea of where the problems are, also they asked for gender and age range to be provided to give context to the information.

The Committee considered and noted the content of the report they requested more context information for the table at 4.4 in the report, they agreed the report recommendations:

- 1. To explore the additional actions to support the reduction in the number of missing episodes for young people placed in Derby City Council Residential Homes and Foster Care in the city**
- 2. To ensure those looked after young people in out of authority placements are monitored and supported appropriately in accordance with the missing protocol**

17/22 Update Report on Reducing Criminalisation by Children in Care CONCORDAT.

The Committee received a report of the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care. The report was presented by the Head of Specialist Services.

CONCORDAT is an agreement across the children and young people's partnership in Derby City to join up work under a vision to avoid the unnecessary criminalisation of children in care. The scheme was launched in October 2018, following a successful pilot it was rolled out to all DCC city based residential homes. It was led and driven by managers and staff in Youth Offending Service (YOS) CPS, Police and residential services and several other partners.

Since the last CONCORDAT Annual Report in October 2021 there has been significant progress against the Action Plan including, delivery of a Missing Persons and CRE Best Practice Forum to share key developments, practice and information, the Cromarty model has been embedded in Enhanced Care Planning Meeting framework, and the delivery of CONCORDAT awareness session to newly recruited staff in Sinfin Homes.

An analysis of Police Data has been compiled for DCC Children's Homes showing the number of crime occurrences between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022 in each of the 3 children's homes (home 4 was still closed). There has been a rise in offences in all 3 homes in the past 12 months compared to the previous year.

The data shows an increase in offences most of them being in Home 2, children with high level needs had been placed in the home, staff found it difficult to manage their behaviour, the children have been moved to new homes. In Home 1 there was more stability, children have been in place for some time which lessens offending behaviour. Most offences were at level 3 and under, criminal damage, crime without injury. Some incidents could have been better dealt with in the home. Home 3 had offences where the police were contacted.

Data for the types of incidents in each of the Homes was explained. Home 1 has seen a 57% reduction in the number of Missing Person calls. Home 2 had an increase in crime incidents mainly for Criminal Damage and Violence. There has been an overall increase of 10% in incidents from 176 in 2020-21 to 195 in 2021-22. Home 3 had an increase of nearly 53% for incidents, 113 were recorded in 2021-22 (relating to one child breaching bail conditions) compared to 74 in 2020-21.

The YOS data shows that there were fewer Looked After Children (LAC) living in DCC Homes involved with the service and a reduction in the number of offences committed. Several of the offences reported by Homes in 2021-22 did not lead to Court Appearances. The strategic aim of CONCORDAT was to lower the numbers of vulnerable children in Court. The service was looking at increasing funding for Early Help and diversion programmes.

Every year the Local Authority must make a data return to the DfE on the number of LAC children committing offences. 12 children committed offences in 2021-22 compared to 10 in 2020-21. There were 37 offences in 2021-22 compared to 16 in 2020-21. One child committed 18 offences in 2021-22 which inflated the data. 8 LAC children open to YOS during the 2021-22 did not re-offend. Most offences were at Gravity score 3, which is the less serious end of offending.

The Cromarty model was used in 2021-22 it measures progress children are making against identified targets which are broader like Education and Health needs rather than just simple offending. 8 children had Enhanced Care Planning Meetings (ECPM) in 2021-22, all of them

made positive progress but there were some fluctuations due to increased difficulties experienced by the children.

The officer highlighted challenges and explained one key risk factor relates to the Emotional Health of children, which can create situations where behaviour becomes poor and can lead to self-harm or criminal behaviour. More children are struggling to cope post COVID and this manifests in complex behaviour which is difficult to manage.

The YOS Clinical Psychology Post had funding agreed from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and will be a substantive post, but there was no agreement from Health to continue to fund the Youth Well-Being Worker post beyond October 2022. However, there might be an opportunity of funding from elsewhere to confirm the role.

The officer explained that placement sufficiency was a national challenge, locating suitable placements for children was difficult especially those with high levels of need.

There are a high number of Return Interviews to complete for young people in care homes. Normally they are completed by Social Workers, but guidance states they can be done by the best person who has a relationship with the child, potentially a carer could also undertake these interviews.

The next steps were highlighted which included updating the CONCORDAT Protocol, the Action Plan has been developed by Tactical Group, they will meet every 12 weeks to review and refresh. DCC will work with the ICB to roll out Clinical Review Panels for LAC, 2 cases per month from November 2022.

A councillor stated that the CiC Council had asked for more time before Missing Interviews took place. The officer confirmed that an interview had to take place within the statutory period of 3 days or 72 hours. The service focuses on getting quality of information, like are LAC going to places known for exploitation of people. A Return Interview Resource Pack has been created offering different approaches to the Interview, not just tick box responses.

Another councillor asked about the identified trend of child emotional health presentation, this was an issue where there would be need for someone with training, possibly the Wellbeing Worker post. The officer explained that the Psychologist was an expert whilst the Wellbeing Post was a Youth Worker. He highlighted that there was a possibility of using funding from the Ministry of Justice to continue the role.

Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People left the room during for this discussion and when she returned declared an interest and did not take part in the discussion or agreement of recommendation.

The councillor suggested making a recommendation of possibly using some of the 300K funding moved to the Youth Service, as a fallback position to fund the post. They thought that funding should be sought from outside the local authority, but if funding was not available then could council funding be used to support the post. A councillor wanted more information on the impact of the post, the officer stated it was a valuable post. The committee agreed to recommend that that if there was a risk of the loss of the Youth Well-being Worker post then as a fallback could some of the £300K funding moved to the Youth Service be used to fund this post

Another councillor was interested in the growing trend in complex needs is the service able to manage the potential placements, secure units could be needed as some Homes would not be able to manage the complex needs of young people, is there any preparation work other than placing elsewhere. The officer explained that Commissioning and other workstreams are starting to look at provision for these cases. There was recognition of the issues.

A councillor asked when the Protocol document would be renewed, it was confirmed that it would be renewed before next April, it was last reviewed and signed off by all partners in 2018.

The Committee considered and noted the content of the report and agreed the recommendation of the report:

To ensure Corporate Parenting Committee are kept abreast of developments, progress, and impact of the CONCORDAT Programme to date.

The Committee also recommended that if there was a risk of the loss of the Youth Well-being Worker post then as a fallback could some of the £300K funding moved to the Youth Service be used to fund this post.

18/22 Children's Rights Service Annual Report 2021/22

The Committee agreed to defer the Annual Report of work undertaken by the Children's Rights Service to the meeting on 21 February 2023.

19/22 Independent Reviewing Service – Annual Report 2021/22

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director Peoples Services and was presented by the Deputy Head of Service Children's Quality Assurance.

As part of the IRO Handbook 2010 statutory guidance the IRO manager must prepare an Annual Report for scrutiny of this Committee so that they are aware of the performance of the IRO Services and issues that may be impacting on CiC.

Every child that comes into care must be allocated an IRO, who has a statutory responsibility to chair the statutory review and ensure that the council considers the child's wishes and feelings and that their Care Plan is right for the child. In Derby every young person who comes into care is allocated an IRO within 24 hours.

The first review of a child's case should be within 20 working days of the date on which the child becomes looked after; the second review no more than three months after the first; the third and subsequent reviews no more than six months after the previous one.

The DHoS of Children's Quality Assurance gave an overview of 2021-22. The IRO had an additional officer post. Statutory Guidance recommends that each IRO caseload should be between 50-70 cases in 2021-22 the average caseload for IROs in DCC was 71. In March 2021 the number of CiC was 642 at the end of 2021-22 it was down to 627.

IRO service highlights include the ability to explore different ways of working like using MS Teams to undertake some reviews, over the last year a hybrid model of some face-to-face reviews as well as some virtual reviews has been used successfully.

The quality of reviews has remained high. There have been improvements in collation of feedback, there was an electronic system in place, after a review a link can be sent to all participants so they can feedback anonymously. In 2021-22, 97% of statutory reviews held have been within the required timescales, the Target was 97%, also in 2021-22 98.5% of all reviews had children and young people participating in them.

The service works regularly with partner organisations such as Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS), and Derbyshire IROs to improve partnership.

working, this includes planning and facilitating an annual workshop for IROs in Derbyshire and Derby with CAFCASS Officers to improve working together, practice and learning.

The IRO service has focused on writing child centred Children Looked After (CLA) reports, which are aimed at young people and written in a format and style suitable for them. The feedback for the reports has been positive.

Regarding IRO Reviews a councillor sought assurance that the service would undertake face-to-face reviews with young people in care as well as virtual/hybrid reviews. The officer confirmed that at least one review must be face to face, to give value to the IRO role there must be contact with a young person.

The Committee noted the report and thanked the IROs for all their hard work.

The Committee considered and noted the content of the report

20/22 Children in Care – Children at Risk of Exploitation

The Committee received a report and presentation of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services and was presented by the Child Protection Manager. The report provided an update on Children at Risk of Exploitation (CRE) and the wider impact of the partnership work over the last 6 months to raise awareness and safeguard children in Derby from exploitation.

There is no co-located team who look at CRE. The work relies on a partnership approach. Children are offered a range of support and interventions from the partnership, this includes support from Police, Education, Health Trusts, and commissioned Specialist Services. Work is enhanced by partners in the Voluntary Sector, all partners work to safeguard children from exploitation and educate them about emerging risks.

The CRE offer is a provision to young people and families, work was done to reduce risk, direct work was undertaken with the child and/or sibling to prevent risk, the offender would also be targeted. Every child referred to the local authority with concerns about sexual or criminal exploitation will be assessed using a standard CRE Risk Assessment.

The governing group for children at risk of exploitation was the Exploitation and Vulnerable Young People (EVYP) a subgroup of the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Partnership. CRE leads do not report quarterly, instead an overview of other partnership work is provided in line with priority themes.

Research and good practice updates are regularly provided and shared with all partners. The partnership is committed to safeguarding children and families, ensuring effective governance and information sharing, oversight of the regional group is done by the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS). Their Agenda is good practice and information about children placed, the region has reciprocal arrangements to review procedures as local oversight is important, they try and influence other agencies to have reciprocal arrangements also.

Updated research and trends are considered within workforce learning training updates to partners and monitored through Child Protection, Child in Need and LAC Plans. As patterns or trends elsewhere will soon appear in Derby. Podcasts on various aspects of exploitation like Modern Slavery, Gangs, how to create a Disruption Plan have been produced to update staff so they can recognise trends. The CRE Risk Assessment has been updated and added to the IT system, there are several prompts to encourage completing reports earlier as early intervention means better support for children and young people.

The Derby and Derbyshire Modern Slavery Partnership was refreshing its Strategic Assessment on modern slavery. They are undertaking a series of surveys on various types of modern slavery and exploitation; human trafficking was fundamental to the risk.

Missing is also a key indicator of exploitation, the missing team ensure they review all reports of missing and return interviews, return interviews incorporate the CRE Risk Assessment and referrals are made as appropriate.

A councillor suggested that more people should be more aware of, understand and contribute to the wider partnership offer around child exploitation. The voices of children and young people and their Carers need to be heard also. Carers should understand, contribute, and have awareness of what is available to help, they need to be included in all this information so that they can monitor situations. The Child Protection Manager confirmed that the Workforce Development Team provide training to all services, she had attended Child Protection Groups of individual Providers to talk about the strategy. Home Education was raised as a possible risk, it was explained that EVYP undertook a review of excluded children in home education. A councillor asked about the data on any re-referrals, the officer confirmed that figures were not specific to LAC and the rate of re-referrals was low around 18%.

The Committee resolved that the recommendation from the report should be amended to read:

Support partners to understand the wider partnership offer and to encourage their contribution to the partnership work

MINUTES END