

# ITEM 4

Time commenced 1.00pm  
Time finished 2.15pm

## **CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE** **Tuesday 16 April 2019**

Present: Councillor Williams (Chair)  
Councillors Ashburner, Hezelgrave, Hussain and Russell

In attendance: Two representatives of the Children in Care Council  
Patrick Aherne, Participation Officer  
Pervez Akhtar, Corporate Parenting Lead  
Annamarie Johannesson, Chair of Derby Foster Care Association  
Heather Peet, Designated Nurse Looked After Children  
Kelly Thompson, Named Nurse  
Fiona Kilgour, Derbyshire Constabulary  
Catherine Young, Commissioning  
Gareth Dakin, Deputy Head of Service- Children in Care  
Graeme Ferguson, Virtual School Head  
Suanne Lim, Director of Children's Integrated Services  
Andy Smith, Strategic Director of People Services

### **34/18 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harwood

### **35/18 Late Items to be introduced by the Chair**

There were none.

### **36/18 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

### **37/18 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2019**

Councillors queried when they would receive updates on the recommendations from the following items:

30/18 Care Leavers Report – Education, Employment and Training – officers investigate a means of capturing or monitoring information about how officer input/interventions assist children leaving care to achieve an apprenticeship or gain employment.

Officers confirmed that, as the Agenda for this meeting has a health theme, the report with an employee focus would come to a future meeting.

31/18 Annual Report of the headteacher of the Virtual School for Looked After Children 2017-18 – That a further report be brought to a future meeting giving an explanation of Attainment 8 and Progress 8 figures, in order to better understand what the figures represent and how DCC are enabling Derby cohorts of children to improve.

Officers confirmed that as the Agenda for this meeting has a health theme the report with an education focus would come to a future meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

## 38/18 Children in Care Council – Update

The Committee received a report of the Director of Integrated Commissioning which provided an update on recent activity by the Children in Care Council (CICC). The report was presented to members by a representative of the CICC.

Councillors noted that since the last report there have been two meetings of the CICC.

At the February meeting, the Fostering Team attended and asked for feedback in relation to Foster Carer support. The CICC were asked "What do Foster Carers need from the Council ? Answers given included: Help with Stress; Make children smile, Foster Carer Booklets (information about foster family). The Fostering Team also asked "What should the Council expect from Foster Carers?" Replies given included: Not to bully children; Good with children; Pocket Money. CICC, were asked for their thoughts about the permanent Foster Placement offer. They felt that a focused pack that explains everything, gives details of processes, what happens, where to go for help and information about CICC would be useful. The group also talked about changing the CICC logo. Several ideas were suggested and a thumb in vibrant colours was the most popular choice. Ideas are being taken forward by the Council design team.

At the March meeting the young people revisited the ground rules for the CICC meeting. They suggested changes to the rules layout so that they stood out and also added some new rules. The CICC were asked for their input into developing the new Corporate Parenting Strategy, including what should be contained in the document. The CICC suggested that the strategy should include a forward from the Mayor and Youth Mayor. They also asked for pictures of Derby to be included together with cartoons. CICC were asked what the policy should be called and gave a number of options. The Committee considered the following three as ones that stood out:

Our Bright Future Plan  
Our Fabulous Future  
Thinking Forward

The Committee noted that the "Focus on Us" newsletter has been redesigned into a magazine and should be ready to send out to looked after children by the end of April.

At the April meeting the Chief Executive of Derby City Council visited to find out more about the CICC. She agreed that Derby City Council should host the next regional CIC meeting, and a venue would need to be found for the event.

The first meeting with Looked After children who could not attend the CICC was held in their school in Derby. They looked at the Corporate Parenting Strategy and gave suggestions, one of which was that the Pledge should be at the start of the document.

The Committee noted that the Participation Officer is continuing activity to increase the number of children in care who can contribute to CICC meetings but who are unable to come due to a clash of activities. The Committee noted that the numbers of young people attending the February, March and April meetings were between 6-7. It was hoped that the numbers would increase slightly after the Participation Officer had visited more schools.

The Committee noted the efforts made to widen the voice and participation of the CICC and their input was greatly valued. The Board will re-look at the Pledge and other Strategies and prepare alternatives which would include pictures and cartoons; they agreed that the Pledge should appear at the front of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. Councillors also requested that the Permanency Panel re-look at the Permanency Policy to make it more friendly and readable.

**The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:**

- 1. To consider the content of the report and the feedback from the Children in Care Council**
- 2. To refer the work of the CICC around the permanent Foster Placement offer to the Permanency Panel.**

## **39/18 Unaccompanied Migrant and Asylum Seeking Children looked after by Derby City Council**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care. The report was presented by the Deputy Head of Service for Children in Care and Care Leavers. The report provided an overview of the services received by Unaccompanied Migrant and Asylum Seeking Children and gave the Corporate Parenting Committee an update with regard to the progress of our corporate parenting duties to this cohort of young people.

Councillors noted that historically Derby City Council's population of UASC has been low, with numbers sporadically arriving in Derby and identifying themselves to the authorities as children. But since 2018, with the opening of Laverstock Court which is a Home Office Initial Accommodation Centre, Derby has experienced about a 900% increase in young people requesting services of Derby City Council claiming to

be children. These young people have at some point been processed by the Home Office as adults despite presenting as children.

The officer advised that Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 imposes a general duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need. Children seeking asylum (UASC) who have no responsible adult to care for them are separate or "unaccompanied" and are therefore "in need".

Councillors queried whether any other local authority had the same number of UASC, or if it was just Derby City who had about a 900% increase. Officers confirmed that this situation was the case in every area where there was an Initial Accommodation Centre. When asylum seekers enter the country at a Point of Entry they undergo a Home Office Assessment, if they are processed as an adult they are passed to centres like Laverstock Court. Once at an Initial Centre the local authority have to identify the age of an asylum seeker. If they are assessed as a child they have to be accommodated by the local authority; if there is an element of doubt about the age of the asylum seeker then they have to be accommodated as a child and undergo a further age assessment.

Councillors queried whether the government was aware of the situation and if it provided any financial assistance. Officers confirmed that once an asylum seeker is assessed to be a child then funding becomes available for them and they become a looked after child (LAC). They are entitled to same provisions that the Council provide to it's own LAC population. Young people under 16 are usually placed in Foster Care. Young People who claim they are 16-17 are placed in semi-independent accommodation.

The Lead Member for Children and Young People confirmed that the Home Office has been informed and they are aware of the impact of policies and the unintended cost to the system here. The Council is currently working with colleagues in the LGA to lobby the Home Office. They are also working with other councils in the regional area to highlight issues and the Council is waiting to see if money can be returned to the Local Authority.

Councillors noted that since the opening of Laverstock Court the service has become more robust and were now able to help asylum seekers access health and education so they feel safe and secure. The service has close links with Health Teams and has developed links with places of worship, faith based groups, cricket and football clubs to help them meet other children. Officers advised on the challenges of looking after UASC which included abuse and trauma, separation from families, distances travelled, social isolation, no knowledge of Derby or of public transport systems, trafficking and exploitation.

Councillors asked if Commissioning services could check that there is enough support provided to USAC to assist with any trauma or health issues. Councillors noted that trauma in UASC often appears after they have become settled and feel safe in their surroundings, at which point they could be too old to be referred to any children's mental health services available such as "The Keep". The Designated Nurse for LAC confirmed that a report is being prepared to highlight any gaps and to understand what is needed to assist the UASC in terms of trauma.

Councillors were concerned that full identification papers could be provided for UASC. Officers confirmed that once an asylum claim has been dealt with and was successful, then identification documents are provided. In cases where a young person does not enter the asylum process then they would be given support to obtain legal assistance. However if the claim was unsuccessful they would have to leave the country.

**The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:**

**1. to note the content of the report and the progress made**

**40/18      Annual Health Report for Derby City LAC**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Corporate Resources. The report was presented by the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children (LAC), NHS Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group. The report provided Derby City Corporate Parenting Board with a brief overview of the progress, challenges, opportunities and future plans to support and improve the health and wellbeing of LAC in Derby City.

The Committee noted the summary of achievements for 2017-2018 which included the following:

- Health pathways implemented – several pathways have been developed and implemented successfully including health assessment refusals and specialist nurse input for those children with special educational needs. These changes have resulted in more efficient working and improved compliance with statutory timescales and service delivery across clinical and administration areas.
- A Peer Record keeping audit template developed and implemented with a vision to improve the standards, quality of documentation and to share learning as a team
- Completion of the CCG “Markers of Good Practice” assurance framework and the implementation of an improvement plan with Designated Professionals
- The Training programme for Foster Carers and Residential Care Workers was redeveloped and began in March 2018. Foster Carers were struggling to attend half day training sessions so these training sessions are now linked with the bi-monthly foster carer forums and have covered subjects such as immunisation..
- The Health history booklet and process has been improved, in partnership with the provider Local Authority, leaving care teams. This is a child held record which is given to the young person/child when they enter care. It is a record of their health and also contains information about registering with various services like GPs.

- Health Data Performance has been strengthened by quarterly reports to the Southern Derbyshire CCG Quality Assurance Committee of performance and quality of the Children in Care service. The Committee were advised that immunisation was slightly lower than in previous years but was in line with the national uptake. The committee were concerned how the health data performance compared with children not in care. The Designated Nurse confirmed that immunisations for CIC were at 93.9% and that the national figure is less. The figures for completed dental checks is an issue across the East Midlands and also nationally. The committee were concerned that monitoring performance against dental care took place in order to ensure that any gaps could be closed. The Designated Nurse confirmed that, robust processes are in place and the uptake of dental checks for CIC was improving. Issues do arise, however, when the Local Authority do not hold parental authority over CIC. The Committee felt that there was a need to have a system in place to see that inputs are making a difference to dental care for CIC. The Designated Nurse confirmed that it was difficult to capture evidence of a child going to a dentist and what treatment was needed. Officers confirmed that dental health had been an issue but now improvements have exceeded the national figure. It was difficult to get a measurable outcome other than ensuring that young people are seeing a dentist or doctor.
- Voice of the Child, during 2017-18 the Named Nurse and Designated Nurse attended the CIC Council by invitation on a couple of occasions. The main purpose was to explain the role of the CIC Team and the Named Nurse and Designated Nurse and to provide the CIC Council with some feedback of actions taken from their previous input and suggestions (you said, we did). Suggestions from these sessions included the introduction of toys in clinical areas, and changes to the venues for health assessments. Staff now undertake visits in homes and schools, also at flexible times to avoid children losing classroom time. The designated nurse confirmed that future plans include engaging with people differently by using social media, including creating a Facebook site for Foster Carers.

The representative from the CICC asked whether the Nursing Team are present at all meetings with young people. The designated nurse confirmed that it was not possible to attend all meetings but they try to attend wherever possible.

The Committee asked whether any mental health audit of children was undertaken in connection with the use of social media and mental health issues. The Designated Nurse confirmed that, during their Health Assessment, young people would be advised about internet safety. They would also be asked about the length of time they spent on social media and also applications they were using.

The Committee thanked the Designated Nurse for the Annual Health Report for Derby City LAC. The Designated Nurse suggested that for the next Health Focused meeting an overview of the health status of CIC be brought for discussion. This would enable an understanding of health issues of the CIC population in comparison to the general population.

**The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:**

- **to note the contents of the report.**
- **that an overview of the health issues of CIC population be brought to the next health focused meeting.**

**41/18      Update report on Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service – "The Keep"**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Integrated Commissioning (CYP) People Services which was presented by the Children in Care Commissioning and Placements Manager. The report provided an update on the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service – "The Keep".

The Committee were advised that the "The Keep" is currently being delivered under a "Proof of Concept" from October 2016 until June 2019. The service is jointly funded by Derby City Council and Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group. The service is staffed with a multi-agency team consisting of Clinical Psychologists and Therapeutic Social Workers who deliver a range of interventions to meet the needs of children in care.

The Committee noted that discussions were taking place about the future of the service. Derby Commissioning Officers are currently working with colleagues from Derbyshire with the aim of aligning the future service provision between Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council. The service may not be jointly commissioned but they would offer the same or similar services.

The officer advised that there would be a provision in place after June but it would not be a fully tendered service. Councillors were concerned and sought assurance that there would be no gaps in place for the provisions. The Officer confirmed there would be no gaps in the service: the contract is led by the CCG and they would be looking at caseloads, waiting lists and interventions needed.

The Committee noted that most of the referrals received are from social services but, referrals are also received from GP's, named nurse, education and the voluntary sector.

The officer advised that in order to determine the impact and outcomes for the service, 233 cases referred by Derby City Council Social Care for young people where support and therapeutic intervention was provided by the service, were reviewed in 2018. It found 118 closed cases and 105 open cases. Of the 118 closed cases 80% remained stable in the same placement as at the time of referral. Of the 105 open cases 68% were in the same placement as when referred to the service. The Committee noted that permanency outcomes were good but requested more information about closed cases in the form of feedback from young people. They asked if "Exit Interviews" from 118 closed cases could take place in order to seek

ideas on how the system works and if there could be improvements made. The officer confirmed that Exit Interviews would take place.

Councillors questioned the rationale applied for referrals of young people to the Keep who were then passed on to different services; they were concerned as to how these cases would be monitored. The officer confirmed that the decision to refer is made by The Keep. An initial consultation/assessment is undertaken to ascertain if The Keep can meet the needs of the young person or whether they should be passed to another service. Social Workers would have regular contact with The Keep to ensure monitoring continued. Councillors requested further information about criteria used, where would young people go and how they are tracked if they are referred on from “the Keep”, as they would like to understand the reasons for onward referral. Officers confirmed that this information would be circulated to the Committee.

**The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:**

- **to note the contents of the report.**
- **to request information about closed cases in the form of feedback from young people. They asked for “Exit Interviews” from 118 closed cases to take place in order to seek ideas on how the system works and if there could be improvements made**
- **to request further information about the criteria of referrals from “The Keep” to other services, which services are young people referred to and how are they then monitored or tracked.**

MINUTES END