

ITEM 04

Time commenced 1.00pm
Time finished 3.15pm

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE **Tuesday 30th July 2019**

Present: Councillor Williams (Chair)
Councillors Pattison (Vice Chair), Hezelgrave, Hussain and A Pegg

In attendance: Two representatives of the Children in Care Council
Patrick Aherne, Participation Officer
Pervez Akhtar, Corporate Parenting Lead
Fiona Colton, Head of Service Locality 2
Graeme Ferguson, Virtual School Head
Andrew Kaiser, Head of Service Locality 1 and 5
Jasmine Nembhard-Francis, Head of Service - Quality Assurance
Sarah McAughtrie, Derbyshire Constabulary
Andy Smith, Strategic Director of People Services

01/19 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Heather Peet, Designated Nurse Looked After Children, Suanne Lim, Director of Children's Integrated Services, Emma Humphrey, Commissioning Manager

02/19 Late Items to be introduced by the Chair

There were none.

03/19 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

04/19 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2019

The Committee discussed the work taking place at Laverstock Court which they felt was a good example of what services could be provided at other UASC centres across the country. Councillors noted that there are health and dental facilities on site. Locality 3, 4 and 5 staff visit the centre and any children moving into the community are registered with Children's Centres. The Committee noted a recent Court Judgement which will affect the dispersal of UASC, ie Asylum Seekers will in future be judged as being over 25 years before being sent to dispersal centres.

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

05/19 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 three meetings of the CICC.

April's meeting was attended by Derby City Council's CEO who agreed they could host a Regional CICC meeting. The Committee noted that the next Regional Event would be in October 2019 and would be hosted by Leicester.

CICC also suggested they could create a residents survey to show how much work the Council undertakes. The Committee noted that the CICC had been involved in a range of consultations from Derby organisations and felt that CICC should be more involved in any upcoming Derby City Council consultations having already taken part in the Budget Consultation. The Committee suggested that a recommendation be made to Cabinet that, as part of Derby City Council Corporate Parenting responsibility, all Service Directors should consider engaging with young people in the CICC in any future Council Consultations on service provisions and other issues. The recommendation was agreed by the Committee.

In May's meeting, staff from the Commissioning team attended to talk to the group about how they are working with other councils to ensure and Children in Care (CIC) are not placed too far away from home. The group helped to develop some questions to ask future fostering agencies and residential homes.

As part of the meeting in June the young people developed a question for D2N2 about residential placements, which will be asked of organisations who apply to provide good homes for children in care. The Committee noted that the CICC gave a number of recommendations for facilities for children in residential care. The suggestions were all taken up by D2N2 and this was a positive result for CICC.

The Participation Officer reported on the ongoing work to engage with CIC. A meeting with other Local Authority Participation Officers had concluded that it would be better to identify clusters of CIC in placements and visit them in situ. He was also looking at different ways to engage with CIC in Children's Homes and was considering joining monthly meetings held in the Homes.

The Committee learnt that there had been more success in engaging with Care Leavers, who had requested that meetings be relaxed and have themes. The officer reported that he was in the process of networking with existing groups who work with Care Leavers, for example the Derby Theatre. The Committee noted that feedback from the meetings and networking events with Care Leavers would be given at the CYP Improvement Board providing a conduit for Care Leavers views to be heard.

The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:

- 1. that this Committee recommend to Cabinet that Council Directors consider engaging young people including the Children in Care Council (CICC) in any future consultations regarding changes to service provision as the involvement of CICC and young people in consultation needs to be broader across the whole council**

06/19 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 Service for Early Help, Locality 1 & 5. The report provided information about CONCORDAT. The Officer explained this was an agreement across the CYP partnership in Derby City to join up work under a single vision to avoid the unnecessary criminalisation of young people in care.

The Committee noted that CONCORDAT recognised the trauma that young people face in their routes into care, and the secondary trauma caused by being a child in care. The Officer reported that this can result in challenging, impulsive and reckless behaviour by the children, some of which comes to the attention of the Police. Councillors were advised that, whilst some of the behaviour does need a strong police response, there was some lower level behaviour which needs a different and more constructive approach.

The Officer advised that Partnerships had agreed to work together in Derby to agree:

- a vision for CONCORDAT
- a protocol to act as a framework to deliver the pilot scheme
- an Action Plan to support a pilot scheme in the city across Derby City owned Care Homes in the Sinfin area.

The Committee noted that the scheme had been approved at senior levels across Derby City Council, the Crown Prosecution Services (CPS) and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire. The CONCORDAT protocol and action plan for the Sinfin sites was launched in October 2018.

The Officer gave an overview of progress to date and recommendations for next steps. Councillors noted that most of the Action Plan has been delivered with actions completed which include:

- Training of residential staff in the Sinfin homes on restorative parenting (bringing together the perpetrators and victims to discuss actions and not progressing to police to resolve the situation).
- Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) in all services for CIC.
- Ensuring Independent Reviewing Officers are aware of the full range of services available to CIC.
- Training for Police call handlers to ensure they put calls through which can lead to an appropriate response to information supplied by residential staff.

The Committee noted that benchmark data was set at the outset of the pilot CONCORDAT in October 2018 and comprised data in a six month period before the

launch. Comparative data was then produced for the 6 month pilot period, Councillors noted that this identified that there had been an improvement in behaviour of the young people and showed that CONCORDAT work was going in the right direction ie to stop CIC being criminalised unnecessarily for their behaviour.

Councillors queried whether the role of the SPOC could be replicated across a team of Police Officers or alternatively that a briefing or training be given to police officers, as it helps to keep a consistent message when speaking to children. Derbyshire Constabulary confirmed that a briefing would be provided.

The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:

- 1. to ensure Corporate Parenting Committee are kept abreast of developments, progress and impact of the CONCORDAT programme to date**
- 2. that the CONCORDAT Action Plan return to Corporate Parenting**
- 3. to recommend that the CONCORDAT action plan is rolled out across other residential children's homes in Derby City that are run by Derby City Council**

07/19 Update report on Children Missing from Care

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services. The report provided Derby City Corporate Parenting Committee with an update on Children Missing from Care. The Head of Service, Locality 2 attended the meeting to give a presentation update.

The Committee noted that it is important that there is regular monitoring of all children and young people who go missing. Early Help Services in the Council report on this regularly through the Vulnerable Young Peoples Meeting and a fortnightly Missing Young Peoples meeting. This report and presentation shows what action the Council are taking to support and prevent missing episodes, and updates the Committee on the progress of delivering the Missing Protocol.

The Committee noted the missing data from April to June 2019. There were:

- 181 missing episodes in total – most missing episodes were one off /non persistent.
- 25 children from care homes with numerous episodes – most persistently missing young people were those placed in Derby City Council care homes and have multiple vulnerability factors and are well known to services.
- 6 Children in Foster Care
- 10 Children Out of Authority

The Officer reported that Missing return interviews) are now a part of the system on Liquid Logic. Officers handwrite the statements and they are then typed and put on the system. There are 82 completed and on the system, 99 cases have completed Return interviews that are ready to be input. It is planned to have all outstanding return interview records complete and on the system by mid-August. Councillors requested that an update be brought back to Corporate Parenting Committee once

the outstanding data had been input so they could monitor the current position. The Committee also noted that a roll-out of IT upgrades was planned for October, which will enable better interrogation of liquid logic data and help with compiling reports. The Strategic Director of Peoples Services confirmed that there is an operational issue in inputting Return interviews onto the Liquid Logic System promptly, however the strategic and operational grip on children who go missing is very robust, embedded in the service and has a strong partnership ethos.

Councillors were concerned that children are missing for long periods of time. Officers confirmed that the majority of children go missing between four to twelve hours and that there was strong evidence that "Missing Strategy" meetings are being held/arranged when children go missing for three days or more. Officers reported that Derby does not have young people going missing for long periods of time and that missing protocols have changed and safeguarding has improved. Parents are encouraged to report missing children straightaway.

The Committee also noted the work being done to understand why young people go missing, looking at trends like why more young people in residential care go missing. It was planned to look into a number of missing episodes for a smaller group of young people,

The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:

- 1. to acknowledge progress made and actions to be completed for future direction of travel.**
- 2. That an update comes to Corporate Parenting Committee when the figures have been put on the system.**
- 3. That an update report returns to Corporate Parenting Committee in January 2020.**

08/19 Children in Care – Protection from Children at Risk of Exploitation

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services. The report provided the Corporate Parenting Committee with an update and information on Children at Risk of Exploitation (CRE); evidence links of CRE to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE); the impact this has on children in care and the work that has been undertaken over the last 12 months in Derby to raise awareness and safeguard children in care from exploitation. The Head of Service, Quality Assurance attended the meeting to present the report.

The Officer reported that national held research material gives evidence of the links between CSE and CRE. Neither CSE nor CRE differentiate across race, ability, disability, sexual exploitation, gender or class. It is clear that all children are vulnerable to exploitation. A joint CRE Strategy had been prepared by Derby City Council and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children's Board (DSCB) which recognised that CSE is no longer a single risk factor. Research has shown that children are at risk of many different exploitative behaviours in modern day society, including on-line abuse and trafficking amongst others. Both CSE and CRE target children and young people (CYP) who have experienced some or all of the common risk factors:

- A history of abuse
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Low self-esteem and poor confidence
- Lack positive friendship or support network from the same age group
- Being in care or leaving care.

The Officer reported that CIC in Derby are in fairly stable family placements and they benefit from having Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers who know them. They also have regular safeguarding meetings where concerns about CSE or CRE risks are discussed and plans put in place to support them. If CSE/CRE risks are identified a risk assessment is undertaken. If risks are identified as medium or high the child or young person and their family would attend a chaired CRE meeting separate from their Looked after Review meeting.

Councillors asked if there was any evidence that home educated children are deemed to be at more risk of being exploited. Officers confirmed they were not, however if children are not in school they are more vulnerable to outside influences. There are a high number of Derby children who are home educated but the legislation around home educated children was governed by the 1940's Education Act and the responsibility of the Local Authority was limited.

The Committee noted that the Looked After Health Nurse continues to work with young people and link with residential staff to ensure that, when young people are missing from care, they are spoken to quickly and any concerns regarding exploitation are discussed and addressed.

The Officer reported that the Safeguarding Board's Vulnerable Young People's sub group had commissioned work to increase the participation of young people in meetings and that a "Task & Finish" group had completed this work. They recommended amongst other things:

- child friendly invites addressed to the child, not the parent;
- a way of contacting the chair of the meeting to give feedback that does not rely on them attending the meeting.

The Officer confirmed that examples of what young people say about the meetings they attend will be brought to a future meeting of Corporate Parenting Committee.

The Committee noted all licensed taxi drivers and company escorts undertake safeguarding training to raise their awareness of risks, and to help identify exploitation in children and young people who use the taxi service. The officer reported that the training had made an impact and there were examples of referrals being made to Social Care.

A Councillor queried whether the number of referrals in relation to CRE in a five month period could be measured as a way of checking the extent intervention of social services was helping. The Officer confirmed that their provider "Safe and Sound" use tools which can measure progress and this information can be provided to the Committee.

The officer reported that over the next 12 months children social care and outside agencies will be developing a new model of intervention with children and their families. This is based on the strength-based approach (which involves focusing on strengths, abilities & potential, rather than problems, deficits when working with children and their families) but also considers the vulnerabilities that children are exposed to in adolescence. This intervention is called "Contextual Safeguarding".

The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:

- 1. to note the ongoing work being undertaken in relation to CRE.**

09/19 Report on Children in Care (CiC) Missing Education

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services. The report was presented by the Virtual School Head teacher. The report provided an update on the number of Derby City CiC who do not have a school place and the reason for this.

The Committee noted that, in order to gain access to education as quickly as possible. CiC pupils are supported by the Virtual School, Social Workers, the SEND team, the Admissions Team and the New Communities Achievement Team.

The Officer reported that the number of looked after children who are not accessing education was monitored. The numbers of pupils without a school place varies due to pupils coming into care and care placement moves. In July 2019 there were 11 pupils without a school place:

- 5 pupils were Y11 UASC – coming into care since January
- 3 pupils had an EHCP and were awaiting suitable provision
- 2 pupils were Y11 and have given birth
- 1 pupil in Y7 who had come into care and then moved out of the area.

Councillors were informed that pupils who do not have a school place are offered one to one tuition (three hours a day for five days a week) until a school place can be found.

The Officer advised that CIC pupils without any Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) are admitted to schools very quickly, and there is normally little delay or disruption to their education. The Committee noted that statutory timelines and consultation processes must be adhered to when a CIC pupil has SEND needs to ensure that the educational establishment can meet the needs of the pupil. When a CIC pupil has significant learning difficulties schools may not be able to meet the needs of the pupil, delaying accessing education for the pupil whilst further schools are consulted. The Committee noted that in one recent case a school had been directed by Derby City Council to take a child.

The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:

- 1. to note the numbers of CIC missing education and agree the appropriateness of the actions taken to date to minimise the time a pupil is without a school place.**

10/19 Report on changes to the key education performance data in secondary schools

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services which was presented by the Virtual School Head teacher. The report provided an outline of the new grading system used for GCSE exam results.

The Committee noted how the system for comparing secondary school outcomes has changed; in particular "Attainment 8 and Progress 8" The Officer explained that the Attainment 8 score measures the achievement of a pupil across eight different subjects which include English and Maths (which are double weighted). The progress 8 score shows how pupils have improved during secondary school, compared to other pupils who were at the same level when they finished primary school.

The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:

- 2. to note how the new grading system compares to the previous A*-G GCSE grades**
- 3. to note how secondary outcomes and performance data is calculated**

11/19 Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report

The Committee received the Annual Report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services. The report was presented by the Deputy Head of Service, Children's Quality Assurance. The report provides information about the work the Independent Reviewing (IRO) service had undertaken during 2018/19.

The Committee noted that all CIC are allocated an Independent Reviewing Officer, whose responsibilities are:

- to chair the statutory review
- to make sure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account
- to ensure the Care Plan is right for the child.

IROs work closely with Social Workers and others to ensure that the views of young people are listened to. The Officer reported that it had been a busy year for the IRO service, more young people coming into care, more reviews, more young people involved in their meetings and a high number of reviews held on time.

The Officer reported that during 2018/19 96.4% of statutory reviews held were within the required timescales, the target was 97%. It was important to ensure that young people participate in their review; the Committee noted that 97% of all reviews had children and young people participating in them.

The Officer reported that the service received Mi Fi Units in 2018/19. This new technology has enabled them to work on the go and has improved the efficiency and wellbeing of the IROs. Councillors enquired whether other staff could benefit from Mi Fi Units, but the Officer explained that funding was not available to extend this provision. It was explained that there would be a strategy put in place for IT updates and that Social Work Teams have been given a priority for the roll out of new IT.

The officer advised that the IRO service remains stable with an experienced and knowledgeable team of IROs. The service has continued to maintain and build good working partnerships with social workers and team managers in social care, as well as external partners.

The Committee congratulated the team on their work and the feedback about IT improvements was welcomed. They noted the challenge of increasing caseloads and the work ongoing to strategically re-align the service to deal with this increase. The IRO service performance was good and the team are a consistent and strong element of Derby City Council's social work practice.

The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:

- 1. to consider the contents of the report and make appropriate recommendations.**

12/19 Children's Rights Service Annual Report

The Committee received the Annual report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Service on The Children's Rights Service. The report outlined service provision, take up and relevant issues for consideration by the Corporate Parenting Committee. The Report was presented by the Deputy Head of Service Children's Quality Assurance.

The Committee noted that there is a statutory requirement to provide a Children's Rights Services. The Children's Rights Service in Derby is made up of three services from the 1st April 2017 and it has been delivered by SOVA, now Change, Grow and Live (CGL). The services include:

- **The Independent Visitor Service** – in 2018/19 38 young people have been matched with visitors. Some 26 referrals were received on behalf of young people and 21 new matches were made.
- **The Independent Advocacy Service for all CIC** (since January this has included all children who are privately fostered) - In 2018/19 CGL received 71 advocacy referrals which covered a range of themes which include:
 - Support to prepare for looked after child reviews
 - Support during looked after reviews
 - Placement
- **Independent Advocacy at Child Protection Conference** - in 2018/19 78 young people were supported to participated in over 56 separate child protection conferences.

The officer reported that since starting the contract, CGL has worked hard to develop partnerships and provide quality children's right's services.

The Corporate Parenting Committee resolved:

- 1. To consider the contents of the report and make appropriate recommendations.**

MINUTES END